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A milepost on Africa's road to democracy

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President Kaunda's spectacular electoral defeat at the hands of Frederick Chiluba and the MMD on 31 October 1991 not only reflected the Zambian people's exasperation over increasingly intolerable living conditions. It also illustrated black Africa's growing disillusionment with political leaders who had gained power by mobilizing the masses' desire for freedom and prosperity, but who had effectively brought them greater poverty and oppression than that experienced under colonial domination.

Similar to peoples elsewhere in Africa, Zambians have long lost the naïve belief that the leaders who had once effectively expressed their yearnings, actually work for the public good once they are in control. They have learned that power inevitably corrupts unless checked by democratic processes and public accountability. Twenty-seven years of listening to Kaunda preaching Humanism have taught them that high-sounding phrases are no substitute for good government.

The Zambian masses' greater awareness and sophistication is also demonstrated by the fact that, notwithstanding often vicious campaigning before the election, tribalism played no significant

role and violence was minimal. Regardless of how the country's party-political life may develop in future, the two presidential candidates have set an example of magnanimity and maturity that puts many leaders of old-established democracies to shame.

Of Kaunda it has been said that nothing ever became him as the manner of his leaving his job, bowing to the will of the people; while Chiluba has called upon his countrymen to practise forgiveness, reconciliation and unity, and to respect Kaunda: "He is the founding father of our nation and he must remain in our hearts ... we must ensure nothing is done to harass him."

The Zambian leaders' manifestations of political maturity and sophistication encourage hopes of similar advances in the sphere of economic policy and public administration. The Kaunda government's nepotism and gross mismanagement have devastated the productive sectors, the physical infrastructure, education, health and other social services. The economy is still as overwhelmingly dependent on rapidly dwindling copper reserves as it was 27 years ago. According to current estimates, the copper mines will be practically worked out by the year 2010.

The incoming government – and with it the tender flower of Zambian democracy – face an awesome task of economic reconstruction and development. By comparison, the rebuilding of the war-shattered German and Japanese economies after 1945 was child's play because these two countries disposed of well-qualified and motivated – if numerically depleted – labour forces with capable managers and administrators anxious to repair the badly damaged transport, power and other infrastructures and to rebuild bombed-out factories, offices and dwellings.

By contrast, the Zambian economy is not only disastrously run-down and burdened by impossible debt obligations (the foreign debt is US$7,8 bn and amounts to $1 000 per head) it is also severely distorted structurally: it is overwhelming dependent on the declining copper mines; about 130 poorly managed and generally ill-designed parastatal corporations (including the mines) account for four-fifths of the country's modern economy; the agricultural potential is unusually good but grossly neglected, and increasing quantities of food have to be imported; the civil service and the parastatals are demoralized, vastly overstaffed, inefficient and

corrupt; education, training and health service have been reduced to a shambles (seven out of nine provinces have been afflicted by severe outbreaks of cholera); housing in urban areas, where about half the population lives, has been badly neglected; inflation is running at around 100 per cent a year; foreign exchange is in extremely limited supply; and the population is doubling about every 20 years.

In September 1991, the IMF and World Bank suspended their financial help because Kaunda was not prepared to reduce the high subsidy on maize-meal (costing about $100 million a year) shortly before the elections. Zambia's chances of obtaining foreign funding are virtually nil until help from the two Washington organizations is resumed. With Chiluba in power, they will be more favourably disposed, but ultimately outside assistance will hinge on the effectiveness of the domestic reform programme.

Effective economic reform, however, will entail considerable hardship for the Zambian people: public sector employment must be vigorously reduced; the slashing of subsidies on maize-meal will result in a higher cost of living, and the prices of basic foodstuffs must also rise in order to promote domestic production; users will increasingly have to pay for social services; and so forth. Chiluba has repeatedly warned people not to expect an easy ride, but it remains to be seen whether the new government will be sufficiently strong and courageous politically. One is, for instance, reminded that Chiluba had long been the leader of the powerful 300 000 - strong mineworkers' union, whose militancy played quite a role in appreciably raising the wage costs of the vital copper industry. Will he be prepared to antagonize this important constituency?

The Zambian election was a triumph for democracy in Africa and a resounding setback for one-man or one-party rule. However, considering the daunting economic hurdles facing the country, it is clear that Chiluba's victory at the polls is by no means a guarantee that Zambia will be democratic and prosperous ten years hence.

The political economy of informal economies

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After decades of sustained and more or less deliberate neglect the state is now recognized by the World Bank as a critical variable in any strategy aimed at fostering "sustainable growth". Moving away from its earlier, stubbornly economistic bent, its report *Sub-Saharan Africa, From crisis to sustainable growth*, explicitly admits the need for "not just less government but better government – government that concentrates its efforts less on direct interventions and more on enabling others to be productive".[1] "Underlying the litany of Africa's development problems", the report goes on to note, "is a crisis of governance, a failure of the exercise of political power to manage a nation's affairs".[2] Only through "a systematic effort to build a pluralistic institutional structure, a determination to respect the rule of law, and vigorous protection of the freedom of the press and human rights" can the foundation be laid for fostering private sector capacities.[3]

Laudable though these aims are, exactly how they are to be implemented remains unclear. While some would dispute the merits of the "minimalist state" advocated by the Bank, by invoking the conventional wisdom of the 1950s and 1960s, with its emphasis on state-centred, "big push" strategies,[4] others might properly stress the difficulties involved in getting the "big

push" under way where the state is itself the most privatized sector of society. Privatization of the state reaches its highest stage of development in the form of what Callaghy calls "crony capitalism", which translates into a drastic shrinkage of indigenous productive sectors and the massive channelling of entrepreneurial energies into the informal sectors. In such cases the logic of the Bank runs against the logic "crony capitalism and crony statism", leaving much of the continent "lost between state and market".[5]

Between state and market lies the shadowy space of the informal economy. Precisely because its boundaries are notoriously ill-defined, rational-choice theorists and proponents of the economy of affection have staked out conflicting claims to this contested terrain. While the former tend to view the informal economy as a rational response to declining market incentives, the latter insist that it is embedded in the normative dispositions of African societies. Since the economy of affection "has not been effectively pushed back by feudal or other economic forces",[6] it is both normal and predictable that it should occupy the vacant space left by the breakdown of the state. Uncaptured by the state, African peasants fall back upon the economy of affection as a solution of last resort. That each school of thought holds very different implications for policy makers is plain enough. Rational-choice theorists see the introduction of appropriate market incentives as the quickest way to reduce the

scope of the informal sectors and therefore as the first step towards the restructuring of African economies; devotees of the economy of affection, by contrast, would argue for strategies aimed at effectively tapping the potential for co-operation inherent in traditional modes of production.

What follows is an attempt to rethink some of the postulates underlying each school of thought. Rather than to offer an alternative explanatory model, the aim is to suggest new perspectives from which to analyse the nature and operation of informal economies, in the hope that this may yield fresh insights into their significance as a potential source of economic regeneration.

The convivialist and other fallacies

The growth of informal sectors is perhaps best understood, in Naomi Chazan's words, as "a complex response to either opportunities presented by state engagement in the market or the inadequacies and frailties of state economic structures".[7] Depending on the extent of state involvement, then, a distinction must be drawn at the outset between "activities which are supposedly controlled by the state but either evade this control or involve illegal use of state position" on the one hand, and "activities which ignore the state and operate beyond its reach".[8] The former transform the state into a market; the latter are the economic manifestation of withdrawal from both state and market. There is an obvious and fundamental

difference between survival through what Chazan refers to as "self-encapsulation", which in many instances is little more than a euphemism for the most precarious forms of existence, and self-enrichment through corruption, embezzlement, theft or land speculation, all of which normally take place on the fringes of the formal economy with the active or tacit co-operation of state officials.

Failure to distinguish between each type of phenomenon can only obscure the complex ways in which one may interact with the other – how corruption at the centre creates those very conditions of neglect, social dislocation or political violence that make "self-encapsulation" or secession from the state the only meaningful option, and how this in turn further restricts state capabilities. Before spelling out the argument in more detail, several fallacies ought to be dispelled about the nature and implications of informal sectors (it being understood that the phrase itself carries misleading connotations in that it suggests a sectoral discreteness that exists only in the mind of the analyst).

One such fallacy is what might be called the "convivialist" view of economic informality, the essence of which is aptly summed up in A Toure's work, *L'imagination au service de la conjoncture*.[9] The emphasis is on the capacity of individuals to "beat the system" through endless displays of imagination and resourcefulness. In Latin America this view has been popularized by Hernando de Soto's *The other path*,[10] in which the informal economy is conceptualized as a major escape hatch from the constraints of underdevelopment. Unrecorded growth through economic improvization and self-employment is a key characteristic of informal economies. Echoes of De Soto can be found in several analyses of the African situation, most notably in Hyden's writings on the merits of the economy of affection, and Chazan's fascinating inquest into the dynamics of *kalabule* in Ghana.[11] Closer scrutiny of the record suggests the need for a more balanced estimate, however. Many observers would probably share Reginald Green's depressing view of Uganda's *magendo* economy, which he describes as "a brutally and nakedly exploitative system which degrades, corrupts, deprives and routinely kills".[12]

Closely related to the foregoing is the notion that informal economies are a transitional phenomenon, destined to disappear at the speed of capitalist development, and on the terms dictated by the state. The evidence, however, is precisely the opposite. Not only are the informal sectors expanding in proportion to capitalist development; the processes of social reproduction at work in the informal sectors suggest that they have now reached a degree of institutionalization that makes their anticipated demise highly unlikely.

Finally, we must categorically reject the notion of an undifferentiated social universe, in which marginalization becomes a convenient label to describe an extraordinarily diverse spectrum of economic activities – ranging from services (shoeshine boys, scribes, porters) to manufacturing (anything from ivory toothpicks to palm-leaf roofing and sandals made out of cannibalized tyres) and food-processing – modes of social exchange and social categories. Some types of social exchange are deeply rooted in the social organization and "moral economy" of rural communities. Some are clientelistic in character; others are embedded in community or kinship ties; others still are largely improvised, such as the countless forms of black marketing activities associated with *magendo* in Uganda or the second economy in Zaire. Again the infinite variety of social categories that have sprung up in the nooks and crevices of the informal sectors defy generalization. Where Westerners often see an undifferentiated mass of marginalized elements, Africans can readily identify its many components – *talaka* and *mekunnu* in Ibadan, *gardawa* and *mallams* in Kano, *mafutamingi* and *bayaye* in Uganda, *haratines* and *batrounes* in Mauritania, *bakonde* and *bagererwa* in Rwanda. Only if we appreciate the complexity of the social landscape of the informal sectors can we begin to understand their inner dynamics, not only their capacity to reproduce themselves, but also to generate violent eruptions when the dysfunctions of capitalist development run counter to the basic norms of their moral economy, including the minimum subsistence formulas analysed by Scott.[13]

The cultural underpinnings of informal economies

To view the flowering of informal economies as evidence of the affective norms embedded in African tradition grossly oversimplifies the "mixed" character of the normative tissue surrounding informal arrangements. New social formations, strategies and forms of behaviour have come into existence in the wake of the dislocations engendered by capitalist economies, but these are incorporated into the cultural idiom of African societies, and thus codified in accordance with traditional norms. What is emerging is an "invented tradition", to borrow Terence Ranger's phrase,[14] that distorts the past and is at the same time validated through symbolic referents borrowed from the past, or, in some instances, by linguistic labels borrowed from the West but traditionalized through local usage.

There are, of course, almost endless variations on this theme; no single case can possibly capture the full range of behavioural norms and practices involved in the operation of informal economies. Sometimes the emergent division of labour replicates traditional modes of stratification, as in Senegal where caste-like differentiations, as between superior *geer* and inferior *neno* castes, have reconfigured themselves in the context of various metal-working activities: jewellery, aluminium smelting or car-repair shops. As one observer puts it, "it is through the play of caste-centered endogamy that such redeployment of traditional activities has occurred".[15] While many of these informal activities articulate the cultural imperatives of the wider social environment, not all such imperatives are equally supportive of the informal economy. Resistance to the growing dysfunctions and inequalities generated by the spread of urban or rural capitalism may suddenly activate the energies of traditional social formations in the name of a pre-capitalist "moral economy". The moral universe of African societies is not a one-way street; it can both legitimize and discredit informal economies, and through them the state system in which they operate.

As a point of entry into this discussion, consider for a moment the following terms currently in use in the informal sectors of Mauritania: *batroune*, *tieb-tyib*, *lehasse*, *gazra*. The first is a deformation of the French word *"patron"*, but bears only a distant relation to traditional patron roles. As one Mauritanian commentator noted

> ... the *batroune* is this dynamic entrepreneur who seeks to reap maximum

profits, and who is far more concerned about his business in Las Palmas or the health of his cattle than about the long line of beggars which each day is blocking access to his office. The traditionally wealthy were hardly distinguishable from the poor... but the *batroune* can be easily recognized, since their wealth consists of houses, building and enterprises whose value increases along with speculative business ventures, and they have their own way of speaking, of dressing and behaving towards others.[16]

Tieb-tyib, according to the same source,

is an entirely new word... [used] to describe a situation of quasi-theft or certain murky business dealings [*ces affaires peu claires et peu soignees*]. The phenomenon appeared for the first time in 1980, with the rise of structural unemployment caused by the inability of the economy to absorb those young school graduates in search of a job.

As for *lehasse*, the term is of Hassaniya origins and means literally "he who licks". It refers to "this army of civil servants who rip off the coffers of the state; here they are, raking off fabulous amounts while concealing their theft behind accounting procedures which they have learned to manipulate". *Gazra*, or "usurpation" in Hassaniya, refers to any illegal appropriation of state property, but normally refers to the appropriation of land owned by the state. "What is especially worrisome", we are told, "is that no one can avail himself of public services unless he has the 'force' or the 'means' to avail himself of such services".[17]

That these are practices for which they are no exact parallels in the traditional society is reasonably clear. To quote:

1960-1988: three decades that have demolished an entire system of social organization and life in common... everything bears traces of these transformations: traditional values are in decline (*en berne*), the people's life-styles evolve according to the rhythms of fashion and of the changes that have taken place in the West, and new ideas have been introduced that are all the more dangerous since they are at the antipode of public order.[18]

And yet, no matter how extensive and "out of sync" with the traditional order, these changes have been given something of a sanction of legitimacy through their symbolic insertion into the cultural idiom of Mauritanian society. Even though the *batroune* is clearly a very different political animal from his traditional analogues, his corrupt wheeling and dealing unfolds in a

cultural context in which it is likely to find a measure of social support. (Just to what extent, at what level and for how long this support is likely to exist is an empirical question.)

The same holds true of other societies where patron-client ties are highly institutionalized, such as northern Nigeria, Rwanda and Burundi. In the latter two the concept of power is inextricably bound up with gift-giving. The Kirundi term *kugaba* means both "to give" and "to claim power". The derivatives are equally instructive: *umugabire*, "he who has received", in short the client whose acceptance of a gift places him under the dependence of his gift-giving superior; *ubugabire*, the social exchange that enters into a clientele relationship: *umugabo*, the authority that is expected of a chief. It is easy to see why in such an environment gift-giving should be interpreted as the normal response of power-holders to the demands of their subordinates. What Westerners see as tangible proof of corrupt behaviour is generally perceived, "from the native's point of view", as the embodiment of social virtue.

Gift-giving incorporates a logic of social exchange that is by no means devoid of rationality, albeit a very different one from that normally presiding over rural development projects. A case in point is the fate that befell the World Bank's *paysannat* scheme in northern Rwanda, designed to open up new tracts of land for peasant cultivation. Though intended to give land to the landless, most of the lots ended up in the hands of either rich peasants, civil servants or secondary school teachers (*moniteurs*). Only because of their access to wealth could they provide the local authorities (*bourgmestres*) with the expected cash rewards. The recipients thus became the clients of the *bourgmestres*, and were designated as such (*bagererwa*) in local parlance. Meanwhile, the recipients called upon their own clients and relatives to cultivate their lots, and as the size of clienteles increased so did their prestige and social status. While thoroughly subverting the project's objectives, the informal economy of the *paysannat* scheme led to a process of clientele-building that served the interests of both patrons and clients. The local authorities were able to accumulate substantial "bribes", the recipients gained both land and clients, and from their enhanced social status some could

even anticipate additional political clout in their local communities. The main losers, of course, were the landless peasants. Exclusion from the clientelistic nets built around the *paysannats* left them with few options: either fall back on the kinship structures, "scavenge" the formal economy or migrate to Uganda or Tanzania.

Informal economies thus generate their own "perverse effects", rooted in the patterns of access and exclusion inherent in their operation. On the one hand, capitalist development provides a remarkably fertile soil for the efflorescence of clientelistic networks of one sort or another: it opens up new opportunities for the expansion of patron-client ties; it releases new resources and energies for the institutionalization of personalized friendships, informal reciprocities and ostentatious displays of wealth – all of which testify to the rapid inflation of traditional modes of social exchange. On the other hand, there are limits to how far clientelistic polities can handle the shocks of capitalist development without creating the seeds of their own undoing. To properly grasp the nature of these limitations a shift of perspective is in order – one that draws attention to the transformations taking place in the upper reaches of patron-client pyramids, and that, for lack of a better phrase, may conveniently be subsumed under the rubric of "clientelistic involution".

Clientelistic involution and malign neglect

"The informal economy is about linkages", writes Chazan. So, too, is clientelism, with patronage providing much of the lubricant for the smooth functioning of patron-client linkages. And just as the informal economy "flourishes on the fringes of the formal economy",[19] clientelism, likewise, straddles state and society. Each, in fact, is intimately related to the other. The growth of the informal sectors is both the symptom and the cause of the logic of political clientelism. Access to the formal apparatus of the state is a major precondition for allowing clients to enter into the informal economy; conversely, the wealth accumulated in the informal sectors may also become a key qualification for access to a formal government position, which in turn can be used as a source of patronage (a situation best exemplified

by the case of Zaire). As Lancine Sylla puts it, *"le clientelisme, c'est l'expression d'une certaine confusion structurelle entre societe et Etat, une confusion entre prive et public"*.[20]

That there are major variations in the degree of confusion regarding public and private spheres is equally plain. A familiar trajectory can be detected in the evolution of clientelistic polities, basically reducible to the shift from patronage to prebends as the critical mode of social exchange. Patronage is a way of eliciting popular support; prebendalism is overwhelmingly centred on personal gain, that is, on the accumulation of personal benefits from the appropriation of public office. The phenomenon has been excellently analysed by Richard Joseph in his discussion of prebendal politics in Nigeria, and many of his insights are equally applicable to Zaire or Uganda. What is involved here is an involution of clientelistic nets, leading to a shrinkage of the field of social exchange, along with the reproduction of increasingly complex forms of personalized reciprocities, rip-offs and corrupt forms of behaviour, many of them transcending the domestic arena. The concept of involution is borrowed from Clifford Geertz (who himself borrowed it from Alexander Goldenweiser), to denote the growing complexity of transactions, including "a special kind of virtuosity", behind the persistence of clientelistic patterns. Thus Geertz calls attention to the existence of

> ... those cultural patterns which, after having reached what would seem to be a definitive form, nonetheless fail either to stabilize or transform themselves into a new pattern but rather continue to develop by becoming internally more complicated... . The pattern precludes the use of another unit or units, but it is not inimical to play within the unit or units. The inevitable result is progressive complication, a variety within uniformity, virtuosity within monotony. This is involution... . Expansive creativeness having dried up at the source, a special kind of virtuosity takes its place... .[21]

In such circumstances, the state is the only market place for the investment of creative energies, and the only source of profit. Virtuosity in deal-making is substituted for "expansive creativeness", and rip-offs for trade-offs. The giver-receiver relationship operates in a rapidly shrinking political arena, giving rise to growing social inequalities.

Patronage gives way to prebends; cronies and parasites take the place of patrons and clients. Although official ideologies may emphasize the merits of community norms, or paternalist metaphors, this thinly disguised form of ideological domination only serves to legitimize the interests of the dominant patrons. What comes into view is "a polity of both parasitism and riot, predisposed to elaborate a mystique of popular resistance".[22]

Popular resistance from the poor and the downtrodden takes a variety of forms short of open social violence. These have been thoroughly catalogued by Chazan in her discussion of coping mechanisms in Ghana: (a) the "suffer-manage strategy"; (b) escape to greener pastures, often leading to massive migrations to neighbouring countries; (c) "beat-the-system strategies", involving the construction of an informal economy "which bred on the formal sector, diverted its resources and set out to manipulate the state in order to serve the needs of diverse groups of persons", in short what is normally referred to in Ghana as *kalabule*; (d) "the strategy of withdrawal and readjustment of production modes", which in Ghana "centered most notably on agriculture and its reorganization as an ongoing basis for economic development".[23] On the strength of her analysis of one rural community (the village of Hani in Brong Ahafo), Chazan reaches the conclusion that "the increased productivity and rise in standard and quality of life evident in Hani was symptomatic of manifold self-reliant moves taking place in other parts of the country as well".[24] Exactly on what basis the case of Hani can be said to be "symptomatic" of what was happening in other parts of Ghana remains a mystery, however.

While much of Chazan's analysis is convincing, the seamier side of the rural economy is entirely left out of the account. Indeed the impression one gets is that of a remarkably healthy agriculture, drawing renewed strength from the neglect of the state. Although Ghana may well be the exception that confirms the rule, to generalize from Chazan's case study of Hani would seem unwarranted. Moreover, one is impelled to wonder whether in this case the "convivialist" features of the urban-based *kabulale* economy have not been overemphasized at the expense of their more negative aspects. Bonnassieux's

detailed inquest into Abidjan's *maquis*,[25] to cite but one example, while confirming many of the points made by Chazan, conveys a singularly more precarious form of existence than might be inferred from her analysis of the Ghanaian situation.

Although its contours are anything but precise, the social landscape of economic informality reveals immense poverty, considerable social fragmentation, and forms of oppression directly traceable to the malign neglect that necessarily affects the rural sectors when clientelistic involution sets in. Our own investigation of the Bandundu region of Zaire, in 1978, brings to light remarkably diversified social aggregates: subsistence cultivators, cash crop farmers, plantation workers, fruit cutters, migrant labourers, hunters and scavengers, all of whom share, besides their extreme poverty, the characteristic of being in one way or another the victims of a predatory state.[26]

Though some of its characteristics can be intuitively grasped from our sketch of clientelistic involution, the concept of the predatory state is inherently vague. Just how predatory is the state? Who are the predators? What are the mechanisms of predation? Tentative answers to these questions can be gleaned from an empirical discussion of state society interactions in specific contexts. What follows, then, is an attempt to go beyond the clientelistic involution syndrome and pin down the patterns of social interactions that lie in the background of rural neglect, oppression and revolt.

The dynamics of state-society interactions

Typically, state and society are linked through clientelistic arrangements; who penetrates whom is not always clear, however. Situations may arise where the patron-client nets built around the state compete with, and in the end destroy, subsidiary societal networks; or else the opposite may be the case, with traditional social networks in effect capturing the state. As it seeks to co-opt, incorporate and control traditional nets, the latter may in fact end up controlling the state; as in matters of inheritance *"Le mort saisit le vif"*. When this happens, the blurring of boundaries between the old and the new

makes for considerable conceptual confusion. What some may see as evidence of new social configurations is sometimes better understood as a reconfiguration of pre-colonial social formations, whose renewed vitality stems from their partial insertion into the formal apparatus of the state.

As the following examples demonstrate, each pattern allows considerable room for variation – and indeed for explanation. No single set of factors accounts for the sharply divergent patterns of social dislocation and reconfiguration discernible in the recent histories of Nigeria, Niger and Mali.

In part, the explanation lies in the character and scale of capitalist development (the oil boom in Nigeria evidently holds very different implications from the peanut boom in Niger), in part in the nature of the networks affected by such development (the Koranic networks of Nigeria are qualitatively very different from the *dyula* networks of Mali), and in part in the developmental options of African rulers, or what some might describe as "governance".

Northern Nigeria: God and *gardawa* against the state

What became known in northern Nigeria as the Yan Tatsine riots caused widespread violence in at least five major cities from 1980 to 1985, resulting in thousands of deaths and the wholesale destruction of public and private property. As Lubeck argues, the riots show "how a pre-capitalist institution with a pre-capitalist function and supported by essentially pre-capitalist communities is modified by and, in turn, reacts to capitalist development".[27]

The pre-capitalist institution was the network of peripatetic Koranic students (*gardawa*) attached to a religious patron or *mallam*; the pre-capitalist function hinged around the ideological, political and economic reproduction of society; the pre-capitalist communities were the socio-political hierarchies of the northern emirates. Capitalist development during the oil boom dealt a devastating blow to the *gardawa* networks, as it ushered in, along with a variety of economic constraints (rampant inflation, declining food output, growing social inequalities), extensive corruption in high places and the rise of a *rentier* class largely indifferent to the needs of the poor. The *gardawa* were the first to experience severe economic hardships.

As alms-giving (*zakat*) ceased to be widely practised, and as many of their traditional employment opportunities vanished, many students lost their principal means of subsistence, as well as their means of social reproduction.

> So over the decade of the petroleum boom the *gardawa*, once a respected social category that had reproduced the ideology of the Islamic state and provided an opportunity for Muslims to gain religious merit by giving alms, became redefined by the newly wealthy classes as an embarrassing, dangerous and immoral set of people.[28]

Behind the riots lies something quite different from a class struggle – a millenarian insurrection activated by a vision of "the just society" rooted in the tradition of Mahdist social movements, a phenomenon that, as Lubeck notes, finds an analogy in Western Europe when "during a historically analogous period, displaced vagabonds became attracted to militant religious movements in order to regain the material and social security of a lost moral economy".[29]

As capitalist development threatens subsistence guarantees the point is eventually reached where the imperatives of social protection and economic survival can no longer be handled on the basis of established patron-client nets. These either tend to disintegrate and to give way to an alternative mode of social organization, or they undergo major alterations. In either case, however, the claims of the traditional social order are difficult to resist. In challenging the vehicles of official Islam the Koranic students drew their inspiration from a populist, militant Islam associated with an earlier (Mahdist) tradition; a new social configuration came into being (the Yan Tatsine sect) to challenge the old (the networks of official and reformist Islam), yet its ideological roots claimed an even more ancient pedigree than that of the social system they sought to displace.

Niger: The capture of the state

While northern Nigeria brings into focus a "client revolt" that looked to the past for its inspiration, the case of Niger under Hamani Diori (1960-1974) exemplifies a very different type of phenomenon: a merchant class whose insertion into the formal and informal economic networks of the country gave it a power of patronage out of all proportion to its traditional role. So much so that, at

the time of Diori's overthrow in 1974, much of the formal state apparatus had been "clientelized" by the wealthiest elements of this class.

Though traceable to a pre-colonial, Hausa-centred trading diaspora, in the post independence years the so-called *alhazai* (singular: *alhaji*) emerged as one of the most influential groups in Niger, owing in part to their heavy involvement in the commercialization of groundnuts (through their control of marketing co-operatives), and in part to their informal connections with their Hausa kinsmen in northern Nigeria.[30] While the apparatus of the state was overwhelmingly dominated by Djerma elements from the south-west, until the fall of the Hamani Diori government the Hausa merchants were able to rapidly expand their control of the informal sectors of the economy, and this with the active (though seldom acknowledged) co-operation of Djerma civil servants and politicians.[31] The point that needs to be stressed is that their control of the informal economy was intimately tied up with, and conditioned by, their access to the state.

This is where another aspect of the informal economy comes into focus – the so called *biki* institution, described by Polly Hill as a "non-usurous device, facilitating borrowing from trusted partners at moments of crisis or celebration".[32] The significance of the *biki* lies in another feature of Niger society: an "oblatory" economy involving reciprocal offerings of the kind associated with potlatch ceremonies, where status is heavily conditioned by ostentatious displays of wealth on specific occasions (births, circumcisions, marriages, and the like).[33] Widely practised among Djerma cabinet ministers and civil servants as a means of reinforcing their status and influence within and outside the political system, such offerings often led to considerable individual indebtedness. Recourse to the *alhazai* was the normal strategy to secure the loans necessary for servicing the informal networks built around ostentatious gift giving. *Biki* arrangements rapidly flourished between merchants and civil servants. As money lenders, however, they were seldom repaid in cash but through informal concessions ranging from free access to import licences to tax evasion or a blank cheque to smuggle commodities in and out of the country. Predictably, the resulting losses in tax

revenue were made up by additional demands on peasant producers who, in a sense, ended up subsidizing the opportunity costs of the informal economy.

The capture of the state by the _alhazai_ did not result in anything like an "uncaptured peasantry". In fact exactly the opposite happened, with the rural producers emerging as the most exploited sector in society. Every effort was made to squeeze maximum returns from peasant production. Raynaut's account of what he calls "the conflictual dynamic of social relationships" leaves little doubt as to the scale of rural exploitation.

> It was not uncommon to see heads of households chained and flogged for failing to meet their fiscal obligations, and village chiefs thrown in jail for not being able to obtain from their people the amount of taxes they were expected to pay.[34]

Unequal exchange is almost a euphemism to describe what was in fact a thoroughly exploitative form of state-sponsored clientelism.

Mali: The _dyula_ against the state

A very different state of affairs developed in Mali, where the traditional trade networks built around the _dyula_ merchants were virtually wiped out in the name of the regime's socialist options. It is not an exaggeration to say that the _dyula-diatigi_ nets, extensively spread throughout the country, served as the building blocks of Modibo Keita's _Union Soudanaise_ (US) in the years immediately preceding independence in 1960. By 1962, however, Mali's move towards the "radicalization" of the economy – involving, among other priorities, control of the commanding and lower heights of the economy and a withdrawal from the CFA franc zone – had driven most of the _dyula_ merchants out of business. By then the state had emerged as the central arena for a brand of "administrative clientelism"[35] through which huge material profits were siphoned off the formal economy and redistributed among civil servants and their obedient clients. As administrative corruption flourished on an unprecedented scale the Malian economy went into a tailspin. A class of _nouveaux riches_ thus emerged on the debris of the traditional merchant class that not only lacked the latter's powerful connections with the rural sectors, but failed utterly to restructure Mali's peasant societies along the lines of its socialist options.[36]

Agrarian socialism in Mali led to a catastrophic decline of the rural economy; the sheer oppressiveness of the control mechanisms built into the rural co-operatives caused a substantial number of peasant families to turn to subsistence farming; many simply left the country. At the heart of this egregious failure lies a profound misconception of rural society. Operating on the wholly unwarranted assumption that the introduction of collective cultivation would fit naturally into the framework of traditional practices, the Malian leaders ended up driving thousands of peasants on to a "forced draft" system of rural mobilization ominously reminiscent of the worst features of the colonial state. Escape from the state found expression in the revitalization of local self-help and mutual assistance groups (such as the _ton_ among the Bambara); subsequent attempts to introduce a new form of co-operation in the countryside through _ton-villageois_, or village collective aid groups, only met with partial success. In the absence of commercialization networks of the kind that the _dyula_ used to provide, much of the Malian economy remained captive of incompetent and corrupt bureaucrats.

Uganda and Zaire: Statelessness as a variable

Uganda and Zaire are perfect examples of clientelistic involution. Their state capabilities are almost nil. The impoverishment of their economies leaves no room for extensive state-centred patron-client ties; cronyism reigns supreme. The society restructures itself independently of the state; it generates its own fluid, inchoate patterns of stratification, replicating at the lower levels the exemplary cronyism of the centre.

In Uganda the _magendo_ economy has generated a process of capital accumulation over which the state has relatively little control, except as a means of entry into the dominant _mafutamingi_ stratum, characterized by Reginald Green as "the dominant capitalist subclass who control the _magendo_ system".[37] Below this top group, numbering anywhere from 50 to 100 members, Green identifies the _magendoists_, perhaps 2 500 strong, as "substantial _magendo_ businessmen, in some cases relatively independent but often related to a _mafutamingi's_ group"; finally, at the bottom of the heap are the _bayaye_, consisting of street traders, drivers,

money changers and "strong-arm men", representing "up to 200 000 households".[38] Sucked into the bowels of the _magendo_ economy the state virtually ceased to exist as an independent agent. Nor could it be otherwise given the rottenness of the state apparatus. Reginald Green's telling metaphor comes close to approximating the situation in Zaire:

> Uganda's public sector now resembles an old battered but apparently sturdy chair. It appears serviceable until one sits in it. Then it collapses into dust because white ants have eaten out its heart, leaving only a brittle shell.[39]

The Zairean state has yet to reach this degree of decomposition, yet what Janet MacGaffey calls "the secondary economy" has produced a pattern of corruption, embezzlement and fraud entirely reminiscent of the Uganda situation. What few spasmodic attempts are made by civil servants to control the secondary economy is to make sure that they and their friends get the lion's share of the loot – a process described by Janet MacGaffey as an attempt "to effect closure of class boundaries". As she puts it:

> ... the mobilization of these (personal) connections (among members of the administrative class) is a manifestation of the struggle between this class and those who aspire to enter it and represents an effort to effect closure of class boundaries.[40]

The appropriation of an ever larger share of the agricultural production by the political class is inseparable from the penetration of the rural sectors by political élites whose strategic positions in the political system and the army enable them to control both the production and marketing of agricultural commodities as well as the sale of consumer commodities to the rural masses. At the élite level, the trade-offs that keep the system going cover a broad spectrum of mutual back-scratching and reciprocal benefits. At the village level, however, the terms of exchange are not negotiable. They are enforced through the brutal logic of the Mobutuist state: noncompliance inevitably brings forth retribution. The only alternative for the peasants is to take to the bush. Or to find solace in various forms of "suffer-manage" strategies, which in most cases means considerable suffering and very few resources to manage. A vicious circle develops in which rural stagnation feeds upon coercion, and the likelihood

of coercion increases in proportion to the levels of exploitation tolerated by the state.

Côte d'Ivoire: The uneasy synthesis

At the other end of the spectrum are cases where the state retains enough control over the economy to orchestrate a wide range of clientelistic strategies; the aim is to convert patronage resources into bases of political support; the stability of the system depends not only on its distributive capacities but on the ability of the super-patron to establish his own scale of priorities. Côte d'Ivoire provides a classic example. The alliance of the old plantocracy and the new generations of civil servants has proved remarkably beneficial to both (though by no means to the economy) while at the same time providing the basis for what might be described as the epitome of the clientelist polity.[41]

As long as the planter-politicians provided the principal linkages between the state and the rural constituencies, a substantial portion of investment capital found its way into the rural sectors. Over the last decade, however, the agrarian bourgeoisie has been largely displaced by bureaucrats and party officials with few solid roots in the countryside. The new generation of bureaucrats derive none of their income from cocoa and coffee farming, but through state-centred activities of an increasingly prebendal character. These include "directorships and minority shares in foreign companies; holdings in trucking, shipping and taxi services; Abidjan real estate; and investments in export agriculture not subject to marketing boards regulations".[42] The resulting decline of investment in cocoa and coffee farming has had disastrous effects on the rural sectors, leaving the vast majority of peasant producers "as a heavily taxed and unorganized group".[43]

Predictably, the logic of the system has tended to produce an increasingly predatory economy.[44] The privatization of the public sectors (state enterprises and parastatal organizations) has led to a massive siphoning of state funds into private hands. "At the beginning of the 1980s", writes Fauré, "more than half the public external debt was attributable to ten or so parapublic concerns".[45] At the same time, the system contains within itself the seeds of severe social fragmentation. Some have already sprouted. For a variety of reasons –

some having to do with Houphouët's flagging energies, others with the catastrophic decline in the price of cocoa, and the decision of international lending agencies to negotiate loans directly with the representatives of ministries and parastatal agencies – the old clientelistic pyramid had given way to "a segmentary structure, each agent who controlled a network and each holder of a resource in the universe of patronage claiming a growing autonomy".[46] The crisis of patronal authority, as Fauré suggests, is also a crisis of the patrimonial economy. The constraints thus placed upon patron-client relations calls into question their long-term viability, and raises the more fundamental problem of how far a clientelist polity can continue to draw on its shrinking economic resources without engendering its own collapse.

The cumulative impact of indebtedness, declining commodity prices, and shrinking foreign exchange resources has radically transformed the social parameters of Ivoirean politics. Economic austerity seriously complicates the maintenance of extensive patron-client sets; prebendalism threatens to dry up the sources of patronage and substitute "crony statism" for clientelistic statism. Structural readjustment in such circumstances can only perpetuate the built-in propensities of the system towards corruption and cronyism.

Conclusion

Let us, by way of a conclusion, try to formulate a few tentative generalizations about this highly fluid and variegated social universe. The first and most obvious point to be made relates to the difficulties involved in conceptualizing the informal economy in terms of a "vacant space" occupied by culturally determined "affective" dispositions. Such a view leaves out two critical variables: the extraordinary diversity of social structures that underlie self-help or self-encapsulation strategies, ranging from community and kinship ties to household organization, occupational divisions along caste lines, age-grade work groups, patron-client ties, and so forth, all of which point to different modes of social exchange rather than a universal and spontaneous display of affection;[47] and the changes in the structure of social exchange attendant upon capitalist development, with the

entirely predictable consequence of individual or collective disaffection becoming the characteristic feature of the informal economy.

Second, the relationships between state and the informal sectors are not always reducible to a zero-sum game, where the latter expand while the former atrophies; in their more corrupt and illegal manifestations informal economies must be understood as an integral part of a state system that has a major stake in their perpetuation. The irony is that in so doing the state unwittingly sets the stage for its own undoing, thus leaving the path clear for the proliferation of self-encapsulated communities operating independently of, and often in opposition to, the residual state.

Third, and as a consequence of the foregoing, the absence of appropriate market incentives is only one of several factors that have contributed to the growth of informal sectors. The lack of market incentives is itself a reflection of a more fundamental crisis – the rapid decline of state capabilities in a context of self-generating economic scarcity. The result is a rapid shrinkage of patron-client nets, accompanied by a proliferation of transient and instrumental ties between civil servants and their intermediaries.[48] Although the use of the clientelistic model smacks of reductionism, as a heuristic device it is not without merit. As we have seen, out of the encounter of clientelistic nets with the spread of capitalist economies, both end up drastically transformed, the former into involuted, prebendal forms of exchange, the latter into informal sectors dominated by corruption and social inequalities. In short, the forces that drive individuals into informal channels are largely beyond their control, and the choices they make to ensure their own survival are rooted in a social universe that is neither reducible to the economy of affection nor limited to the calculus of profits and losses that normally enters into the accounting of rational-choice theorists.

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Policy impact of democracy in South Africa

*Professor Fanie Cloete, Department of Development Studies, Rand Afrikaans University, analyses the policy issues that will confront South Africans in the near future**

Introduction

This article will explore a few dimensions of the causal relationship between policy choices by political actors and institutional development in South Africa. Larry Diamond has argued the issue as follows:

...political leadership – both of individual government and party leaders, and of political leaders conflicting and conciliating as a group – can make a difference both to the success and failure of democratic development. But the extent of that difference depends not only on the qualities of leadership, but on the nature of the social, economic, cultural, and political conditions in which it operates. Moreover – and this is the most crucial linkage that is often missed – those conditions themselves are not just given: they are significantly the product of the policies, choices and decisions of previous generations of leaders.[1]

Unlike Diamond, who analysed different types of leadership and their implications for a comparative study, I will devote attention here to certain societal constraints in South Africa as well as to certain policy choices open to political actors that will substantially influence the (possible) development of

democracy there. This will therefore be an exercise in institutional policy analysis, undertaking a tentative, qualitative assessment of certain potential consequences of the pending regime change in South Africa.[2]

After the events of the preceding eighteen months in South Africa, it appears to be only a matter of time before a new inclusive democratic system of black majority rule is established there. This assumption, however, is a dangerous oversimplification of the present position in South Africa. Diverse (potential and real) demographic, political, cultural, social and economic constraints complicate the achievement of this objective. It is quite possible that the first post-apartheid government, which may initially be more representative and legitimate than its immediate predecessor, may quickly deteriorate into a system as authoritarian and repressive as the system it replaces. Experience in other parts of the world confirms this assessment. These conclusions have profound policy implications for any post-apartheid government in South Africa, irrespective of its composition.

My article will briefly identify the crucial forces that will probably determine the outcome and assess the impact that several different policies to deal with these forces will have on the nature of future political institutions and processes in South Africa. An analytical focus will be used, not a descriptive approach to the subject matter.

Policy choices in democratic transitions

The study of political transitions to democracy is fast becoming a growth industry. It was triggered by an excellent exploratory study in theory building by O'Donnell and Schmitter, followed by analyses by equally eminent scholars such as Diamond, Linz and Lipset, Higley and Burton, and a number of others.[3] The political domino effect of democratic transition that started in Southern Europe with the unexpected collapse of the authoritarian Portuguese regime in 1974 and quickly spread to South America, Central America, Eastern Europe and now Southern Africa, will probably be keeping students of democracy occupied for years to come.

Central to all these analyses is the important role attributed to political leaders and the deliberate policy choices they make to enter into vitally important agreements with one another during the transition process. The importance of this political phenomenon was also confirmed by my personal participation in (and subsequent assessment of) the initiation of recent political change in South Africa.[4]

Although political "leaders" (Diamond) or "élites" (Higley and Burton) must take mass preferences and interests into consideration, these issues:

...constitute parameters within which elites can safely and effectively act. These parameters normally leave elites a

range of choices, and the choices they make tend to be decisive for political outcomes.[5]

In the transition literature, institutional political change to democracy is normally initiated by such relatively autonomous political élites.[6] For a number of reasons (of which personal ambition, interest and survival frequently make up a substantial part), they normally decide to bury the hatchet (literally in the South African situation), and to enter into one or more negotiated settlements, pacts or agreements aimed at ending violent conflict and replacing it with a new political arrangement. These pacts do not always guarantee a democratic system. And attempts at settlement may break down, depending on the participants' commitment to a negotiated resolution of the existing dispute and their willingness to compromise. In the last resort, the determining factor is always to be found in the policy choices exercised by the negotiating partners, influenced by various intervening societal and psychological variables as perceived by the parties concerned.[7]

Recent political developments in South Africa

Colonial occupation of the southernmost tip of the African continent occurred as early as 1652, when the Dutch East India Company established a permanent provisioning depot on the site where Cape Town later developed.[8] Since that moment – three-and-a-half centuries ago – the descendants of these European settlers, supplemented by immigrants mainly of British, French, German and Portuguese descent, have dominated this region in all respects, despite the fact that they today constitute only 12 per cent of the inhabitants.

As in other similar situations, European intrusion established a colonial rule that sparked off the protracted conflict being waged to this day in South Africa, earning the country the dubious distinction of being, probably, the last remaining important example of colonialism in the world.

After these centuries of white minority rule, a political breakthrough in the direction of popular democracy in South Africa now seems imminent. On 2 February 1990, today's State President, F W de Klerk, announced sudden and far-reaching concessions to his black political enemies. Despite the fact that

he personally adheres to a very conservative ideology, and still is vehemently anti-communist, he abolished the thirty-year bans on the three principal illegal political resistance movements in the country: the dominant Marxist-Leninist oriented African National Congress (ANC), its close ally the (until recently Stalinist-oriented) South African Communist Party (SACP) and their political rival the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC), an African socialist political organization. He also lifted a five year national state of emergency, released scores of political prisoners, announced the intended abolition of many racially discriminatory policies constituting "apartheid", and declared himself willing to negotiate a new political system with equal rights for all citizens.[9]

The ANC/SACP alliance reciprocated by formally ending its "armed struggle" aimed at violently overthrowing De Klerk's white minority government through a revolution started among the disfranchised black masses and aimed at taking over power in the country. It declared itself willing to negotiate a new multiparty democratic system for South Africa on condition that all remaining political prisoners were freed, all political exiles were allowed to return and the remaining security laws restricting free political expression and action were abolished.[10]

De Klerk's policy changes on 2 February 1990 sent shock waves through the conservative white Afrikaner establishment that makes up his main political constituency. They led to large-scale defections from his pragmatic National Party (NP) to the ultra-right wing Conservative Party (CP) which tries to reinstate classical apartheid. Although recent opinion polls have still predicted a close victory for the NP over the CP if an election should be held now, the NP's margin of success is steadily diminishing. It has been stated by government spokesmen that no whites-only election will ever be held again. This alleviates political pressures on De Klerk from the right, although sporadic and small-scale vigilante actions by frustrated white farmers and isolated individual right-wing terrorists continue.

De Klerk has not made up his own mind as to which strategy he wishes to pursue. On one hand he wants to retain for himself and the NP as much political influence as possible in any post-

apartheid government. This would probably necessitate an alliance of some sort with the ANC/SACP as the major political force in a new South Africa.

On the other hand, being a staunch anti-communist and a devout and fundamentalist Calvinist Christian, De Klerk finds the idea of associating himself with the SACP unacceptable. This is also the predominant view of his party, which in decades of propaganda has equated the avowedly atheist SACP with the Antichrist and Satan. De Klerk's attempts to persuade the *de facto* leader of the ANC, Nelson Mandela, to break the alliance between the ANC and the SACP have so far failed. Mandela has proved fiercely loyal to his old friends and allies, as well as to his increasingly controversial wife, Winnie.

This situation has forced De Klerk to look towards another political actor for assistance, Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi, powerful leader of the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), political vehicle for the largest and most aggressive ethnic group in the country, the Zulus. The Zulus today total approximately 8,5 million people compared with the Xhosas (the ethnic group dominating the ANC to which Mandela and most of the senior members of the ANC belong), with approximately 6,9 million members and the white racial community of 5 million members (approximately 2,5 million Afrikaners and 2,5 million other members chiefly speaking English, German, Dutch, Portuguese, Greek, Italian, and French).

Buthelezi is a professed Anglican, free-market supporter and political moderate compared to the more radical ANC/SACP leaders. The Zulus, however, are politically split between the IFP and the ANC/SACP. This weakens Buthelezi's power base. Buthelezi is also for a number of reasons *persona non grata* with many influential ANC leaders, although he has been a friend of Mandela himself for a long time. These facts, together with a history of ethnic competition between Zulus and Xhosas for scarce resources, diminish the prospects of an alliance between Buthelezi and the ANC/SACP.

The beginnings of a trend of closer co-operation between De Klerk and Buthelezi (and concomitantly between the NP and the IFP) in opposition to the ANC/SACP can be perceived as a result of these forces. An important manifestation of this trend is the not so

subtle bias of the South African Police and Defence Force in favour of the IFP in the increasingly frequent incidents of urban violence in black townships resulting from the political power struggle between the IFP and ANC/SACP alliance. As a result of these developments, De Klerk's early political honeymoon with the ANC is something of the past.

A legal organization for only seventeen months, after being banned for thirty years, the ANC is finding it exceedingly difficult to organize itself as a streamlined political movement and exercise control over its supporters. It has not yet succeeded in transforming itself from a revolutionary resistance movement into a recognized party and part of the country's political establishment. It has become notorious for an administration in disarray, with telephones that are not answered, messages that are not delivered and appointments that are made and then just ignored. Its membership drive has attracted fewer members than expected.

The ANC also suffers from internal power struggles among a number of "Young Turks" in the organization who are all in the race to succeed an ageing and frail leadership. Thirty years underground has had an unhappy effect on the cohesion of the organization. At least five powerful interest groups currently compete for dominance in the ANC. They are the present Robben Island prison leadership cadre who were released in February 1990 and work closely with the second group, the Lusaka-based external wing of the organization; the SACP; the trades unions; and the United Democratic Front (UDF), founded as an internal front in the days when the ANC was still banned. The trades unions and the UDF have since acquired a life of their own, independent of the ANC, chiefly because the Robben Island leaders have so far failed to integrate UDF and trades union leaders fully into national and regional ANC executive structures.

There are a number of reasons why the ANC finds it difficult to bring these local civic organizations, trades unions and other interest groups, which had a field day inside the country while the ANC was still a banned organization operating from outside South Africa's borders, fully into its influence sphere. Plans are in an advanced stage to replace the UDF with another, more

legitimate non-partisan umbrella organization to co-ordinate all these bodies in order to establish a vibrant and independent civil society. This will certainly further undermine the ANC's attempts to consolidate political control, but will stimulate free democratic organization and a spirit of lively enterprise in civil society.[11]

The reason for the decision to replace the UDF with another non-partisan organization is to be found in the continuing political enmity between the ANC and the PAC, a result of the PAC's splitting away from the ANC in 1959 through its rejection of the Freedom Charter of 1955, still the ANC's political credo. The UDF also accepted the Freedom Charter as an operating framework when it was established on 20 August 1983. The PAC rejects the Freedom Charter principally because of its non-racial character. The PAC's strongly African socialist ideology accords a more important role to Africans than to whites in the struggle for a new South Africa.

During April 1991 the ANC and the PAC agreed to work seriously towards a settlement of their differences; but in practice the ideological gap looms large. The PAC still refuses to formally end its armed struggle and embrace a negotiated settlement with the NP before all remaining discriminatory legislation has been repealed, before the NP has made a commitment to return all land taken away from blacks, and before they have accepted the principle of an elected Constituent Assembly as negotiating forum.[12]

Negotiations between the NP and the ANC have recently stalled on the issue of certain remaining political prisoners, exiles not granted amnesty, the refusal of the NP to accept the principle of an elected constitutional assembly and an interim government to oversee the process of transformation to a new South Africa, and the refusal of the NP to ban the carrying of spears (as traditional weapons) by Zulus.

The inability of the ANC to persuade the NP to accede to its requests, and the delays in achieving constructive results from negotiations, have caused many youth members of the ANC to defect to the PAC, which has a more hard-line policy. This further undermines the authority and status of the ANC as the chief liberation movement in South Africa.

Real negotiations on the principal political issues have, therefore, not yet started. South Africa finds itself in what is sometimes called the preparatory phase of negotiations.

Policy implications of demographic constraints

The racial and ethnic composition of the South African population is an important fact in the political debate. The total population of approximately 39,5 million, including the residents of what have been known as the self-governing and "independent" homelands, is constituted as follows:

Table 1: Racial composition of the South African population (1990 projections)[13]

Black	30 289 000	(76,6%)
White	5 031 000	(12,7%)
Coloured	3 245 000	(8,2%)
Indian.	961 000	(2,5%)
Total	39 526 000	(100%)

Cross-cutting language and cultural cleavages further complicate the demographic situation in the country. Table 2 summarizes these language cleavages. There are no less than 24 different home languages, of which eight are spoken by ethnic groups with more than 1 million members each.

The relatively small-minority status of the white community (12,7 per cent of the total population), linked to its high level of development and strong economic position because of the policy of apartheid, have caused strong feelings of apprehension and fear among members of that community of the consequences for them of black majority rule. These emotions are strengthened by the unfavourable record, as white South Africans see it, of black governments' treatment of white settler communities in the former Belgian Congo, Kenya, Zambia, Zimbabwe and so forth. This has persuaded De Klerk to strongly emphasize the need for statutory guarantees of minority rights and the establishment of a federal-type government with a two-chamber legislature of which one chamber would be constituted on a community basis, with a weak national government, and with stronger regional and local governments. Although the

Table 2: Home languages in South Africa (1990 projections)[14]

Zulu	8 541 000	(21,6%)
Xhosa	6 891 000	(17,4%)
Afrikaans	6 188 000	(15,7%)
(1980 racial breakdown of Afrikaans:		
whites	551 000	(51,6%)
coloureds	2 297 000	(46,6%)
blacks	81 000	(1,6%)
Indians	10 000	(0,2%))
Tswana	3 601 000	(9,1%)
North Sotho	3 438 000	(8,7%)
English	3 432 000	(8,7%)
(1980 racial breakdown of English:		
whites	1 720 000	(62,2%)
Indians	676 000	(24,5%)
coloureds	337 000	(12,2%)
blacks	30 000	(1,1%))
South Sotho	2 652 000	(6,7%)
Shangaan/Tsonga	1 349 000	(3,4%)
Swazi	926 000	(2,3%)
Ndebele	802 000	(2,0%)
Venda	763 000	(1,9%)
Other home languages (Portuguese, German, Greek, Italian, Dutch, French,Chinese, Gujerati, Hindi, Tamil, Urdu, Telegu)	943 000	(2,5%)
Total	39 526 000	(100%)

ANC has already agreed to the principle of a bill of rights and minority guarantees, it has so far resisted pressures for a federal-type system from fear that it might lead to a perpetuation of apartheid and therefore white privilege.

The relatively small size of the white community and its history of total domination may, however, just entice the ANC to ignore these white fears. This may increase the possibility of a reactionary white backlash and complicate the negotiations process and the implementation of its eventual outcome. If a substantial number of whites refuse to accept a negotiated outcome, the development of a durable democratic system in South Africa will be endangered. The organizational, economic and military power bases of the white community make any political decision by the ANC to alienate substantial numbers of this community a risky one. Unfortunately there is an influential school of thought in the ANC – and especially among political élites in the SACP – that promotes just such a hard line.

Policy implications of socio-economic constraints

In contrast to the relative affluence of the white community in the country, blacks in South Africa suffer many of the social ills characteristic of Third World states: illiteracy, poverty, hunger, a lack of access to sufficient opportunities for housing, health services, employment, skilled labour, land and so on. This is the inheritance of colonial discrimination, not only present in many sectors of society but still dominant in some.

What is necessary here is a deliberate attempt to redistribute wealth, services and land in order to reverse the huge inequalities currently existing in society; and to effect a durable democratic system. It is uncertain, however, whether the white community is willing to face this challenge; whether the state of the economy will allow it; and whether there will be a sufficiently innovative entrepreneurial class and skilled work-force to generate surpluses for redistribution, or sufficient international investment and assistance to make possible such a vast project.

If inequalities between the different communities cannot be remedied, however, the chances of a stable democracy in South Africa are slim.

South Africa's present economic position does not offer encouragement for large-scale spending sprees on redistributive action:

- Its 1991 budget was R85 bn (approximately US$34 bn at the current exchange rate of US$1=R2,80) with a deficit before borrowing of R10,1 bn (3,4 per cent of GDP).[15]
- It grapples with a foreign debt of R50 bn.[16]
- 1990 saw a real economic growth rate of –0,9 per cent in the GDP of R132,4 bn and –3,1 per cent in the GDE of R119,5 bn. The expected growth rate in GDP for 1991 is slightly better at R132 bn (–0,27 per cent) while an improved 1992 projection is estimated at R134,4 bn (1,83 per cent). The expected changes in the GDE for these periods are a change of R119,3 bn (-0,15 per cent) for 1991 and R121 bn (1,43 per cent) for 1992.[17]
- The 1990 import figure of R33,9 bn represents a growth of –3,07 per cent over the previous year. The expected changes for 1991 and 1992

are R34,3 bn (1,32 per cent) and R35,1 bn (2,26 per cent) respectively. The corresponding export figures are R46,7 bn for 1990 (3,41 per cent), R47 bn (0,57 per cent) for 1991 and R48,5 bn (3,15 per cent) for 1992.[18]
- A positive foreign trade balance of R1,7 bn existed in February 1991.[19]
- South Africa's gold and foreign reserves (1991) are worth R6,9 bn.[20]
- The prime interest rate at the end of 1990 was 21 per cent, estimated to drop to 18 per cent at the end of 1991.[21]
- Inflation, measured by the annual rate of increase in the consumer price index, is expected to fall from 13,5 per cent during 1990 to 12,36 per cent at the end of 1991 but will probably rise again in 1992 to 12,86 per cent.[22]
- The rise in wage levels for 1990 was 15,8 per cent while the projected changes for 1991 and 1992 are still below the inflation rate – 11,2 per cent and 13,12 per cent respectively.[23]
- The officially estimated unemployment figures for 1988 (excluding that for whites which was minimal), were: blacks, 13 per cent of the economically active black population (823 000); Indians, 8 per cent (26 000); and coloureds, 8 per cent (92 000).[24] Employment figures grew 0,3 per cent in 1990 but are estimated to grow by 4,08 per cent in 1991 and grow again slightly by 0,10 per cent in 1992.[25] According to one estimate 450 000 new jobs are needed every year over the next 13 years in order to provide sufficient jobs for everybody. This would necessitate a massive annual growth rate of 5-6 per cent every year over this period – a goal clearly impossible to achieve.[26]
- There is a housing backlog of 2,2 million units at present, mainly for blacks in urban areas. In addition to this backlog, it is estimated that an additional 240 000 homes must be provided each year until the year 2000 in order to meet future demands resulting from expected population increases. This is a huge and probably impossible demand – triple the current rate of 70 000 to 80 000 new dwellings per year.[27]
- Educational inequalities. Government schools are still organized on a

racial basis. In 1989, 26 per cent of the available places in white schools were not filled (307 000 out of 1 180 000). Simultaneously there was a shortage of 60 000 places for children in black primary schools and 99 500 places in black secondary schools.[28]

- In 1988 the state's per capita expenditure on school education outside the homelands was: whites, R2 722; coloureds, R1 507; Indians, R2 014; and blacks, R595.[29]

- The pupil/teacher ratios in 1988 (excluding some homelands) were: white, 16 to 1; Indian, 20 to 1; coloured, 25 to 1; and black, 41 to 1.[30]

- Black school-leavers in 1987 totalled 718 000, of whom 63 per cent left primary school.[31]

- In 1988 the five Afrikaans-language universities had a black student enrolment of 3 per cent (1 800 out of 63 700 students) while the traditionally English language universities had an enrolment of 10 per cent black, 5 per cent coloured and 6 per cent Indian students, in all approximately 8 000 out of 40 000 students.[32]

- In 1989 per capita expenditures on pensions for the different races were as follows: whites, R218; Indians, R167; Coloureds, R167; and blacks R117 per month.[33]

- If literacy is defined as basic reading, writing and computing skills and an elementary knowledge of the physical and social environment (approximately a primary school education – 7 years' education), then 99 per cent of South Africa's white population of 5 million people of 13 years and over are literate. This must be compared with 85 per cent of the Indian community of 1 million, 70 per cent of the coloured community of 2,5 million people and only 48 per cent of the black community of approximately 18 million people living in the urban and immediately surrounding rural areas of the country.[34] This 48 per cent figure excludes the notorious rural homelands, where the situation is much worse.

A seriously complicating fact relevant to the future economic position of the country is the ANC's declared economic policy, which is strongly socialist and distribution-oriented to the detriment of economic growth. The nationalization of mines, banks and industries is still an official policy objective, subject to the ANC's being offered acceptable alternative proposals strong enough to persuade its leaders that sufficient finances for redistributive purposes can be generated in other ways. The ANC also plans an increase in the role of the public sector in South African society. Judging by experience in other societies, this increase in state intervention will prejudice lasting democracy in the country because it will still further weaken the economy.[35]

It has not been my intention to assess the socio-economic status of South Africa here but to draw certain conclusions from the situation as it is.

Policy implications of political constraints

Democracy in the Third World

The record of democracy in the Third World, especially in Africa, is not good.[36] The single-party state is the most favoured model of government, although the domino effect of socialism's collapse in other parts of the world has had a beneficial impact on Africa and the rest of the developing world. Nevertheless, authoritarian government in Africa is the norm. Where democratic governments do appear, they are unitary in nature (examples are Botswana and Namibia). The record of federal models of government in the Third World is even worse.

The key question is this: Can societal forces in developing countries cope with the intricacies of democracy – and especially federalism? Another way to frame the same question is to ask: Does an appropriate value system conducive to democracy – and especially federalism – exist? Or can it develop and prevail within a reasonable time in the society concerned? Such a value system as we are enquiring about must include a high degree of tolerance for specific interest groups, and for regions that want autonomy to solve problems in their own way, not the tendency to ram some uniform approach down peoples' throats willy-nilly.

This question is especially acute in developing societies. And it is doubtful whether ideal-type federal systems can in the medium- to long-run be transplanted successfully into such societies. The reason for this rather dramatic statement is the plain fact that federalism operates with a low 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 basis of the theory and principles of extreme non-centralization or decentralization (federalism or devolution), are implemented differently in different 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).[37]

The central problem is illustrated by the following comments from an Indian judge in 1977 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.[38]

Federalism, 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 (example: Canada). In younger countries, what is more, nation-building objectives are regarded as more important than the entrenchment of minority rights. In fact, minority rights are regarded as obstacles to effective nation building (example: Zimbabwe). In South Africa, nation building has already been accepted by all significant political interest groups as an urgent priority.

Conclusion: unless a number of obstacles can be effectively overcome, the prospects for successful federal regionalism are not very good in most Third World countries, suffering as they do from many of the constraints we have listed.

Federalism is not the only model of geographical autonomy that may be applicable to South Africa. One can think of several 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 – as we see in Spain. In both instances effective minority rights enforcement would provide sufficient protection for minorities who presently fear domination and suppression. The geographical decentralization of decision making and policy implementation within a unitary system to regions that want such autonomy is an important and potentially successful conflict-regulating mechanism. The introduction of this type of autonomy must be seriously considered where feasible.

Another important point to bear in mind in establishing a new constitutional order is that it always proceeds by trial and error until a relatively stable system has developed appropriate to local circumstances and the effective balancing of opposing interests. A federal system is by nature very rigid. Its very strength may simultaneously be a fatal weakness that may make it impossible to change if the need for change should arise. In extreme cases it may allow small minority groups to veto the wishes of the majority. 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 their minorities.

A last point: the economies of most Third World countries are in a desperate state, with hyperinflation and huge debts that cannot by any stretch of the imagination be repaid. This, linked to a weak world economy, fast deteriorating into a worldwide depression as a result *inter alia* of today's *de facto* Third World 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. Viewed against this background, unitary regionalism is probably more feasible and to be preferred in the Third World.[39] This argument will receive more attention later in its application to South Africa.

Authoritarian political cultures

Both the ruling NP and the resistance movements in South Africa have strong

authoritarian political cultures. The NP governed the country for years as a white minority party that refused to acknowledge the right of the majority of blacks to equal political rights. Even within the party, NP leaders have a strong and authoritarian stranglehold on policy making.

The party is supposed to consist of a federation of four provincial parties linked by an advisory Main Council. In practice, the Council rules by making binding policy decisions, which are later ratified by the annual provincial congresses. Although policy is supposed to be made by the provincial congresses of the NP, the leaders of the party, those who make up the Cabinet, are in fact relatively autonomous élites who decide upon policy themselves and have their proposals only legitimized/rubber-stamped at the provincial congresses. In the past, these congresses have been well stage-managed, with virtually no spontaneous participation and all discussion points prepared (in writing) well in advance. The last series of congresses saw a deviation from this pattern in the direction of a more open and democratic discussion of issues. Nevertheless, the party's leaders largely control the agenda and the contents of all contributions made during such congresses.

In this respect the ANC is not much different. As recently as eighteen months ago it was still a devoted Marxist-Leninist vanguard party. One can observe the traumatic effects of the collapse of socialism in other parts of the world on the intellectual élites within the ANC/SACP – and also those in the PAC – in their agonizing analyses of what went wrong, and why it need not happen in a socialist South Africa, in the pages of radical local journals such as *Transformation* and *Work in Progress*.

Despite the rhetoric of being based on popular participation and democratic action, the ANC consists of street and area committees that are frequently self-appointed, self-perpetuating and self-coopting bodies. The level of political sophistication of their members and supporters is minimal in certain instances, and the organization has a reputation for its intimidation of members and of the public at large in order to secure compliance with the directives of the frequently self-appointed leaders (the "comrades"). This frequently results in people being rounded up in the streets and on buses and trains

to attend mass gatherings such as meetings, funerals, protest actions and so on and so forth. This is routinely accompanied by the commandeering by the comrades of public and private vehicles for this purpose. It is clear that the ANC leadership does not have full control over its members and supporters at grass-roots level.

Another illustration of the authoritarian nature of decision making in the ANC is the fact that virtually all invitations to individual leaders in the organization to present a public address had to be referred at one time to the top policy-making body of the organization, the National Executive Committee – until the burden of work resulting from this practice became unbearable. There were incredible administrative delays in merely trying to secure an appointment of this nature with an ANC official. One of South Africa's most eminent writers, a member of the ANC who served a prison term for conspiring against the state, Breyten Breytenbach, recently expressed his extreme disappointment with what he termed the "Stalinist roots" underlying the ANC's organizational culture.[40]

Authoritarian cultures are also largely characteristic of other organizations such as the CP, the PAC and, especially, the IFP. The only political party that really conforms to democratic practices is the small and basically all-white Democratic Party.

These authoritarian traditions in the country's principal political movements make one sceptical of all the democratic rhetoric spouted by them so routinely. It places a question mark behind the democratic nature of post-apartheid government in South Africa

Forces facilitating democratic development

Despite all the obstacles on the road to democracy in South Africa summarized above, there are also forces facilitating the move towards more democratic government of the country. The rest of this article will be devoted to a discussion of the most important variables here.

Relatively strong economic infrastructure

Despite all the headaches summarized earlier, South Africa is one of the strongest Third World countries. It has well-developed agricultural, manufacturing,

distributing, mining and military sectors, with relatively effective and efficient economic and technological capabilities and with basic infrastructures that 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 also one of the strongest in the Third World. The comparative world development indicators compiled by the World Bank confirm this assessment.[41]

What this national strength means is that, given the adoption and implementation of appropriate government policies, South Africa will be in a better position than many other developing countries to achieve that minimal level of economic growth that is a prerequisite for an effective and stable redistribution of resources. This will make it easier to address the serious material inequalities inherent in the South African economy, which in turn will enhance prospects for a more durable democratic system in the longer term. It does not mean that the problems of economics and finance foreseen earlier will not materialize. They will, however, pale into relative insignificance when set beside similar problems in many other Third World countries.

Developing cultures of moderation and tolerance

Despite the ANC/SACP's ideological commitment to Marxism-Leninism and the NP's history of authoritarianism and centralized decision making in South Africa, it is apparently becoming clearer to both of these actors that they will have to tolerate each other and moderate their own policies within a multiparty democratic system in order to achieve a compromise in the negotiating process.

The collapse of socialism in the rest of the world has made it difficult for adherents of that philosophy in South Africa to explain why it should succeed there. It has even resulted (*inter alia*) in spokespersons for the ANC denying that the organization ever propagated socialist (or even authoritarian) policies. The international demise of socialism has thus already stimulated some reflection in the minds of those who will probably be members of the new policy élites in South Africa. It will facilitate the development of effective multiparty democracy by pressuring political actors into policy modes that acknowledge the primacy of participatory planning and

regular and free elections controlling political élites at the ballot box.

One of a number of possible illustrations of this development is to be found in the positions these élites are adopting on multiparty democracy, a bill of individual rights, minority safeguards and regionalism. Here, the current debate on the unitary or federal nature of the new political system for the country is of interest.

Federalism is not a concept new to South Africa. It was considered as an option for the new state in 1910, but lost out against the perceived merits of a unitary model for nation building among the four disparate colonies. The result was that four relatively autonomous provinces were established within the Union of South Africa.

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

The most detailed proposal yet for a federal model in South Africa came in 1987 from the KwaZulu-Natal Indaba. After a long wait, the NP has accepted the principles of this proposal. The African National Congress, however, still rejects federalism because it is seen to be an attempt to retain the privileged position of whites – thereby obstructing the aim of redistribution – and to be detrimental to the job of nation building (the same argument that sank it in 1910). It has, however, accepted the principle of regional administrations with autonomous powers.

Now as argued earlier,[42] experience so far with federalism in developing countries is not encouraging for its future in South Africa. This, however, does not exclude a federal-type regional model, adopted in order to achieve and reconcile goals such as economic growth, development, political self-determination, grass-roots democracy, ethnic conflict regulation and so on. 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.[43]

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 existing opposition to such steps by the leading

political resistance movements. Such a system may evolve over time into a more pronounced federal state, or even in the opposite direction, depending upon quite a number of different considerations. Constitutional mechanisms – such as an optimum delimitation of wards or constituencies and the use of multi-member constituencies linked to transferable-vote electoral systems – would facilitate this type of guaranteed representation on a non-racial basis.

This model will probably address the crucial issues of minority guarantees and decentralized government favoured by the NP as well as the overarching need of the ANC for a strong central government in order to effect nation building and a redistribution of resources. It is, in any event, doubtful whether there is any difference in practice between an effectively decentralized unitary system and a federal system in which the balance of powers is tilted towards the federal government.

The increasing moderation of the principal actors is further illustrated in the following section.

No feasible alternative to a negotiated settlement

Negotiations can produce one or more of only three possible outcomes:

— a continuation of the process of negotiations until either an agreement or a breakdown occurs;

— no agreement, leading to a breakdown in talks and renewed conflict;

— an agreement resolving some, or all, of the outstanding issues.[44]

The likelihood in the South African context of each of these outcomes will now be briefly summarized and assessed.[45]

Continue talking

One possible result is that the outstanding issues may prove so intractable that negotiations continue in the current on/off mode for an indefinite period without coming closer to a settlement or deteriorating again into conflict. Although this, theoretically, may happen, the relative ease with which the few preliminary meetings between the government and the ANC were set up, the apparent cordial atmosphere prevailing among participants, the absence so far of blatant antagonism, and the favourable outcome of those few meetings that resulted in consensus reports by joint technical committees on procedural

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matters, point strongly against such an inconclusive result.

Already some issues have apparently been agreed to by both sides to the talks: issues relating to the continuation of the armed struggle, the return of exiles, the release of the remaining political prisoners and the conditions for amnesty. As suggested earlier, it is conceivable that other issues such as land and economic reform may prove to be more intractable. Experience with such issues in other instances of negotiations is that they are normally, with the consent of all the negotiating partners, deliberately left out of the initial "political pacts", with the understanding that they will be addressed at a later stage, so as not to endanger the success of initial negotiations.[46] This, however, presupposes commitments from all concerned to the success of the talks. If a sufficient degree of commitment to success does not exist, the talks may, in fact, break down.

Another point that militates against such an inconclusive scenario is that of time constraints. The support bases of both the ANC and the NP are too fragile and volatile to maintain the _status quo_ indefinitely without increasing defections both to the left and the right. Neither De Klerk nor Mandela can really afford to allow this to happen through allowing stalling tactics or the development of a stalemate. Their own credibility, legitimacy, status and therefore political future in their organizations depend upon a speedy and successful conclusion to the negotiations. Otherwise the increasing opposition to both leaders (from both the right and the left) may weaken their bargaining positions and complicate the successful implementation of any eventual settlement.

In addition, De Klerk faces an election at the latest in 1995 – unless it is postponed by some earlier amendment to the constitution. If De Klerk and Mandela can conclude a "quick" settlement providing for measures that will effectively address the most pressing needs and fears of their supporters, they may again succeed in re-recruiting some of the defectors who have already left their parties. Such defectors may return because they decide that fears of their leaders selling them out may have been unjustified.

This time constraint leads to the conclusion that an indefinite period of negotiation without substantial progress

is unlikely, and that, with time, the talks will either break down or a series of mutually acceptable settlements or pacts will (probably) eventually be reached. The outcome may take some time to appear.

Breakdown: Endemic conflict, deadlock, or temporary setback

In July 1990 the ANC formally abandoned, in favour of a negotiated settlement, the "armed struggle" it waged for thirty years against the NP government in an attempt to attain full political rights and political power. The current president of the ANC, Oliver Tambo, has reiterated recently that the ANC will not return to the armed struggle.[47] Nevertheless, in some circles (of both participants and outside observers), a return to the armed struggle is still contemplated as a feasible alternative if negotiations should reach stalemate or do not work out as expected,. Both the ANC and the _Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging_ (AWB) continue training their forces for such an eventuality. The Conservative Party hints increasingly that it would consider violent resistance to attempts to obstruct whites from exercising racial self-determination.

Although the option of returning to violence in order to settle the country's political disputes cannot be totally discounted, a number of different considerations make it only a theoretical option raised purely for purposes of propaganda.

To begin with, the ANC's "armed struggle" was for all practical purposes a dead letter for at least two or three years before it was formally abandoned. The ANC faced a strong and relatively effective counter-revolutionary strategy by the South African government that minimized armed struggle successes. The changes brought about in the international political climate by the reforms in the Soviet Union caused a reduction in moral and material support by the Soviet government, the ANC's biggest sponsor. The international climate against the export of revolution to other countries is today at its strongest. And in the absence of outside sponsorship, the ANC does not command sufficient resources to take up the armed struggle again.

A programme to return ANC exiles to South Africa is in full swing, as we noted earlier. This will reverse the thirty year-long outflow of political exiles.

Many exiled ANC leaders are already back in the country, settling in after a long absence. Poor (and deteriorating) living conditions abroad for exiles, especially in Africa, have further caused a groundswell of urgency among these exiles to return as soon as possible. They will probably rebel against either being exiled again or not being able to return home after all.

Although the negotiations seem to proceed slowly, and are currently subject to many a political hiccup, the prospects of the ANC's achieving most of their objectives through a negotiated settlement are still very good. As we pointed out above, the most important intervening variable probably lies with the time constraints involved.

An ANC decision at this stage to reverse the peace process and return to exile and violent conflict does not seem likely. It would have a vastly superior military force against it – and have to operate, probably, as we have seen, with international (and even domestic) support insufficient to maintain even the _status quo ante_. Too much prestige, too many vested interests and too great an investment in costs of all kinds are already tied up in the negotiations for the ANC to now risk a breakdown.

The NP finds itself in an even more difficult position regarding a return to counter-revolutionary war with the ANC. It would face a massive international backlash, which might even be stronger than today's economic and political sanctions. Many international statesmen have put their personal reputations on the line to support the De Klerk regime in its reform efforts (in many instances in the face of huge resistance in their own constituencies). De Klerk just cannot afford to alienate these international supporters by reverting to a hard-line counter-revolutionary position.

The dismantling of apartheid has also proceeded to a point at which it is in fact irreversible. The NP thus faces crucial decisions in its own ranks concerning its future identity and goals. Its only chance of medium- to long-term political survival is to continue along the road of reform it has chosen to take. A return to the crossroads is impossible.

Financially, the South African government cannot in any case afford to go back to war; here lies the most important reason why an attempt was made in the first place to make peace with the ANC. The fragile condition of

the South African economy will only be prejudiced if peace efforts break down. And this the NP simply cannot afford.

Extremists both to the left and the right continue to threaten violent action. But this is because they perceive the impossibility of attaining their respective goals: these threats are not serious. Left-wing radicals find it increasingly difficult to mobilize international support for violence. Their domestic support seems to be limited to radical intellectual youths frustrated with the slow pace of reform. They can no longer mobilize mass popular support. If the negotiation process produces constructive results, the incidence of left-wing violence will diminish.

Right-wing resistance is of an individualistic and small-scale nature. It is not well-organized for a number of reasons, one of which is important – the lack of a feasible right-wing alternative to negotiated settlement. From all indications the security forces are easily containing and curbing sporadic outbursts of sabotage and terrorism. As a result, it is probable that right-wing supporters and sympathizers will in the end follow one of four possible courses of action:

— emigrate to another country if they do not wish to accept a new South Africa – and if they can afford to;
— fight until apprehended or killed by security action;
— accept the new situation under protest and either continue to support their leaders in opposition to the new society or return to the NP as the only party that can effectively try to protect white interests;
— fall into political apathy and concentrate on becoming as financially independent as possible – or on conducting themselves as inconspicuously as possible in order to continue with their accustomed life style as part of a subsociety of whites. This is what has happened in Zimbabwe.

All these arguments point to the conclusion that both the ANC and the NP are captive audiences of the negotiations process, and that we can be very clear on the absence of feasible alternatives to a negotiated settlement. The doomsday scenario of a protracted, endemic conflict situation in South Africa thus seems unrealistic. At the worst, we may experience short-term breakdowns in talks as a

result of a deliberate (or even unintentional) brinkmanship ploy pushed too far by one or other of the participants. This may cause temporary setbacks, but will probably not lead to lasting conflict – unless one of the existing variables in the political equation changes dramatically, causing one or more of the participants to reassess the costs and benefits of a negotiated settlement against what it might achieve through another attempt at violent overthrow of the present regime or a return to the *status quo ante*.

The additional variable of time constraints (already addressed), will seriously affect the outcome of negotiations and the potential breaking down of peace. The longer a settlement is delayed, the greater is the danger that an increasing number of De Klerk's and Mandela's already reluctant supporters may defect, from sheer frustration, to more rightwing or more left-wing organizations opposing a negotiated settlement.

Agreement
A negotiated settlement can be of a distributive or an integrative nature. A distributive agreement means that in the end there are both winners and losers, and that the extent of one's gain equals the extent of the other's losses. An integrative result means that all parties can claim gains from the negotiations. This is the "win-win" outcome (not a "win-lose" one). An integrative result is obviously preferable because it gives all parties a share of the political spoils as well as improved face-saving opportunities and therefore better chances of a durable settlement in the long run. One example of each kind of settlement will be briefly summarized.

The most likely potential outcomes of the current political negotiations concerning the future distribution of power in the country are the following: either a coalition government of national reconciliation; or an ANC dominated socialist-oriented alliance in power opposed by an NP dominated capitalist-oriented opposition alliance – a situation similar to that currently to be seen in Namibia.

A government of national unity/ reconciliation
Although the ANC already probably commands sufficient support to win outright an at-large election, it will be in its interest to consider bending over backwards to accommodate at least

the most prominent existing moderate political parties in the establishment of a government of national unity/reconciliation. Such a government would include the ANC, NP, DP and IFP.[48]

In support of this argument we adduce the following:

— This would be the optimum negotiated compromise resulting in a clearly integrative result in which every member of the governing alliance would be a winner. It would minimize resistance to the new government from the ranks of opposition parties and maximize their co-operation with government policies.
— The stated policies of the four organizations already to a large extent overlap, the principal differences being the preferences of the NP, DP and Inkatha for more free-market mechanisms and a lesser role for the state than the ANC would like to see. The NP, what is more, is much closer to the ANC than one might think on the issue of state intervention in society. The existence of agricultural control boards, the big role currently played by the state in the provision of black housing, the existence of subsidized housing for public officials, health services for the poor and so forth prove the point sufficiently.

For the rest, all parties agree on the necessity of having a multiparty, democratic political system with a bill of rights protected by a constitutional court, and on the importance of minority guarantees in order to protect cultural, linguistic and religious minorities from majority domination.

— The ANC (which is a predominantly Xhosa-controlled organization) cannot in its own interest allow the alienation of perhaps the majority of the largest and third largest ethnic groups in the country; nation building would be severely affected if this were to happen.
— It would stimulate and attract economic growth because it would restore investors' confidence in the country.
— It would further bind these other ethnic groups to the policies of the ANC by establishing co-responsibility for the decisions of a government in which the ANC would

probably in any case be the major/ senior partner and driving force.

— It would pacify and reassure whites that they still had a stake in government (especially if politically sensitive portfolios such as Police, Defence and Agriculture were left in white hands). This would guarantee the support of the security establishment, minimize the risk of a right-wing coup, and maximize stability in post-apartheid South Africa.

— It would be the only way in which minority parties such as the NP, DP and Inkatha could still retain some measure of influence in the government of the country.

— This option would probably enjoy the support of an overwhelming number of people in the country because it would have the support of the three largest ethnic groups and of substantial numbers of people from the smaller groups too.

No other option has the all-round potential of a government of national unity to consolidate the maximum political support possible in the country.

The Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA) option

Although the benefits of a government of national unity are clear, there is a question-mark behind its acceptance in certain circles, especially a query concerning the ANC's commitment to such a policy as a result of its perceived dominant position at present. If the ANC is not interested in such an option, it presents the other parties with no other choice than to consolidate support in an alliance or coalition opposing the ANC. This would probably result in the Namibian DTA-option: the ANC and a few other sympathetic political parties form a working relationship in order to govern, with an NP/IFP alliance in opposition.

This solution would inevitably render ethnic polarization more acute and be detrimental to the goal of nation building and legitimate government. It is a good example of a distributive type of ethnically-based outcome that would generate substantial potential for societal destabilization. For this reason a DTA option should probably only be considered as a long-stop position by the prospective members of the opposition alliance, while the ANC for its part would be well advised to consider a reconciliation alliance as first option.

Conclusions

Comparative studies have proved that policy choices by political élites directly affect the political and institutional outcomes of the process of government. This is especially relevant for the development of democratic cultures, structures and processes in South Africa.

Various potential demographic, cultural, economic and political constraints on the future development of democracy in the country have been identified. Fortunately, they are not independent variables but dependent variables. It will depend very much on the leaders of the different interest groups that will eventually participate in the political negotiations process concerning a new political system for South Africa as to whether these potential constraints prove true constraints or not.

It is much too early to tell whether the current trend towards populist democratization in South Africa will become established practice. Nevertheless, it is clear that, despite the existence of strongly authoritarian political cultures in virtually all the principal political parties in the country, there are indications of emerging value and attitudinal changes leading increasingly to a generally accepted political culture of moderation and greater tolerance of political criticism. This is underscored by all the signs of a strong and developing civil society relatively independent of the ANC. These are all encouraging indications of a development in democratization; they are creating the normative preconditions for durable political pluralism.

Linked to this development another, parallel consideration is making itself ever more surely at home within South African society. This is the important perception that there is no feasible alternative to a negotiated settlement. The costs of a full-scale renewal of war are still perceived to be higher than the costs of compromise. This perception fortunately has a moderating effect on the policy positions of the country's different political interest groups. As argued earlier, it is, fortunately, inconceivable for a number of reasons that this perception will soon change.

Stable democratic government in South Africa in the longer term needs radical policy changes within the parameters of a growing economy. The ANC is currently the front-runner to

form either a new post-apartheid government on its own, or be the senior and most influential partner in a future coalition government. The organization's publicly declared political and economic policy positions are unfortunately still totally inappropriate to achieve the objectives of a more just redistribution of resources against the necessary background of a growing economy. These policies are already much watered-down versions of the organization's original Marxist-Leninist doctrines, and further indications exist that the ANC will moderate them even further. Strong ideological resistance against such steps can, however, be expected from ideologues in the ANC/SACP alliance.

The strong economic position of South Africa relative to that of other Third World countries means that the country can probably absorb some of the economic shocks and setbacks that lie ahead. It will, however, not be able to maintain satisfactory economic prosperity under badly-conceived macro-economic policies.

Perhaps the most important lesson to be learnt from other transitions to democracy is that, once the transition has started, it is not a foregone conclusion that the final outcome will be a lasting democratic system. Many things can go awry. The choice of what will happen, however, lies squarely within the discretion of the political élites involved in steering the transition in one or another direction.

One can only hope that the democratic navigation system is effective enough to steer a post-apartheid South Africa clearly and safely between the Scylla of authoritarian post-apartheid society and the Charybdis of a typical run-down Third World state.

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Madagascar: Change and continuity

Eduardo Serpa, an independent researcher, has been analysing historical and present developments in Africa for many years. In this article he examines the role played by the great weight of the past in contemporary Madagascar.

"*Separated from Africa by those 392 km of the Mozambique Channel Madagascar turns her back on the African continent, to which she does not belong, either by her soil, by her history or by her present (international) relationships.*" [1]

Ratsiraka wins a battle, but seems set to lose the war

On 29 October 1991 the leader of the Active Forces (*Forces Vives*), Professor Albert Zafy, concluded an agreement with Prime Minister Guy Razanamary. This constituted the beginning of a state of transition in Madagascar, with a unity government and the immediate suspension or dissolution of those institutions created by the previous regime. [2]

The objective of the state of transition is to remove (*mettre a l'écart*) President Ratsiraka from the political stage pending the holding of elections. Ratsiraka, however, has announced that he will run for the presidency. Zafy expects that the armed forces, which have remained fairly neutral during the past five months of anarchy, to back the interim government. He also believes that these arrangements will meet with international approval. [3]

A national conference is to be held before the end of November and a referendum on a draft constitution before the end of the year. General elections – legislative, presidential and local, are expected some time after the middle of 1992, to bring the Third Republic into being. [4]

The transitional period began with no reports of violence. Opposition leaders were given key positions in the administration, in which Ratsiraka continues to hold only nominal power. Zafy heads a 31-member interim government. The opposition spokesman, Rev Richard Andrianamanjato has been made head of a 130-strong Economic and Social Recovery Council, dominated by the *Forces Vives*. [5]

Ratsiraka's loss of effective power came as something of a surprise, after a month in which the political tide in Madagascar suddenly turned against him. Indeed, reports received from Madagascar early in October 1991 seemed to indicate that, after almost four months of continuous anti-government demonstrations and strikes, the opposition had abandoned its hopes of dislodging President Ratsiraka from his palace-fortress. This came as a major surprise to the Western media, which, after unrest had brought a halt to Madagascar's economic and administrative life, was announcing that Ratsiraka's fall was imminent. [6]

It was possibly the intransigence of the opposition *Forces Vives* that deprived them of immediate success. The West, France in particular, had been seeking a compromise solution. Ratsiraka would remain in office while an interim government held the reins of power. By rejecting such a solution, the opposition precipitated a protracted conflict. This favoured Ratsiraka in two ways: the West was alienated by the opposition's radicalism and the population at large became

worn out with the continual unrest.

It does not seem possible at this stage to determine how radically Madagascar's socio-political course will be affected by the accord of 29 October.

If profound changes fail to occur, a clear trend in Malagasy history will be reconfirmed: dramatic events frequently take place, but not in such a way as to threaten the essential continuity of the country's history.

The recent turbulence in Malagasy life, beginning in June 1991, can therefore be understood only in terms of the country's geography, ethnography and history.

The geographical environment

Separated from Africa before the end of the Paleozoic era, an ancient pre-Cambrian fragment, Madagascar is almost a small continent: a 590 000 km² land mass, extending over 1 580 km from north to south, and over 580 km from east to west. The aspect of the landscape contrasts with that of the neighbouring coast of East Africa. This huge island is far more mountainous, although its highest point, the Tsaranana, does not rise above 2 886 metres. The average altitude lies around 1 300 metres and flat areas are scarcely to be found. The general picture is one of a "jumble of small ravines joining the main valleys". Although Madagascar is situated near the 15° N line of latitude, a number of different types of tropical climate, in some cases affected by temperate influences, can be found there. As are many

MADAGASCAR

(map of Madagascar with labelled provinces and towns: Antseranana, Ambilobe, Vohimarina, ANTSERANANA, Sambava, Analalava, Bealanana, Andapa, Antalaha, Maroantsetra, Mahajanga, Mandritsara, Soalala, MAHAJANGA, Maevatanana, Besalampy, A'tondrazaka, Maintirano, TOAMASINA, Toamasina, Ankazobe, Anjozorobe, Tsiroanomandidy, ANTANANARIVO, Moramanga, Vatomandry, ANTANANARIVO, Miandrivazo, Antsirabe, Mahanoro, Morondava, Fandriana, Ambositra, Nosy-Varika, Mananjary, FIANARANTSOA, Béroroha, Fianarantsoa, TOLIARA, Manakara, Ihosy, Farafangana, Vangaindrano, Betroka, Toliara, Soalara, Ampanihy, Androka, Tôlañaro, Ambovombe, Ankororoka)

0   50   100   150 km

represent a major potential resource, their numbers roughly equivalent to population numbers, but they are kept mainly for prestige reasons and to be ritually slaughtered at funerals and on other important occasions. Fishing and forestry are practised still at simple working level. Chromite, graphite and mica are the main mining resources.[9]

The extra-African character of Madagascar is not strange to the origins and composition of the island's population. There is a light brown, Asian type that resembles the Indonesian. This is to be found, in varying degrees of purity, mainly among the Andriana and the Hova castes of the Merina people. It makes up roughly one half of that ethnic group. There is a black African type, with both short (*Antesaka*) and tall (*Bara*) elements. There is also a mixed group that seems to constitute the majority of the total population. The diversity of culture and social structure that characterizes Madagascar appears then as the natural consequence of a mixture of different heritages, in which Indonesian elements blend with others of Persian, Arab, African, Indian and Dravidian origin. The situation is, however, one of diversity within unity, as the existence of a common language serves to link and bind the various groups. This language, spoken by a population in which the African element constitutes the majority, belongs to the Indonesian branch of the Malayan-Polynesian group of languages.[9]

The origin of the Malagasy language provides some insight into the inter-group dynamics on the island, the Eastern elements prevailing over the African elements and representing the essential continuity that has survived all the vicissitudes of Malagasy history, including the colonial era and the revolutionary period after 1972.

A rural base and rapid growth constitute the two main traits of Malagasy demography. In 1975 the rural population constituted an overwhelming majority, 86 per cent of its total living in centres with less than 4 000 inhabitants. In that year, only 11 per cent of the Malagasy lived in cities of more than 40 000 people. A population that did not exceed 3 380 000 in 1921 reached 7 600 000 in 1975 and 9 985 000 in 1985. Estimates indicate that it had risen to 11 560 000 by the middle of 1989. In 1974 the Merina were still the largest ethnic group, with almost two million

tropical countries, Madagascar is struck every year by tropical cyclones that do damage to the economy. Agricultural production is often adversely affected in the south, along the western coast, even in the Highlands, by terrible droughts.[7]

Rice, maize and manioc are the main subsistence crops; coffee, vanilla, sugarcane, cotton, tobacco, sunflower and sisal are the main cash crops. Bovines

members. A large number of the many foreigners living in Madagascar left the country after the fall of Tsiranana's regime. In 1975 foreign residents numbered 55 000, with the French (37 000), Indians and Pakistanis (6 000) and Chinese (4 000) constituting the largest communities of foreign origin. By 1986,[10] the number of French nationals had dwindled to less than 15 000.

Going back in history

As we have noted, a strong element of continuity has played a vital role in the history of Madagascar. And this makes an understanding of contemporary developments almost incomprehensible unless they are related to the very beginning of the island's history.

Malagasy tradition says that the first settlers, known as the Vazimba, were a dark-skinned people of small stature who settled in the west and north-west of the island at a date that cannot be precisely determined, perhaps in the ninth century of the Christian era. These people expanded to the central plateau areas before they were ousted, some time in the tenth or eleventh century, by newcomers, the Merina and the Betsileo, coming from Malaysia, Indonesia or even the Polynesian islands. The latter retained their maritime traditions and raided the Comoros, from where they brought slaves, origin of the Makoa.[11]

Recent history

The expansion of the Merina and the arrival of the Europeans may be considered as the two events marking the beginning of the recent history of Madagascar. By the end of the eighteenth century the Merina lived in many small kingdoms before being unified by King Andrianampoinimerina. Political change was followed by true cultural revolution, sparked off by missionaries. The first envoys from the London Missionary Society arrived in 1818; and they were followed in the 1860s by British, American and Norwegian missionaries sent by other societies. Their religious activity was complemented by educational and medical programmes. By 1895 there were some 300 000 Christians in the island, either Reformed or Lutheran. Their schools were attended by more than 100 000 pupils. Catholic missionaries, arriving in 1861, were also successful. In 1895
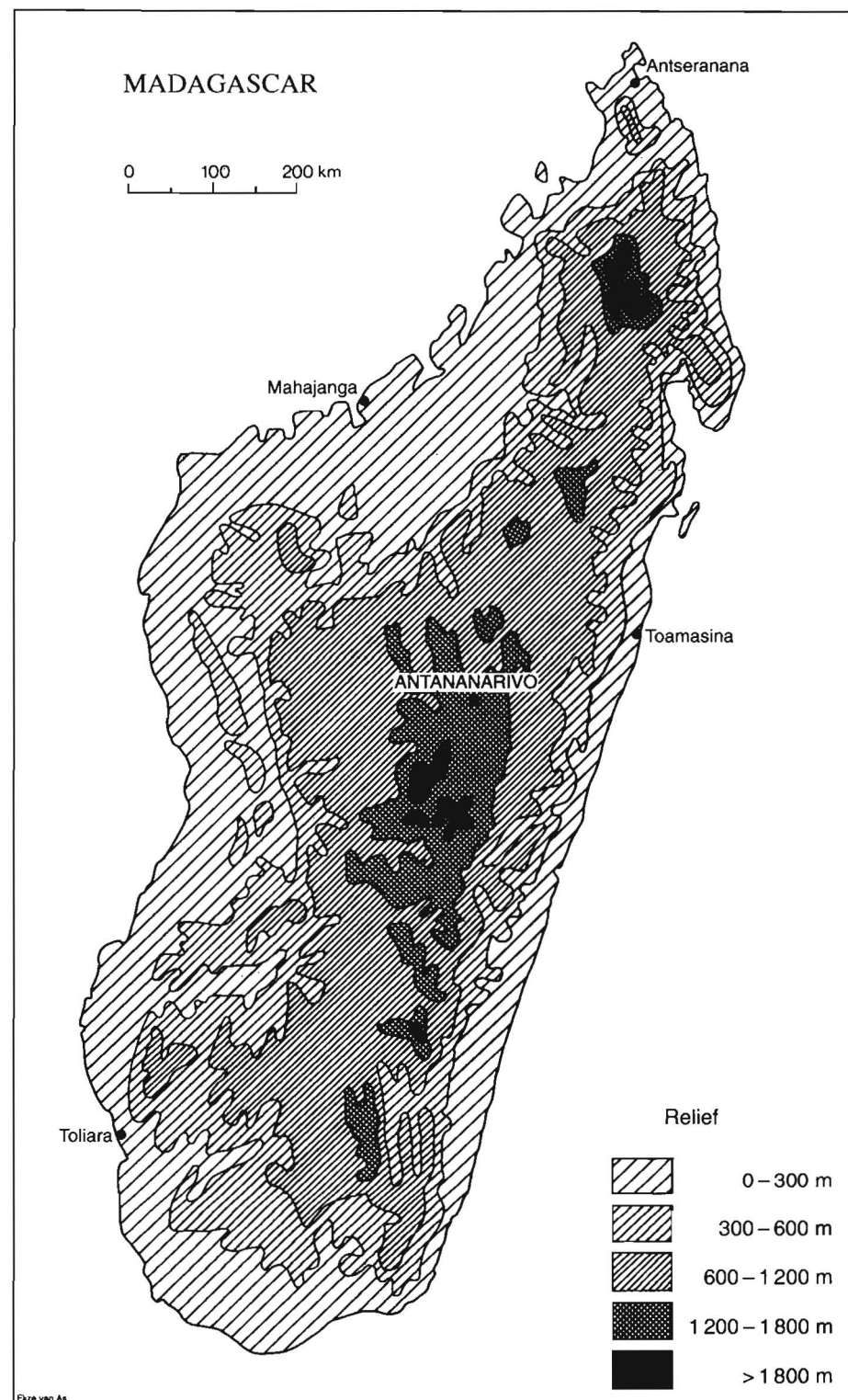
there were some 70 000 Catholics on the island and 50 000 children studied at Catholic schools.[12]

Trade followed the cross in the process of European penetration of Madagascar. Between 1862 and 1869, France tried to assure herself of a privileged position on the island by concluding

commercial agreements. Paris recognized the Merina sovereigns as Kings of Madagascar, a measure that confirmed their rights over the whole island. In 1883, the rejection of a French ultimatum was followed by France's occupation of a number of points on the coast. A poorly worded treaty, concluded in

MADAGASCAR

0   100   200 km

Antseranana

Mahajanga

Toamasina

ANTANANARIVO

Toliara

Relief

▨	0 – 300 m
▨	300 – 600 m
▨	600 – 1 200 m
▨	1 200 – 1 800 m
■	>1 800 m

1885, convinced the French that they had been granted protectorate rights over the entire Merina kingdom.[13]

It should be added that, on the eve of the French conquest, Madagascar had attained a level of development without parallel in sub-Saharan Africa, with the single exception of Ethiopia. A relatively sophisticated form of government had been established. A prime minister, absolute in practice, was assisted by ministers and secretaries of state in charge of different specialized departments. Quasi-diplomatic relations had been established with the United States and a number of European powers. Schools, churches and medical services were run by Malagasy teachers, pastors and doctors, trained in institutions that included Malagasy among their teaching staff. "In all these aspects, Madagascar in 1895 was considerably more advanced than most black African countries when they achieved their independence from colonial rule sixty or seventy years later."[14]

Clashes between the Malagasy government and the Resident-General of France, La Myre de Villiers, were followed by the French expedition of 1895, which occupied Tananarive. The Merina monarchy was abolished and, in August 1896, Madagascar became a French colony.[15]

Lengthy and difficult campaigns took place before the island was entirely pacified. The revolt of the Fahavalo in 1896 and the insurrection of 1904-1905 marked the end of violent resistance to French rule. The conquest of Madagascar by the French represented, paradoxically, a further step in the consolidation of Merina power. The French administration had an authoritarian character. From the governor-general down to the native head of canton, the entire administration was officially appointed, unaccountable to the population. Only in the major cities did elected municipalities exist, chosen by an electorate in which the Malagasy presence was limited to a few notables. Regional differences were reduced by a body of legislation that ignored local customs. This unification not only boosted the French presence. It helped the Merina too. The latter, as the most evolved and largest ethnic segment, supplied the majority of those subaltern officials necessary to the French administration.[16]

The Franco-Merina relationship seems to have worked in a manner beneficial to both parties. The role played by the French in the consolidation of Merina influence outside the central plateau was balanced by the fact that the very institutions and culture developed under the Merina monarchy helped to prevent colonial rule's being seriously challenged before the rebellion of 1947. Hatzfeld is of the opinion that the respect and almost religious submission evinced by the Malagasy for royalty were transferred to the French administration – and that such feelings were boosted by the material progress brought by France and by expectations concerning what was still to come. If some threat to colonial rule did exist, such danger was not posed by the survival of Merina tradition. It could only come from those few men who had absorbed the concepts of equality and liberty brought by the French themselves. In any case, little came from those ideas, since the authorities, in blatant contrast with the principles they proclaimed, dealt sternly with any challenge to their authoritarian administration. Such a policy stimulated the irreducible dissatisfaction felt by the thinking indigenous minority.[17]

This educated élite, principally Merina, were in the main responsible for the wave of agitation that broke upon the island in the 1930s, with labour unrest its main expression. A marriage of convenience between part of the Merina élite and left-wing French forces made it possible for the former to play the leading role in a revolutionary movement in which a proletariat, principally *côtier*, supplied the troops.[18] This somewhat strange alliance was not an isolated case in the history of Madagascar: some three decades later a similar conjugation of forces served to undermine the moderate regime of President Tsiranana, opening the way to a revolutionary regime in which the Merina élite remained in control of most of the top positions.

World War II saw the occupation of Madagascar by British forces; and the ensuing settlement of accounts between Vichyists and Gaullists profoundly undermined French prestige among the Malagasy. The immediate post-war years were marked by the implantation in the island of a modern political party system. The two principal forces were the MDRM (*Mouvement démocratique de la rénovation malgache*/Democratic Movement for Malagasy Renewal) which wanted independence but not necessarily in an anti-French manner; and the PADESM (*Parti des deshérites de Madagascar*/Party of the Disinherited of Madagascar), backed by the colonial administration, which wanted to balance the Merina wish for independence.[19]

The development of post-war political life was seriously disrupted by the insurrection of 1947, which revived, in its causes, the themes that had fed the Fahavalo movement half a century earlier: xenophobia and paganism. The superstitious violence that dominated this revolutionary movement was of great avail to France, as it alienated even many supporters of independence, particularly a large element among the Merina and other evolved people, who were in a position to supply the rebellion with those cadres it lacked and never got. By the end of 1948 the rebellion had been suppressed even in the most remote areas of the island.[20]

The bloody events of 1947-48, which claimed a very great number of victims, moved the authorities to implement urgent reforms in a number of different areas.[21] After a period of restrictions upon it, political activity restarted, but with limited vitality except in times of election. The French government, rather than local political forces, now proved to be the main motor of political activity by creating the French Union, passing the *Loi-Cadre*. The *Loi-Cadre* of 23 June 1956, also known as the Defferre Law, granted the legislative power in each French colonial territory to an assembly elected by universal franchise. It also made provision for the creation of an executive of local ministers, to assist the French governor, with whom ultimate power lay. Its implementation in Madagascar paved the way for the establishment of an increasingly independent republic, "accepted rather than wanted" by the Malagasy. It is interesting to note that the Merina constitued the section of the population that wished most strongly for independence, expecting that the end of French rule would favour the consolidation of their own power in Madagascar. It seems that they overlooked the fact that access to independence and democracy would bring in government by the *côtier* majority. The coming of the Fifth Republic, with the vision of almost immediate political independence, revolutionized political life in the island. A situation characterized by a myriad of

parties was soon replaced by a sound pluralism from which the PSD (*Parti social démocrate*/Social Democratic Party) emerged as the dominant force.[22]

The first twelve years of independence

In July 1960 Madagascar became an independent nation and started upon a new period of its history without a radical break with its colonial past. The PSD, which had been in control of the government council since May 1957, won the elections of September 1960, by taking 81 of the 107 seats in dispute. Philibert Tsiranana, an anti-communist high-school teacher, trained at the University of Montpellier, became president of the new republic. A constitution favouring a strong presidency made it possible for him to build considerable personal power. His domestic policies were based upon a concept of national unity that implied both the elimination of Merina prejudices with regard to the *côtiers* and a moderate and pragmatic form of socialism.[23]

Tsiranana's foreign policy was based upon reinforced ties with France, other European countries and the United States, from whom he expected and received military support and both financial and technical assistance. He was not afraid that a strong French presence might generate a neo-colonial situation, in spite of opposition from his own party on this point. In January 1964 there were still 1 736 French citizens in government employment, in spite of progressive reductions brought about as a result of resolutions passed in July 1961 by the Congress of the PSD. Tsiranana snubbed relations with the Eastern bloc, fearing that they might be used to further communist penetration. He was also very afraid of Asian interference.[24]

A neo-colonial situation was clearly detectable in the Malagasy economy under Tsiranana's regime. In 1968, ninety per cent of the existing 528 enterprises belonged to foreigners. This situation did not, however, fail to bring with it certain benefits to the country, since, in the early 1960s, some sixty per cent of state expenditure was covered by taxes levied upon these selfsame foreign companies.[25]

In the late 1960s the Malagasy economy entered upon a difficult phase brought about by such developments as

the closure of the Suez Canal in 1967, France's economic difficulties in 1968-69 and the country's excessively fast demographic growth. Tsiranana looked for pragmatic solutions to halt his land's economic decline, overlooking the fact that such measures could be exploited by political adversaries. The expansion of the country's economic ties with South Africa and the cession of monopolies to a French company, the *Grands Moulins de Dakar*, were but two of his decisions that brewed up a political storm.[26]

In the late 1960s Tsiranana had to face growing dissatisfaction, coming from both outside and inside his own party. The principal opposition force was that of the AKFM (*Parti du congres de l'indépendance de Madagascar*/Congress Party for the Independence of Madagascar), a left-wing party headed by the mayor of Antananarivo, the Protestant minister Richard Andrianamanjato, a Merina who was neither Marxist nor frightened of Marxism. The rivalry between these two men reinforced the clash between the Merina and the *côtiers*. The PSD rejected offers of a merger emanating from the AKFM, as Tsiranana preferred to retain a multiparty democracy with an impartial judiciary and freedom of the press.[27] For the second time in the history of Madagascar, an élitist ethnic group was playing the role of leader of left-wing forces.

Dissatisfaction inside the PSD could be related to the combined effects of dismay caused by Tsiranana's foreign policies (which could not be calmed by signing a few agreements with Eastern bloc countries), and concerns related to the president's declining health. This last was particularly worrying since the Party's tenuous ideology made the existence of a charismatic leader necessary.[28]

These difficulties were insufficient to undermine Tsiranana's popular support, as shown by the March 1967 elections, which gave him 2 153 236 out of 2 208 275 votes cast in a 97 per cent poll. In practice the AKFM never posed a real threat to Tsiranana's power, proved by the elections of 1970, which confirmed that Andrianamantsoa's support was limited to the Merina bourgeoisie of the capital.[29]

Violence started after the Monima (*Mouvement national pour l'indépendance de Madagascar*/National Movement for the Independence of Madagascar),

headed by Monja Jaona, was able to stir up the impoverished peasantry of the south-west of the island. Swift repression brought many deaths (estimated variously at between 46 and 2 000) and arrests. Monima, however, was able to change from a regional group to a resistance movement, backed by students and urban radicals. In January 1972 Tsiranana was re-elected as the sole candidate in an 86 per cent poll but this did not prevent the continuation of unrest. In May thirty-four people were killed when the security forces clashed with students, labourers and urban unemployed. After that, the President relinquished his powers to General Gabriel Ramanantsoa, an apolitical Merina.[30] This decision opened a new chapter in the history of Madagascar, a chronicle of left-wing revolution and failure.

Time of transition (1972-75)

Ramanantsoa's rise to power marked the beginning of a three years' period of transition that put an end to the "neocolonial" phase in the post-independence history of Madagascar. The new leader, who lacked any clearly defined ideological orientation, kept Tsiranana as a figurehead president, while looking about him for popular backing for himself. After creating a division between students on the one side, and workers and peasants on the other, Ramanantsoa became a popular figure by granting wage increases and annulling poll and cattle taxes. Such policies explain why, in October 1972, eighty per cent of the electorate gave him a mandate, used by him to remove Tsiranana, abolish all elected bodies, and announce that a constitutional referendum, followed by elections, would take place in 1977.[31]

It is difficult to ascertain the exact meaning of the events that occurred in 1972, involving as they did a coalition of quite disparate forces whose common denominator was a reassertion of the Malagasy as a nation. But it does seem as if the political revolution that overthrew the First Republic was unable to demolish a structure of privilege and, consequently, start a genuine social revolution.[32]

Major changes now took place mainly in the fields of external relations and economic policies.

Ramanantsoa established diplomatic relations with China, the USSR and radical African countries. A loosening

of ties with France pleased nationalists of all shades of opinion, particularly the radicals.[33]

Ramanantsoa's domestic policies, which represented an attempt to "malagasize" public life and, particularly, the economy, failed to match the wide approval earned by his changes in the field of external relations. This was a consequence of the fact that "malagasization" revived fears of Merina domination among the *côtiers*.[34] How that policy was put into practice in the economic field served only to increase such fears. Colonel Roland Rabetafika, who became the new president's right-hand man, was an upper-class Protestant who interpreted "malagasization" as the appointment of Malagasy to positions previously occupied by foreigners and as an assertion of local control over the economy. The establishment of state enterprises was expected to drive non-Malagasy out.[35] In practice there was, broadly, a good deal of mismanagement and corruption. And fears generated by developments in the economic field were reinforced by the result of events taking place in government administration. Here, the Merina bourgeoisie effected a real take-over. The opposition to this found expression in the late 1972 – April 1973 riots in the island's coastal towns, which almost paralysed both government administration and economic activity.[36]

The economic crisis that followed was serious enough to undermine Rabetafika's position. Peasants were being defrauded by the state marketing boards. Suppliers disappeared. The black market flourished. Corruption became general.[37]

Rabetafika's policies were most strongly opposed by the Minister of the Interior, Colonel Richard Ratsimandrava, who came from the other pole of the social hierarchy. He was able to put together the urban lumpenproletariat, the peasantry and many radical intellectuals not affiliated to the MFM (Party for Proletarian Power), which had assembled within itself those sectors of the radical opposition that had failed to gain control of the revolution. This new strongman pushed reform in the direction of "a radical vision of rural autonomy and urban populism", which should replace the state apparatus by a "popular control of development". But his authoritarian rule aroused opposition.[38]

By mid-1974 the government was almost paralysed by personal and ideo-logical quarrels. A sinking economy had destroyed Rabetafika's influence. Those excluded from the privileges granted by Ramanantsoa to members of the forces started plotting against him. A plot mounted by Colonel Brechard Rajaonarison, a *côtier* and former NCO, was detected in December 1974. The colonel escaped arrest and issued a communiqué accusing the government of corruption and the preferment of Merina before *côtier* officers in the hierarchy. The rebels secured support from figures from the previous regime, such as Tsiranana and Resampa, and also from Monja Jaona. On 5 February 1975, Ramanantsoa resigned, after appointing Ratsimandrava as his successor. The latter was murdered on 11 February. On the following day, an eighteen-member "Military Directorate" took over, headed by General Gilles Andriamahazo.[39]

Over the following months one of the members of the directorate, Lieutenant-Commander Didier Ratsiraka, built a coalition between supporters of Ramanantsoa's state capitalism and partisans of radical economic and political change. In June, Ratsiraka became head of both state and government. He implemented policies that expressed a determination to establish a brand of scientific socialism adapted to the existence in the country of so many particularist elements. Banks, insurance, shipping, the petroleum refinery and mineral resources were nationalized.[30]

Setting the foundations for full-fledged socialism

In December 1975 Ratsiraka was awarded a seven-years mandate by 94,66 per cent of the votes expressed in a 90 per cent poll. The previous six months had been a time of frenetic political activity on the island. The new leader had convinced both left and right that he belonged among them, although his personal commitment to a socialist revolution was ambiguous and that of his regime even more so. Broadcasts made by Ratsiraka in August served as foundations for the elaboration of the *boky mena* (red book) or Charter of the Malagasy Socialist Revolution. These broadcasts endeavoured to please everybody, an objective made possible by the fact that the local revolution was never identified as part of a national or international class struggle but as the fulfil-ment of a long line of nationalist movements. There were specific promises to particular interest groups, such as reassurances to the bourgeoisie. The revolution also declared its compatibility with religion, small-scale private property, rights of inheritance, and even with rule by social élites if they showed the right attitudes. The desire to achieve the objectives historically pursued by Malagasy nationalism was expressed in the Charter's selection of those elements in Marxism-Leninism that fitted its authors' conception of Malagasy realities and political needs. The attempt to attract into some sort of unity the various sectors of Malagasy society was also expressed in a commitment concerning the revival of the Malagasy soul.[41]

At institutional level, the *boky mena* made provision for a juxtaposition of classical political structures (President of the Republic, a government responsible to the People's National Assembly) and others of a revolutionary kind. The latter included, at central level, the Supreme Council of the Revolution, the Military Council for Development and the National Front for the Defence of the Revolution (FNDR). Genuine power was granted to the masses through the *fokonolana* or local communities – which played the role of a buffer in this "self-managed socialism" – directed by elected councils. A privileged position was granted to the village community, as part of an experiment in which the pursuit of a scientific form of socialism was expressed in the following definition of socialist revolution put forward by Ratsiraka:

> ... the only possible choice available to us, concerning the realization of a rapid economic, social and cultural development, autonomous and human and harmonious.

Battistini is of the opinion that the new regime was searching for economic self-sufficiency by trying to lay down new economic principles upon old foundations.[42] The result, as analysed in the following section of this article, was the continuation of a position of dependence *vis-à-vis* foreign powers and institutions.

The construction of the revolutionary state was envisaged by Ratsiraka before it was capped with an adequate party system. A one-party state appeared the most suitable solution having regard to the objectives set; and it

was also the solution favoured by the president. This choice proved impractical, however: the existing parties opposed the end of political pluralism and seemed to have enough strength to resist the president's attempts.[43]

The deadlock on this issue was broken by an ingenious solution conceived by Ratsiraka – one that permitted the sort of situation normally associated with a one-party system to be realized without abolishing a multiparty framework. This solution served Ratsiraka's objectives particularly well, because it presented an additional advantage: that of serving as a buffer against political manoeuvres by the armed forces. The tool to achieve such an objective was provided by Article 9 of the Constitution, which made provision for the existence of the FNDR (which we have already noted) and entrusted it with the duty to "motivate and guide the spirit of the Revolution towards the establishment of Socialism."[44]

The first step in that direction was taken in March 1976 with the creation of the regime's own party, the Arema (Vanguard of the Malagasy Revolution). It was presented as "non-political". The new party, which was backed by various auxiliary organizations and by the TTS militia, soon claimed a 90 000 membership. In May, the Arema was admitted to the FNDR. The latter's statutes, published in December of the same year, laid down that only those parties that became members of the FNDR – and admission was subject to Ratsiraka's approval – could put forward candidates in the elections.[45]

Later events showed that the solution adopted here by the leader of the Malagasy revolution was most adequate from a political point of view, since it worked out well for both organized political forces and the electorate in general. In August 1981 the last organized resistance to Ratsiraka's group was eliminated with the integration of Monima in the FNDR. In 1982 Ratsiraka was re-elected, in a 86 per cent poll, by collecting 80,17 per cent of the votes cast against the 19,83 per cent given to Monja Jaona. In 1985 a cabinet reshuffle reinforced the socialist character of the regime.[46]

Such political success proved insufficient, however, to solve some difficulties of sociological character related to the traditional divisory lines in Malagasy society. The élite was able to consolidate its power at national level, but at the cost

of becoming increasingly isolated from the rest of the population. It was itself unable to eliminate its structural weaknesses, since distinctions between traditional and new, between Merina and non-Merina élites remained strong. The tension generated by this situation was rendered more acute by the impossibility of accommodating the large number of new job-seekers, 100 000 a year according to World Bank estimates. There was no redistribution of wealth to remove these tensions. On the contrary, there was increased poverty among the population in general, as lower prices were paid to agricultural producers in order to support both state-based and private élites.[47]

The trend followed by Ratsiraka in domestic policy was matched by similar measures in external relations. He tried to secure for himself a significant position on the international stage by acting as a spokesman for underdeveloped countries and becoming the champion of the demilitarization of the Indian Ocean, a standpoint greatly favouring Soviet interests in the area. Such total alignment with Moscow's external policies involved approval of the invasion of Afghanistan. Madagascar became an importer of Soviet weapons and some one thousand Malagasy students received bursaries to study in the USSR.[48]

Building a socialist economy

The economic component of Ratsiraka's socialist revolution was to some extent a continuation of Ramanantsoa's attempt to achieve economic independence by means of the implementation of some form of state-capitalism. This attempt was combined, after 1975, with a socialist reorganization of the economy.[49] The new leader expected that his policies would be able, between 1978 and 1984, to lay the foundations for a new order in Malagasy infrastructures and agro-industries; and that, by the year 2000, the industrial sector would provide thirty per cent of Madagascar's GNP and the real income per capita would double.[50]

A combination of both political and material factors, however, precluded Ratsiraka's ambitious expectations.

The fact was that the Malagasy leadership lacked any unanimity of view on the road to be followed. By 1977 the regime was split by quarrels between a faction that considered nationalization as a tool with which to build a permanently state-

run economy, and members who considered it as a transitional system that should prepare the economy for being handed over to Malagasy entrepreneurs.[51]

By about 1980 the flaws in the country's economic planning had become apparent. Its authors had overlooked the inadequate supply of raw materials, the growing rice deficit, the lack of spares for industry and transport and of consumer-goods inducements for the peasantry. They had also failed to consider a possible fall in international price for Madagascar's main exports.[52] A lack of finance rendered the consequences of these difficulties even more unpleasant. Both public and private investment, already low under Tsiranana's regime, had virtually ceased from 1972 onwards, partly as a result of the government's excessive expenditure in fields that could make no immediate contribution to economic progress. Its value in mass-appeal lay behind an unnecessary expansion of the educational system, which absorbed no less than 26 per cent of the national budget. There were no jobs for university graduates. In order to accommodate them, the size of the civil service was doubled between 1972 and 1978, while the expanding armed forces became an expensive pressure group.[53]

State expansion into areas of investment promising no directly productive benefit represented a particularly serious problem in a country where state control was expanding in most areas of economic activity. The following table gives us the picture:

Estimated state control of economic activity (per cent)

Sector	June 1975	1978
Banking	25	100
Insurance	15	100
Imports	20	60
Exports	-	78
Sea transport	14	14
Water and energy	100	100
Internal trade	30	70
Industry	18	33
Total	13	61

Source: J du Bois de Gaudusson, *Madagascar: Des entreprises publiques aux entreprises socialistes*, p 219 – quoted in M Covell, *Madagascar – Politics, economics and society*, London: Frances Pinter, 1987, p 142.

The government tried to solve the unfavourable effects of its economic policies by starting an "all-out investment" phase which gave prominence to state economic initiative and involved a borrowing of very great sums of overseas money. This produced an almost complete collapse of the economy.[54] It did little to increase the country's medium-term productive capacity – but quadrupled its external debt. Parallel expansionary financial policies, combined with increased quantitative restrictions on trade, produced both external and domestic disequilibria. The level of external debt became such that in 1980 its servicing obligations could not be met.

Ratsiraka's foreign policy proved an additional liability in such a financial and economic situation, since his communist allies were either unable or unwilling to offer Madagascar the kind of assistance needed by the country. Libya supplied some short-term assistance, and the USSR agreed to supply oil; but no Eastern bloc state actually provided financial assistance.[55]

Build-up to an economic crisis

It should be mentioned at this point that the Malagasy economy was already in decline before the crisis ignited by the socialist revolution. Its trend may be illustrated by the fact that 1970 consumption levels, which the Plan for 1978-80 intended to restore, were lower than those of 1960. Some figures mentioned by Covell may be used to estimate the dimensions and growth rhythm attained by the economic crisis in the early 1980s. External debt climbed from US$293,5 million in 1981, when the cost of its servicing rose to the equivalent of one-third of export earnings. The budget deficit increased from 1,5 per cent of GDP in 1977 to 19,2 per cent in 1981. The volume of rice imports trebled between 1980 and 1982. In 1982 the GNP declined by 10 per cent over that for the previous year, while inflation oscillated between 30 and 50 per cent.[56]

The financial situation became so critical that the Malagasy government, unable to obtain suitable assistance from its allies, was forced to follow economic policies, both domestic and external, that clashed both with its principles and with the line followed as a result of foreign political entanglements. This new trend

marks the beginning of what Covell considers the third phase in the economic history of the Malagasy revolution, there being now a partial return to previous policies, including the involvement of external partners.[57]

By seeking assistance in the form of donations and credit from the IMF, the World Bank and a number of Western countries, the Antananarivo government laid itself open to their interference and was forced to liberalize trade conditions and devalue the Malagasy currency. These reforms produced some positive results by reducing the value of the external current account deficit from 14,6 per cent of the GDP in 1980 to 8,7 per cent in 1986, and by making it possible for the country's foreign reserves, which in November 1982 were insufficient to cover even one day's imports, to rise, gold excluded, to US$223,7 million by the end of 1988.

Some of the measures inspired from outside produced results, we must note, that were, at best, mixed. This was so with the increased payments to farmers and more freedom in the rice trade. By 1983-84 these measures had certainly brought an improved supply to urban centres, but accompanied by rising prices that placed basic necessities beyond the means of the average person since there were no substantial salary increases for non-agricultural workers.[58]

It should be added that this more free and commercial approach to agricultural production, in spite of its unhappy particulars, appeared only as a minor, and possibly temporary, evil made necessary by the total failure of socialist structures. It must also be said that the problem had deep roots as Ratsiraka's regime had inherited structures of government intervention in rural areas, whose action oscillated between the ineffective and the outright counterproductive. These state structures (created by Ramanantsoa to assure supplies of important commodities) underwent only minor changes after 1975. The Sinpa (*Société d'intérêt national de commercialization des produits agricoles*), operating since 1973, had become totally useless by the early 1980s. Black markets flourished, with rice selling at five times the official price. The same kind of inefficiency characterized Sonaco (*Société nationale de commerce extérieur*), responsible for the purchase of export goods and for the import and sale to the peasants of

products they needed as payment for their crops.[59]

Liberalization measures adopted in the mid-1980s included a new investment code introduced in 1986 to motivate both local and foreign investors. Most of the state's control of the internal rice trade was abolished, and, early in 1987, exporters secured permission to set prices with their foreign clients. Successive devaluations of the Malagasy franc occurred in 1986-87. These measures made possible the granting of new facilities by the IMF and by the "London Club" of Western commercial creditors.[60]

It must be stressed that these relatively successful results achieved through the implementation of measures heavily recommended by overseas agencies could not stop a continuous deterioration in most sectors of the island's economic activity. This explains why in 1988 Madagascar was to be listed among the fifteen poorest countries in the world. The annual income per capita was estimated at less than US$200, having declined by an annual average of 3,4 per cent between 1980 and 1988.[61]

The rural sector in Madagascar is of the utmost importance, as it is responsible for 80 per cent of the country's export revenues and for the supply of raw materials to most local industries. The production of both cash crops and subsistence crops, with the single exception of cotton, either stagnated or declined from 1975 onwards as a result of the combined effects of socialist policies and natural calamities. The peasantry gave the thumbs-down to the various models of co-operative and state-owned farm, considered important components of the regime's agricultural policy. The government's goal of self-sufficiency in food could never be attained in a country where the area occupied by rice paddies shrank instead of expanding, causing 162 000 tons of that cereal to be imported both in 1986 and in 1987. The 11 per cent production increase registered in 1989 allowed a reduction in rice imports to 73 000 tons. The income generated by agricultural exports was also badly affected by declining vanilla prices, since Madagascar is the leading world exporter of that commodity. Forestry was badly neglected, and husbandry remained uneconomic as cattle are regarded as an indication of wealth rather than a source of income.[62]

Decline also occurred in the small

industrial sector inherited from the colo- nial period – although the straight nationalization of industries was rare, in spite of the fact that most of them were owned by foreigners. In 1972 an in- dustrial sector mainly geared for import substitution generated only 5,1 per cent of the total output of the national eco- nomy. Between 1980 and 1987 industrial output registered a 2 per cent annual decline, most plants working at less than one-third of their capacity. Food pro- cessing, brewing, paper, soap and tex- tiles remained the most important indus- tries. In an attempt to halt industrial decline, a new investment code, intro- duced in June 1986, announced special privileges for manufacturers with incent- ives to spur on both local and foreign private investment.[63]

In a country with sizeable deposits of minerals, although natural conditions often make their exploitation difficult and expensive, mining followed a trend similar to that of industry. Chromite, graphite and mica constitute the prin- cipal mineral exports. The evolution of chromite exports will illustrate the trend in this sector:

– 1976: 200 000 metric tons
– 1987: 106 800 metric tons
– 1988: 64 200 metric tons

In an attempt to improve the mining sector picture, the government offered to private companies the exploitation of gold deposits nationalized in 1975.[64] And in tourism the government was compelled to take measures similar to those for industry and mining. The French group Savanna and Pullman-International Hotels are how imple- menting a US$234 million project.[65]

The evolution of the country's for- eign trade balance seems to illustrate the failure of the somewhat direction- less attempt at economic recovery launched in the early 1980s:

Foriegn trade balance (in billion Malagasy francs)

Year	1983	1984	1986	1988
Exports	113,4	192,3	332,5	396,8
Imports	166,8	213,5	408,4	537,5
Balance	–53,4	–21,2	–75,9	–140,7

An analysis of foreign trade provides further evidence that economic realities compelled Ratsiraka's government to conduct external trade in a direction quite opposed to that taken by those aligned with them politically. In 1987- 88 France, followed by the USA and other Western countries, was the main buyer of Malagasy exports. The same was true of imports, with the single exception that the USSR occupied sec- ond place among suppliers, immedi- ately after France.[66]

Economic failure triggers political crisis

In August 1983 Arema achieved a land- slide victory in the legislative elections. Ratsiraka tried to exploit this success to attempt afresh the establishment of a one-party state, but his plan was rejected out of hand and defeated by the opposition. The president's failure to impose his will here heralded the beginning of a phase of political in- stability that appears to have had, as its principal cause, the continued deteriora tion of the economy. As Covell says, the implementation of the austerity policies demanded by the IMF pro- duced "unacceptable social costs", which set off the riots of late 1984 and early 1985 in Antananarivo. Popular discontent developed simultaneously with signs of opposition to government policies inside the FNDR, Arema and the armed forces which, rather than pulling together in everyone's interests, looked upon government and their own organizations as arenas in which to compete for benefits.

In 1985 Ratsiraka reacted to the pres- sures he was experiencing by declaring that the Revolution was open to different currents of thought, and by proclaiming the compatibility of a Marxist economic approach with religious faith.[67]

In November 1986 an attempt to re- duce the number of students was dropped after arousing serious resis- tance. In 1986-87 famine and food shortages in the rural south were fol- lowed by a number of outbursts of viol- ence. Monja Jaona claimed that 40 000 people had died from starvation over the previous two years. Here clearly was a vicious circle: economic difficul- ties generated a new phase of political violence, and this caused further dis- ruptions in the economy. Orchestrated attacks on Indian (but not Chinese) traders disrupted commerce, and a feel- ing of instability jeopardized invest- ment projects. Popular resistance to externally imposed economic reforms, particularly the liberalization package demanded by the IMF, was endangering the survival of the regime.[68]

In 1987 there was increasing opposi- tion to Ratsiraka, even within the FNDR, which cracked in March of that year, when the Monima, the MFM and the Vonjy formed a coalition to oppose the youth wing of the Arema. At that point, the pro-Soviet AKFM was the only member of the FNDR that con- tinued to offer active support to the Arema, most of the remaining parties having moved into active opposition. Ratsiraka reacted by postponing until 1989 the elections due to take place in the following year, 1988.[69]

The March 1989 elections confirmed the fall in Ratsiraka's popularity, as he received only 62,7 per cent of the votes cast. Nevertheless, the legislative elec- tions held in May gave Arema 120 of the 137 seats in dispute, in spite of growing opposition from intellectuals and different classes of the urban popu- lation. In September, Ratsiraka's Arema increased its tally of municipal posts to 85 per cent.[70]

Democratization

The beginning of democratization in Madagascar matched similar processes taking shape in Eastern Europe: on 21 December 1989 Madagascar's parli- ament abolished the rule that a party's membership of the FRDM was a re- quirement for participation in elections. The privileged status granted to social- ism by the constitution was left undis- turbed. In spite of this concession to the past, the legal foundations had been laid for the creation of a multiparty democ- racy, backed by freedom of the press and the economic liberalization demanded by the IMF. The resumption of a plural- ist system, formally announced in March 1990, was accompanied by the forma- tion of a number of new parties.[71]

Events during the initial phase of democratization have given the impres- sion that the Arema, in spite of the electoral successes of 1989, lacks the resources to preserve its hegemonic po- sition in a pluralist democracy. It seems that the former Party for Proletarian Power (MFM), renamed the Party for Political Progress, was emerging as the leading political force, leading a powerful pro-business, church-backed opposition coalition, organized by the

FFKM (Christian Council of Madagascar). The FFKM was recently recognized by all Catholic bishops as representing Catholic ethics. The MFM wished to form a provisional government opposed to the embattled post-socialist administration of Ratsiraka, but had been unable to secure the necessary support from other opposition forces for its solution.[72]

The increasing strength of opposition parties does not mean, however, that Ratsiraka considers the return to democracy betokens the end of his political career. In order to weaken the opposition, he has been trying to undermine the FFKM by funding a number of religious sects. He has also been attempting to bring certain members of the opposition into various para-governmental structures such as the Economic and Social Council – the new name for the Supreme Revolutionary Council, a body composed entirely of men loyal to the regime, which could be transformed, eventually, into an upper chamber or senate when the time is ripe for the introduction of a full bicameral system.[73]

It is also important to consider that only a future general election can determine whether the opposition enjoys enough popular backing to defeat Ratsiraka's MMSM (*Mouvement militant pour le socialisme malgache*/Militant Movement for Malagasy Socialism), which has been consolidating its structure with the creation of grass-roots units, a labour union and a youth organization. That MMSM candidates won the three by-elections held in February 1991 may provide some indication that Ratsiraka's position might well be stronger than it appeared to be late in 1990, when the MFM gave the impression that it was on its way to being the leading political force in the country.[74]

The fact that some 100 000 people participated in the wave of agitation that engulfed Antananarivo and other major cities after June 1991 does not invalidate this assessment of Ratsiraka's strength. It is quite possible that the government retains strong influence in the rural areas, which apparently remained free of agitation.

Closer relations with France and renewed contacts with South Africa show well that domestic political change is being matched by similar developments in the external relations, where pragmatism has triumphed over ideological considerations.

The West also appears to be replacing the USSR as Antananarivo's supplier of defence and security equipment. In the course of the 1991 Budget vote in the French Chamber of Deputies, a representative of the National Defence Commission mentioned that Madagascar's police were going to receive French equipment to the time of US$2 million. Additionally, the FAC (*Fonds d'Aide et de Coopération*), which falls under the jurisdiction of the French Ministry of Overseas Aid and Co-operation, granted a US$800 million loan to the same police force in order to finance the acquisition of equipment necessary for effective policing of urban areas.[75]

That the president of South Africa, F W de Klerk, was able to visit Madagascar in August 1990 and sign a tourism and civil aviation agreement, at a time when most African countries were still demanding sanctions against Pretoria, shows how far Ratsiraka had moved away from the radical approach that used to characterize his foreign policies.[76]

Reform of the economy

Dramatic economic reforms accompanied the democratization of 1989. They may be considered the logical development of the pragmatic steps taken in the early 1980s, with little consideration for ideological principles, in a desperate attempt to halt the race towards total economic collapse.

An entirely new phase of radical economic reform begun in 1989 represents an attempt to achieve positive per capita real growth without endangering the progress made in the search for true financial stability. To reach this real-growth objective, the country must attain a rate of economic growth higher than the rate of population growth: there will have to be a move from the 1,8 per cent economic growth registered in 1988 to 4,5 per cent. Economic growth must be boosted through the liberalization of both internal and foreign trade and by reforms bearing on finance and public enterprises: by restoring market-determined policies and prices, and by reducing administrative constraints on agriculture.

The liberalizing process began in March 1989 with the abolition of all price subsidies. A fundamental step was taken in January 1990 with approval of

a new investment code introducing incentives to lure foreign investors. This made provision for the relaxation of regulations concerning the numbers of foreign workers to be employed and regulations concerning exchange control. Tax incentives were granted to private investors. And EPZs (export processing zones) were established and were able to attract foreign investors (particularly from Mauritius, South-East Asia and France) who showed their approval of the benefits of preferential corporate taxes and the availability of cheap labour.

Progress towards a freer economic system did not move ahead without hindrances, however. The new investment code was opposed by both politicians and local business. But the demolition of the state-controlled economy continued in March 1990 with the liberalization of the banking sector. A foreign controlled bank, *Banque Malgache de l'Océan Indien*, and a locally-owned private bank soon opened their doors.[77]

The liberalization of the Malagasy economy was accompanied by the implementation of the monetary reforms recommended by the IMF and the World Bank to consolidate the country's financial resources. It is expected that the Malagasy franc will become convertible and access to foreign currency eased. Simultaneously, the interest rates for deposits made in a foreign currency will be raised to 22 per cent, while interest rates paid for bank loans will fluctuate between 27 and 30 per cent. These measures, based on macro-economic considerations, may generate a repetition of the excessively high social price paid for the economic reforms implemented in the early 1980s. Such negative side-effects may take the shape of inflation or of long-term debt problems for local businesses, whose profit margins are often insufficient to absorb high interest rates in this range.[78]

A crisis of expectations?

The wave of unrest that began in June 1991 provides strong evidence of the failure of the democratization process initiated in December 1990.

This process gave rise to high expectations, particularly following the announcement in March 1990 that Madagascar was to become a pluralist democracy. The crisis came to a head after alterations

to the constitution, tabled in May 1991, indicated that genuine democratization was not taking place.

On 31 May 1991 a draft bill revising the Malagasy constitution was tabled in the National Assembly. This included more alterations to the constitution than those announced by Ratsiraka a few months previously. The objective of the proposed amendments was to consolidate the presidential nature of the regime. To make this plan more palatable to the opposition, the new draft removed the references to "socialism" contained in the previous text.[79]

As a consequence of the rejection of these constitutional reforms, since 10 June Ratsiraka has struggled with the "most powerful protest movement he has met since coming to power in 1975".[80]

The protest against Ratsiraka's proposals generated a mass mobilization greater than that accompanying the "Revolution of 1972". In Antananarivo some 100 000 people marched on three consecutive days, calling for a national conference, which would draft a new constitution, and for a transitional government preparatory to a general election. The principal force behind this wave of unrest was the Active Opposition, a coalition of political parties, trades unions and other associations, strongly backed by the FFKM. Because Ratsiraka was in France when the trouble broke, the authorities adopted a wait-and-see attitude until his return. They then reacted firmly, giving no indication of a willingness to yield to opposition demands.[81]

Ratsiraka's intransigence stimulated further protest. On 19 June between 200 000 and 300 000 people marched in the capital, demanding the president's resignation and the formation of a new government within the week.[82]

Subsequent events created the impression that Ratsiraka's regime was on its last legs, for the opposition now began to build alternative, parallel hierarchies. On 18 July a crowd estimated at 400 000 marched in Antananarivo, while a general strike paralysed government offices. The opposition selected an alternative government headed by Jean Rakotoharison, a retired general. The ruling coalition declared the alternative government illegal.[83]

By this time there were clear signs of division within both government and opposition structures. The military leaders remained loyal to the Head of State, but in some ministries senior civil servants were showing their sympathy with the opposition. Yet the opposition was unable to formulate a coherent strategy. The leadership of the MFM wanted dialogue with Ratsiraka to continue, while other opposition forces preferred more forceful methods.[84]

By the end of July the situation had deteriorated further, with seven ministry buildings occupied by opposition elements. Security forces were unwilling to interfere with the crowds surrounding those buildings. Ratsiraka, possibly aware of the opposition's lack of cohesion, responded to demands for his resignation with minor concessions.[85]

The demonstrations now became increasingly violent. On 10 August at least 10 people were killed in the northeastern port town of Mahajanga. The following day more than 100 died and over 300 were injured when the *Régiment de la Sécurité Présidentielle* used grenades, anti-tank rockets and automatic weapons to repel a crowd of 500 000 marching on the presidential palace.[87]

With the violence came increasing political radicalization. The FFKM, which had played a leading mediating role in earlier negotiations, turned against Ratsiraka, describing him as a "non-Christian" and a user of *rampy*, or traditional religious talismans. Early in September, Prime Minister Razanamary threatened to dismiss 100 000 civil servants unless they ended their ten-week strike by the 4th of the month. The threat was ignored and another march of 500 000 people took place in Antananarivo. The opposition thought Razanamary's failure very significant, for it pointed out to international opinion where the real power lay.[87]

Yet there were other indications that the impressive mass demonstrations notwithstanding, Ratsiraka was not in the hopeless position sketched by opposition leaders and most of the international media.

Even as a rally of civil servants was deciding to continue the strike, many strikers were queuing outside banks to receive their salary cheques. The new minister of mines and industry, Jean Jacques Rakotoniaina, said "The people are tired of the situation of constant strikes and shortages caused by the opposition." That most shops were reopening seemed to lend credence to his words. Rakotoniaina, only a few weeks earlier an opposition shadow minister,

added "If the government were to resign now, the opposition have no policy. There would be a vacuum and chaos."[88]

At that stage a beleaguered Ratsiraka still had several trumps in his hand, and the situation was already showing signs of improvement. Most promising among the cards he held was the one marked "ethnic cleavages".

On 17 August, five of the country's six regions announced that they would form federal states. Meanwhile, local chiefs were expressing their support for Ratsiraka. These events indicated that a federal option was emerging as a new alternative for the hard-liners in the regime. That the government could exploit ethnic divisions to control the rebellion on the plateau where the capital is located, became apparent on 10 September. The governor of the federal state of Taormina (former province of Tamatave) threatened to impose an economic freeze on the capital and to discontinue fuel supplies if the civil servants did not abandon their strike. This reflected the possibility of mobilizing the *côtiers* against a Merina-dominated opposition.[89]

As indicated at the beginning of this article, the opposition's intransigence, in its refusal to accept Ratsiraka's continuing as president, even with reduced powers, placed a major obstacle in the way of its achieving success. Later in September the deadlock remained after a proposal suggested by the French ambassador had been rejected. He was of the opinion that Ratsiraka should transfer his powers to a Public Salvation Committee. A similar plan was proposed by the FFKM, which, possibly convinced that frontal opposition could not break Ratsiraka's determination, revived its earlier willingness to talk. Its formula now was a consensus government, which, besides inheriting those powers held by the Head of State, would be empowered to legislate.[90]

Conclusion

The fact that the dramatic process of change that has been taking place in Madagascar since 1989 is far from being completed, makes it hazardous to forecast how the country will evolve – even in the near future. Nevertheless, there are clear trends, some of them deeply rooted in the Malagasy tradition, that give us a few hints as to the possible outcome of today's "transformation scene".

There were signs of economic revival early in 1991, after Ratsiraka had made some tentative openings to foreign investment. After a few months of political anarchy, however, many foreign investments were shelved, investors who had planned to establish export-oriented industries fled, and many local business either closed or face the risk of doing so.

With regard to the immediate future, Ratsiraka, having won the initial protracted battle, during which he so often appeared on the verge of defeat, finally lost his nerve and conceded to opposition pressure.

It does not seem that he would have much chance of retaining power at the elections. Nevertheless, there remains the remote possibility that he could profit from a combination of two factors. The opposition is far from united and could present more than one presidential candidate. In addition, nobody knows how much support Ratsiraka still enjoys outside the principal urban centres. The positions adopted by regional authorities and local chiefs leave the impression that such support may be more widespread than generally suspected.

It is also impossible to surmise how a new government will revive an economy to all intents and purposes already dead. Its success will depend principally upon two things: how peacefully the transition process continues; and the level of confidence of foreign financial circles in Madagascar's political evolution. Only an orderly process of political reform would create the conditions necessary to attract the levels of foreign investment essential to Madagascar's economic recovery. The political future of Madagascar may well be determined by the attitude of the international bankers and aid agencies.

Yet this article aims at more than a prediction of the immediate future. What we note everywhere, first of all, is a deeply rooted sense of pragmatism which never disappeared completely, even during the most agitated phases of the revolutionary period. This it was that made it possible for Madagascar to call a halt to the race into the abyss, and do this by taking measures which ignored the government's proclaimed ideological principles. The latter, with the benefits of hindsight, seem to have played the role of mere tools, useful to attain certain objectives of national interest – but not objectives in themselves. The

absence of a neat, cut and dried, philosophically based ideology made the choice and implementation of pragmatic solutions easier. The policies followed in external commerce since the very beginning of Ratsiraka's regime offer a good deal of evidence on this point. The fact that the economic failure of socialism generated radical political change, not minor reforms of a palliative nature, confirms this interpretation.

A second point: the highly dramatic changes that have taken place in the recent history of Madagascar – conquest by the French, national independence and socialist revolution – show that the Merina élite, through its ability to ride out storms of all kinds can ensure some form of continuity in Madagascar.

These two constants, without which the present situation cannot be understood, appear to indicate that the country has the potential to eliminate, in the long run at least, the consequences of almost two decades of steady decline. Prospects appear even better when we consider the facts of international power today. The new distribution of power in the world, with the Soviet Union adopting a lower profile in its relations with Third World countries, makes it easier for Antananarivo to move further with its traditional policy of following those trends considered to be more favourable to the national interest.

Madagascar is a country well-endowed with agricultural, fishing and, to some extent, mining resources. Set against this, it lacks the technology and financial means to develop its resources and launch the industrialization necessary to attain some reasonable degree of economic self-sufficiency. And its very rapid demographic growth, which shows no signs of losing its momentum, makes even more urgent the development of the island's potential, a goal that can never be achieved unless policies favourable to foreign investment are put into practice.

Malagasy courage in dealing with South Africa (while many African countries are still protesting against the lifting of sanctions by various Western countries) seems to point to the possibility that strong relations may develop between Pretoria and Antananarivo. The little distance separating the two countries, and the competitive prices of many South African products of potential interest to Madagascar, point strongly in that direction.

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Inertia in African public administration: An examination of some causes and remedies

Dr S K Asibuo, Lecturer in Public Administration at the University of Ghana, Legon, looks at some of the obstacles that have prevented African bureaucracies from responding to rapid technological, social and economic change and suggests remedies for their defects.

Introduction

All over the world, governments have extended the scope of their activities beyond the traditional tasks of defence, maintenance of law and order and the collection of taxes. Robson has remarked:

> The increased functions of the state are one of the most commonplace facts of modern political history. Every text-book on government emphasizes the vast growth in the duties and responsibilities of public authorities today compared with a century ago.[1]

Upon attaining independence, many new African states realized that political independence, though laudable, was not sufficient in itself to promote their economic and social development. So it is that, to enhance their welfare objectives, many governments in these new states have created environments fully conducive to the general social and economic well-being of their citizens. Educational institutions and hospitals have been established. Basic infrastructure such as water supplies, roads, telephone networks, railways, electricity supply and similar projects demanding heavy capital expenditure have been undertaken. Public enterprises, boards and other agencies have also been established in order to accelerate the pace of socio-economic development.

In the pursuit of their multiple goals and aspirations, and in the fulfilment of their multifaceted functions, however, these public organizations face several administrative difficulties that call for reform. It is these problems that have made the public sector in most African countries ineffective, inefficient and unresponsive to the changing needs of their societies. One of the most intractable of such obstacles is inertia. This may be defined as the combination of forces that tend to generate resistance to change and reduce the ability and capacity of organizations to be flexible, adaptable and productive – whether in the form of services or goods. This article seeks to examine some of the causes of inertia in African public administration and also suggest possible solutions that will help to ameliorate the conduct of business by the bureaucracy.

The causes of inertia

Any diagnosis of the organizational framework in which public servants operate should begin with Max Weber's model of bureaucracy. For our purposes the key features to note in Weber's ideal bureaucracy are the following: the stress on its hierarchical structure of authority – each lower office being under the control and supervision of a higher one – and the assumption that initiative can come only from above; there is also emphasis on obedience by subordinates to their superiors; all operations are regulated by a system of rules; bureaucratic authority resides in the office, not in the occupant of that office; and the office-holder should not misappropriate the resources attending his office; that is, official activity must be separated from the private life of the official. Weber's bureaucratic model was not specifically intended for any one particular bureaucracy; it has elements familiar to all public organizations.

Inertia may be caused by a variety of things. These include the following: the sheer size of the civil service; an excessive centralization of decision-making authority; an inadequate delegation of authority and responsibility; a rigid adherence to rules and procedures; the attitudes to work and authority of civil servants; the inadequacy of qualified personnel; and the political and constitutional environment of a public sector that may not be conducive to risk taking. There are other causes too.

The sheer size of the civil service

The public bureaucracy (or what is commonly referred to as the civil service) is the biggest organization in many countries. As a complex organization, it consists of ministries, each of which is subdivided into several departments and

divisions. Currently, Ghana's civil service, for one instance, comprises about eighteen ministries. The heavy volume of work handled by the large staff in these ministries results in the introduction of standardized procedures, which normally become the subject of regulations and rules. Thus the sheer size and complexity of the civil service make it difficult for it to operate with the speed that characterizes small organizations. One should not forget that big creatures normally move slowly.

Excessive centralization of decision-making authority

An important fact that has been of much public concern appears to be the inordinate delays experienced in rendering of service to members of the public and in prosecuting government business.

Delays may be attributed to the structure and procedures of the civil service. The problem of structure may stem from an excessive centralization of the decision-making authority in central ministries in the national capital. Arising from such a highly centralized bureaucratic structure, there is inadequate co-ordination of policies between departments and also a lack of the dissemination of the information necessary for effective decision making. The ministers/commissioners and the top central ministry officials are hard pressed to cope with the volume of work and range of decisions they have to make. The overall effect is one of procrastination.

The centralization of the machinery of government that we have noted stifles the prompt execution of certain rural development programmes because regional and district officers lack sufficient discretionary authority to take decisions: almost all major development decisions affecting local issues have to be taken in the national capital. This, usually, entails a loss of precious time due to an ineffective and poor communications network – several district headquarters do not have a telephone network and officers have to rely on correspondence. The postal system, too, tends to be unreliable because many postal vehicles frequently break down; so letters take a long time to reach their destination. In some instances this delay throws many programmes and projects out of gear – particularly those whose implementation has seasonal constraints. Execution

tends to be deficient, too, because decisions in the capital are divorced from local realities. Consequently local initiative and enthusiasm and aspirations are suppressed, if not killed altogether. If, on the other hand, the district departmental head takes a unilateral decision (driven by the urgency of the issue) without reference to his immediate boss, the regional head of department, his actions will be queried.[2]

In Ghana, despite the government's commitment to decentralization, there are still some elements of centralization in the public bureaucracy. Traces of centralization can be seen in the payment of annual increments, leave claims and the omission of names on payment vouchers. The payment of an annual leave bonus sometimes involves the beneficiary's travelling to the Accountant-General's Department in Accra to expedite the processing of payment forms. Similarly, the omission of names on payment vouchers also means going from the remotest parts of the country to Accra to clarify the matter with the Accountant-General's Department. Correspondence alone, even when it emanates from regional or district departmental heads, is not enough: the trip to the national capital has to be made.[3] The cost of transport and hotel accommodation may at times make the journey scarcely worthwhile.

Inadequate delegation of authority and responsibility

Another cause of inertia closely related to the problem of excessive centralization is the inadequate delegation of authority and responsibility. That delegation of authority is of much practical significance in administration cannot be disputed. Delegation frees superior officers to concentrate on more important tasks and gives subordinates an opportunity to take the initiative in certain matters as well as demonstrate their capabilities. It also saves time and allows the utilization of local knowledge and talent. Thus delegation can provide a basis both for making reliable performance appraisals and for ensuring that decision making is brought down as close as possible to the activity concerned.[4]

Yet available evidence indicates that senior public officials are reluctant to delegate for a variety of reasons. Important points are the habits and ingrained attitudes of central ministry

officials and their lack of confidence in the quality and capabilities of subordinates, especially field staff. Ironically, both regional and district departmental heads have been promoted to their present positions after thorough assessment of their experience and competence by central ministry officials; yet there is an increasing tendency on the part of the latter, even though they themselves appointed the officers in question to head regions, provinces and districts, to look down upon them. Other factors for officials' failure to delegate include their fear of losing their posts to well-groomed and brilliant subordinates, their desire to create the impression of indispensability, and the subordinates' inexperience and lack of self-confidence.

In addition, with decentralized programmes, central ministry officials are quite often reluctant to relinquish some of their powers and functions to decentralized departments because the programmes are seen by them as a device for curtailing their own powers and influence. They are therefore not committed to the success of such a programme. Thus the decentralization programme initiated by several African governments suffer from one fundamental defect: the very people who are to implement the programmes and whose attitudes will determine their success or failure are at the outset opposed to them owing to the loss of privileges that effective implementation would entail.

There is also the problem of effective supervision and control in the civil service. In order to encourage the subordinate to feel at ease in his dependency and to perform in a manner consonant with the objectives, policies, rules and regulations and the standards expected of him, his responsibilities must be clearly defined. This is virtually absent in most civil service departments and agencies. As a result of the lack of clearly defined responsibilities and the withholding of information, many junior civil servants always appear, and are, naïve – from sheer ignorance; so they fail to perform well. This ignorance and the prevailing tendency on the part of civil servants to refer issues upwards for clarification cause delay. The shifting of responsibility has become common, the safest way to avoid making mistakes is not to act at all. Here is yet another source of delay.

Rigid adherence to rules and procedures

An important goal of the civil service is to give the public a service that is safe and sure rather than swift and cheap. This necessitates caution and deliberation in the activities of civil servants. Rules and regulations are rigidly adhered to in the interests of impersonal and impartial behaviour; but a lack of imagination, discretion and initiative on the part of public officials and the excessive exercise of caution result in the phenomenon labelled "red tape". According to Juran, red tape may be defined as "delay, buckpassing, pigeonholing, indecision and other phenomena which contribute to, and end in inaction".[5] Red tape contributes to inertia. Thus one thing that has often been denounced for causing delay in civil service operation is the body of standing operating procedures popularly called "General Orders". The *Daily Graphic* in Ghana in an editorial comment reiterated public condemnation of cumbersome civil service procedures as follows:

> Much of the red-tapism and the civil servants' much-condemned inefficiency can be traced to the unrealistic and unnecessarily rigid orders which make it virtually impossible for the organisation to function as it should and yield the desired results.[6]

It is true that the delay may simply arise from the time legitimately needed by a civil service department or a public organization to perform its official work. It should also not be forgotten that certain services undertaken by some public institutions and agencies by their very nature are extremely complex and may require reference to several different departments for their proper execution. But what is disturbing is not the existence of the rules but the rigidity with which they are adhered to without regard to variations in circumstances. Besides, some of these rules and procedures are outmoded. Most African countries have not reviewed their General Orders and Civil Service Codes since Independence. Ghana is currently reviewing its General Orders and Civil Service Code – after some thirty years.

Civil services also resort to excessive paperwork – not on policy issues alone but even on routine matters. As pointed out by Aryeh Globerson,

> An exaggeratedly legalistic approach leads to excessive correspondence and paperwork, including a multiplicity of authorizations and signatures. All this may be justified when matters of principle are involved, but it is very doubtful whether it serves any useful purpose when applied to routine matters where fixed procedures suffice.[7]

Cumbersome operating procedures stem partly from the hierarchic nature and structure of the civil service and also from the accountability with which civil servants are burdened. The hierarchical routeing of correspondence and other communications delays decision making, too. Documents and files must follow a prescribed series of steps through different administrative levels. Thus one of the major impediments to quick action can be traced to the proliferation of levels in central ministries. Files move from one office to another; and since most of these files are not classified according to their importance, many matters cannot be settled without reference to the Permanent Secretary himself. Much of the time of senior officials is devoted to a review of papers and files received from subordinates. These are then passed on to still higher officers.[8] According to Fainsod "Procedural slavishness and dilatory tactics at lower levels have created bottlenecks which only heroic action can break".[9]

A typical cause of unjustified delay is the processing of simple routine matters through excessively cumbersome procedures. Examples are money claims such as insurance, social security, bank loans against large organizations, licence applications, passport issues and so forth. Contractors and private businessmen face handicaps imposed by rigidly followed rules and regulations. To secure approval for industrial or import licences often requires a businessman to fill out numerous forms, visit several government offices in the national capital, and wait at government offices for long periods.

A related cause of delay in the civil service is the devotion to precedents. Considerable pressures are often exerted by the public, and administrators find it more convenient to solve problems in a manner that has been tried before rather than venture out into the unknown. Precedents thus play a major role in decision making in the civil service, a precedent being a previous decision or case taken as an example for subsequent cases or for supporting similar action. The basic rationale behind the idea of precedents is not only to avoid the possibility of a central government department or agency giving different decisions at different times in similar cases but also to facilitate the expeditious disposal of identical cases time after time. In effect, the constant reference to precedents helps to achieve a certain uniformity and preserve the civil service tradition of fairness and impartiality. But an inherent major weakness is that little or no allowance is made for instances in which unusual circumstances mean that established precedents simply have no bearing on the present situation. So in a situation where precedent is lacking, the official will refer the matter to his superior; and, if the case is unusually difficult, it may slowly travel along the administrative chain of responsibility until a decision is made at top level – after an exasperating time lag.

Attitudes to work and authority of civil servants

Besides the structural and procedural problems of the civil service, there are attitudinal problems that have not only called for constant public comment but created room for delay. The attitudes to work and authority of most public servants leave much to be desired. Their apathetic attitudes preclude their applying themselves to work as they should. In an editorial, the *Ghanaian Times* opined:

> ... by every yardstick, the attitude to work of the civil servant of today has become one of the most serious problems which must be counted among those that call for priority treatment.[10]

While it is fair to accept that the attitudes to work of quite a number of public servants are poor, one must also not lose sight of the facts which have created this situation. Their purchasing power, their sense of motivation in relation to the incentives that are given them and their pattern of living are all important points that deserve attention in any critical analysis of administrative problems. Low morale and lack of motivation on the part of both management and staff of public organizations may stem from several causes. It may be due to the politicization of the civil service, carried out in order to make it politically responsive to the aspirations of the regime. And when public office is treated as a legitimate object of

spoils – when promotion is not based entirely on seniority or merit but rather on political considerations – these can only result in a sharp deterioration of morale, efficiency and discipline.

Another cause of low morale is that civil servants are grossly under-remunerated. They also lack other forms of incentive. And they enjoy no welfare programme. Under these circumstances many civil servants are compelled to supplement their salaries by engaging in business or accepting other employment with resulting neglect of their official duties. In some African countries, especially those that have embarked upon International Monetary Fund/World Bank inspired structural adjustment programmes, currencies have been massively devalued. Consequently inflation is too high, and minimum wages are so low that civil servants cannot even buy a kilo of meat. They are therefore dissatisfied with their poor incentives – a dissatisfaction manifested in their widespread lack of concern for the nation and the masses in favour of personal interests. This lack of concern for the nation finds expression in the careless manner in which some civil servants use public or government property and in their desire to grab for themselves at the expense of the state. Civil servants are so demoralized that they are unlikely, in fact, to identify the objectives of the civil service/organization with their own aspirations. This situation is further exacerbated when workers either have no access to the decision-making process or to any channel for articulating their needs and points of view.

Inadequacy of qualified personnel

Inertia may be caused by a shortage of qualified personnel. The tremendous expansion in the functions of government over the past four decades has not been matched by a corresponding increase in the availability of qualified personnel. Our educational institutions have been unable to produce qualified personnel in the numbers and with the speed demanded by the economic, social and political development of Africa. Consequently the few trained people there are, find themselves so heavily overloaded with responsibilities that their effectiveness is dissipated. In some government departments it is difficult to secure staff to carry out the routine operations prescribed for simple documents.

Let us turn to Ghana. Since 1983 the central government has embarked upon an economic recovery programme with substantial financial support from the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. As part of this programme 32 542 persons in the Civil Service and the Ghana Education Service have been retrenched over the period 1987-1989 and a total of $5,5 billion has been paid out in compensation packages.[11] Since 1985 there has been an embargo on the recruitment of new staff. This has exacerbated the acute personnel problems facing ministries and departments. In the course of field work conducted in 1988, I discovered in Ghana's Ejisu-Juaben and Bosomtwe Districts that many decentralized departments such as Social Welfare, Information and Community Development did not have any supporting staff – messengers, clerical officers, typists and so on – at all. This situation clearly makes field administration virtually impossible in that offices may at times have to be closed in the absence of the only senior officer manning the whole district department. The shortage of basic office skills, too, hampers the expeditious disposal of public business. While these shortcomings cannot easily be remedied, more attention to such lower-level administrative problems might well help break through the bottlenecks that frustrate administrators.

The political and constitutional environment: A public sector averse to risk taking

The political and constitutional framework within which public administration, especially the public service, operates is not conducive to creativity. Creativity involves risk taking, something not appreciated in the public sector. A commercial firm, on the other hand, can take a risk; if it makes a mistake, no great harm is done to the country at large – any harmful repercussions are strictly local. But in the event of a mistake by the public service the situation assumes a different dimension because the whole country may be affected. The public sector deals with people's lives, ambitions and aspirations. So caution is certainly called for in its handling of public business, especially in the area of health and food where the slightest mistake or omission may result in danger to the public. Moreover, public servants are quite

often subject to public scrutiny and question. (The mere thought of accountability fosters legalism and delay.)

Niskanen has reflected thus:

> It has long been observed that legislators, the press, and political scientists appear to be more interested in how honestly our public activities are conducted than in how well they are conducted.[12]

Such attitudes, it is argued, have made public servants cautious. For them, the successful career will be one without mistakes – not one noted for innovation. This is what Painter refers to as "maintenance values", broadly described as "keeping your nose clean".[13]

Other influences

Inertia in administration can be caused by an unwillingness to alter some programme in which a government organization has invested substantial financial, human and technical resources. For example, when the Ghana Government has spent a great deal of money on equipment, seminars and workshops to facilitate the implementation of some particular educational reform – the Junior Secondary School Programme – it resists any efforts by parents, the National Union of Ghanaian Students (NUGS) and other pressure groups to suggest alternative educational programmes.

Decision making through the committee system in public administration, despite its alleged advantages, can sometimes lead to inertia. Rather than save time, committees may actually waste it by going into excessive detail and by delaying decisions while waiting for another committee to arrive at a decision that affects its own work. At times the sheer size of some committees and their cumbersome procedures impede prompt decisions on vital issues. In fact some of these committees are not necessarily meant for taking important decisions but avoiding them! Walter Sharp argues that public administration in the United Arab Republic (UAR) was

> ... cluttered with special committees and councils for a variety of purposes .... [These Committees often] reflect a desire to sidetrack knotty problems, or to remove the onus for difficult decisions from a single official to a group ....[14]

Political instability also causes delays in administration. Experience has shown that in those African countries that have witnessed several military interventions, as have Ghana and Nigeria, continuity

of administration has been undermined. This has retarded progress in the implementation of several development projects. A new government assumes office and blames the previous regime for adopting policies and programmes not in the interest of the people. In order to legitimize its new power base, the succeeding regime abandons some of the programmes and projects inherited from its predecessor without any evaluation of their viability and embarks upon its own objectives and priorities. For political reasons, years may pass before any consideration can be given to the revitalization of such abandoned projects. This sequence of events has retarded the development of certain coup-prone African countries and underlined the fragility of the authoritarian system. From the frequency of coups, some African countries have not been able to build up any stable institutions capable of devising any long-term plans.

Possible solutions

Let us now discuss solutions to some of the problems of inertia that have been the subject matter of the preceding section. The first major remedy to problems caused by the excessive centralization of decision-making authority is decentralization. It is as simple as that. Decentralization means of course the transfer of functions from the centre (which may be either functional or the authority to perform certain tasks or activities) to specialized organizations that operate nationally. Examples are the creation of public enterprises to build and maintain utilities and of field offices within national ministries to deal with health care or road construction. Geographical decentralization, on the other hand, involves either deconcentration (a delegation to field offices) or devolution (the handing over of duties to local authorities or other local bodies).

As the latest fashion in development administration, decentralization has a number of things in its favour. It ensures that public business is dealt with more expeditiously, various kinds of procrastination and red tape are eliminated by doing away with the requirement to make frequent reference to central authorities before action can be taken in the field. Ministers/commissioners and the national ministries are relieved of

day-to-day activities, most of which in any event are governed by established precedents. To senior managers in other public organizations, decentralization is also valuable because it tends to ease the burden of detail that weighs on them and so allows them more time to devote to major problems.

Decentralization requires the delegation of a large amount of discretionary authority and the allocation of responsibility. This in turn increases the opportunities for initiative. There is no better way of training young officers for higher duties than by letting them take decisions at their own level. Decentralization also facilitates an increased knowledge of and sensitivity to local problems and needs because of the closer contact it brings about between field officials and local residents.

Another argument in favour of decentralization is that if decisions are made by local residents they are more likely to be relevant to local needs and conditions. If administered in this way, local residents are more likely to be seriously committed to development programmes affecting them and will therefore participate actively in their implementation. Moreover, success in fulfilling one community need will encourage people to try to meet others.

Nevertheless, decentralization programmes in Africa have recorded more failures than successes – for a variety of reasons. In the past, some decentralization programmes were hastily instituted without careful assessment of the decentralized department's personnel establishment and capacities or of the agencies that would be needed to perform certain functions. It was simply assumed that a capacity for local management existed. These deficiencies adversely affected the implementation of decentralization reform. Caution and careful planning are called for before governments in the Third World can safely embark on such major institutional reforms.

Most African decentralization programmes have failed because of an insufficient understanding of the provisions of the reform measures and the new roles expected of both local councillors and district civil servants. This has stemmed from a lack of adequate education concerning the real meaning and fundamental philosophy of the reform. On the 1980 Zambia reforms for instance, Bodemeyer notes that:

A good deal of conflict and confusion therefore appears to be attributed to the fact that people are expected to work within an organizational model which is basically different from the one they are used to, and nobody has put much efforts into explaining to them the difference.[15]

Sound decentralization demands a clear enunciation of policy. To this end, it is suggested that legislation dealing with decentralization programmes should be seriously reviewed, paying particular attention to those sections which through their imprecision are conducive to role conflict. Similarly, policy statements must be clear as to the *type* of decentralization to be adopted – whether the intention of central government is deconcentration or devolution. The success of decentralization in Third World countries will depend upon the extent to which decentralized departments and agencies receive the political support of national leaders. Success will also depend upon the extent to which district officials help to provide the necessary administrative support for district councillors, thus enabling them to initiate plans for effective local development. Finally, decentralization programmes cannot be implemented without adequate financial and human resources.

The problem of ineffective delegation can be remedied by the education of senior officials – by showing them that sharing responsibility with competent subordinates does not necessarily deprive them of their managerial prerogatives. The counselling and participation of officials in seminars and workshops may further help to remove any fear senior officials may have of losing their jobs to subordinates. The latters' inexperience, lack of self-confidence and other difficulties might be solved through a systematic training and counselling programme for them. In order to encourage efficiency, realistic targets should be set for workers. Workers must be involved in this. Their progress can be monitored at mutually agreed stages and by methods familiar to them.

Outmoded and cumbersome procedures, rules and regulations such as those of the General Orders and the Civil Service Code should be revised to suit current changes in the machinery of government and society as a whole. Furthermore, in order to check the withholding or hoarding of information in the civil service and other public organizations, it

is suggested that ministries and departments prepare handy brochures covering only those parts of the General Orders (GOs) and other policies relevant to their own operations. These should be distributed to every literate employee of the organization. A clear understanding of the GOs, it is hoped, will increase the flexibility with which the civil service and other public agencies cope with their environment.

In order to overcome irresolution, lack of initiative and other tendencies to inertia, and attract administrators of high calibre, it is suggested that positive efforts be directed at the proper and systematic selection, training and promotion of suitable candidates for all levels of the public service. A career service based on merit must not only be established but encouraged. Such a system cannot be effective without adequate facilities for training. Comprehensive training schemes and development programmes should therefore be made available for all categories of staff. These will serve a double purpose, both improving the performance of the present duties of the trainees and the identification of promising candidates for future promotion.

Besides training, any reform programme should aim at improving morale, developing leadership skills, improving *esprit de corps* and above all ensuring that civil servants are paid attractive salaries comparable to those in other public organizations and commensurate with their qualifications and output. This will not only remove the tendency among civil servants to devote less than the full working day to official business because of the need to earn additional income for their sustenance, but will help to retain staff. The pay structure, cost of living and fringe benefits should be reviewed from time to time in line with changing economic trends. And if civil servants are to operate effectively without any anxiety then they should be assured of security of tenure and adequate pension and social security schemes.

Finally, a regular system of transfers may help to reduce inertia. If transfers are effected at regular intervals, they may reduce the tendency of civil servants to establish an informal network of relations based on vested interests in the *status quo* at stations occupied for a long time. Such regular transfers, if effectively implemented, will also help to reduce the acute problem of personnel shortage experienced most of all in rural areas. Transfers will further ensure a fair distribution of competent officials, some of whom – as matters stand today – are concentrated at headquarters and are reluctant to go into the rural districts.

Conclusion

It is evident from our review of some of its principal causes that inertia is not only detrimental to the needs of a dynamic administration but inimical to rapid socio-economic development. By its very nature inertia breeds stagnation and frustration. Inertia runs counter to reforms aimed at ensuring that organizations will be more responsive to changes taking place in their environment. More importantly, inertia in public administration, by slowing down and impeding the provision of essential services such as those concerning health, is inimical to the interests of ordinary people, especially the illiterate poor in the countryside who have little access to public officials; and who may not have social and political connections and, above all, money to help them on their way through life.

Public expectations point to a more dynamic and flexible civil service which will be more responsive to technological changes taking place, not only in its environment but also in its scope and functions, a civil service more responsible to socio-economic challenges. Thus if management technology, that is, the appropriate application of methods, procedures, rules, operation (and the functioning of the organization's culture) are improved, the major constraints on efficiency and productivity will be removed. Taxpayers will then enjoy better services from their civil service.

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Training for development: At the crossroads

Professor Hennie Swanepoel of the University of South Africa's Department of Development Administration argues that much training for development is ineffective and suggests ways to overcome this problem

Introduction

Training for development has become a very important part of development activities in the Third World. This is also true of South Africa. More often than not, training is seen as a way to cure the ills experienced during development activities. But while training is absolutely necessary for successful development, it is not a panacea; perhaps too much is expected of it. Added to this is the fact that training for development suffers many shortcomings that severely limit its success. Whether explained away by excessively high expectations, or by some deficiency of the training itself, the fact remains that disappointment with the results of training is growing: what seemed a solution to many development problems is proving not such a success after all. As has happened with many "solutions" in the past, training now finds itself at the crossroads.

Training for development usually concentrates on three cadres: villagers who wish to be involved in development projects, lay workers and professionals. This article will deal only with the third cadre, the professionals, and then not with their formal pre-job training but with their continuous or in-service training.

The need for training

While development personnel are well or fairly well-trained in their professional fields, many of them find it extremely difficult to apply their professional knowledge in the work situation. These professionals work mostly with the poor – and therefore in a poverty-stricken environment. We are not, therefore, talking about certain cases of poverty in some community or other, but of entire communities struck by poverty. And this requires a very specific approach. The first problem, therefore, is one of communities that are difficult to work with and of professionals not trained to work with them.

Very closely related to this first problem is another: that most of these professionals are not skilled in furthering development. Their formal training is very much Western oriented, with the result that they are set on delivering a service, and not on furthering the development of an entire community.

From these observations it is clear that the formal professional training these people receive is not sufficiently development oriented and so does not prepare them for work in an environment characterized by universal poverty. Further, the organizations that employ these professionals are also not sufficiently geared to furthering development, in spite of the fact that their missions quite often have very clearly pronounced development objectives. These organizations, what is more, are not suitably structured to operate within an environment of utter poverty.

Many of the organizations we have in mind here have of late started to become more problem-focused and have gradually moved (or are moving) towards a development orientation. This augurs well for their work in poverty-stricken environments. Unfortunately, however, trends in development thinking are some way ahead of adaptations in organizations operating in the field; this complicates the issue still further. Put more clearly, the greater emphasis on a people-centred, adaptive and experimental type of development administration, one that works towards participation and empowerment, exacerbates the problem of field professionals incapable of doing their job, and thereby again increases the need for further training.

This new focus or trend requires, according to Rondinelli,[1] managers who can facilitate rather than control the interaction of individuals and groups, skilled people who can act as catalysts, mobilizing those whose support or commitment is needed – administrators who can respond creatively and quickly to changes, administrators who view themselves as facilitators of development rather than bureaucrats. Brinkerhoff and Klauss add that we need professionals with interpersonal skills for dealing with inter-organizational relations and with community interaction aimed at local capacities and power: professionals with personal traits such as a tolerance of ambiguity, patience, a propensity to take risks, an ability to interact with people from peasants to top ministry officials, and with some entrepreneurial skills.[2]

It is quite clear that in-service training has a tremendous task ahead of it preparing professionals for a poverty-addressing, development-furthering, human oriented, participatory type of development administration – a task all the more difficult since the formal pre-job training these professionals receive does not give enough attention to this.

These facts have been appreciated: in-service training for development has come to the fore in recent years. Training courses have become something like the fashion – and it has certainly become the fashion among professionals to collect "trophies" of those they have attended. But while this heightened awareness of the need for training is commendable, it is equally clear that training struggles to fulfil the high aspirations people have always associated with it. In fact, voices are already heard announcing loudly that training is doing very little to put things right.

The shortcomings of training

It is true that current training efforts suffer quite a few shortcomings that will have to be addressed before real fruit can be expected.

Some of the more important shortcomings are the following. Courses are presented without first ascertaining the training needs of the organization and its staff. "Canned" programmes are very popular, first for the ease with which they can be presented, and, second, for the professionalism of their manner and content. Powell has the following to say about this:

> [T]he trainer or training organisation finds a program that "works" in a particular situation and then – to overstate the case – canonises it, publishes "the" training manual, prints appealing course brochures, and markets it as effective and tested.[3]

If such a training package is offered to an organization, if it sounds relevant to the work of the organization and if the brochure reflects a professional image, then it is accepted. Now in order to fit all occasions and appeal to as many client organizations as possible, these courses are of necessity very broad in content, with sessions covering all the well-known ingredients of any work situation such as management, planning and budgeting.

Courses tend to be theoretical. They tend to be theoretical expositions of the subject at hand. This is also, at least partly, the result of an attempt to accommodate as many situations as possible in order to get as broad a clientele as possible. One of the main criticisms of the theoretical nature of many courses is that trainees are seldom capable of adapting this theoretical knowledge and turning it into practical guidelines for their everyday tasks. The trainer who believes that this process of theory application is natural and easily handled by the trainees is naïve – or has wrong ideas about the objective of training. Trainees are interested in what will actually work, and not what will theoretically work.[4] The failure of courses to step down from the theoretical level leads to wastage in the sense that the course content cannot be practically implemented. It also leads to frustration on the part of trainees, who can see the wisdom of the theory but can only continue doing things as they have always been done before.

An inexcusable shortcoming is that courses are often irrelevant. They do not reflect the necessity of working towards human-oriented, problem-solving development in a poverty-stricken environment. The reason here is simply that training courses for a Western milieu are presented unchanged to professionals in a situation miles removed from the situation the course was originally meant for. The emphasis in such courses is on generic processes and the structures to carry them out. Sophisticated cost-benefit analysis and blueprint planning are being taught to professionals who should actually be re-oriented to an experimental and adaptive type of administration. Trainers or training institutions offering this type of course must either be totally ignorant of the trends in development thinking, the results of decades of experience, or they must be unscrupulous enough to present such courses in the hope that they will get away with it. On the other hand, organizations accepting such courses for their professionals must still be extremely naïve if they expect that some transfer of knowledge and technical skills from a First World situation will cure all the ills experienced in a Third World one.

Courses are presented in the form of lectures. Because of their broad theoretical content, courses are presented as knowledge-transfer occasions by way of straightforward lectures: the chief idea behind such courses is to transfer a certain body of knowledge to the trainees. Honadle and Hannah call it the "dictation and absorption" method and they contrast it with "the exciting possibilities of a mutual learning experience".[5] Their main criticism of this form of training is that it suggests a ritualized rather than developmental approach to training, and that it is based on a belief that methods developed and applied in any one place can be readily transferred across cultures, sectors and organizational settings.

Courses are not adapted to address specific work situations and work environments. There is a notion that carefully worked out courses with a sound theoretical base, and in harmony with the most important educational pre-requisites, will be appropriate for all occasions. Two misconceptions are apparent here. One is that adaptation is unnecessary, since answers and solutions will somehow appear to situation-specific problems without the latter being directly addressed. The other is that the trainees are able to make the jump from the course content to the work situation by themselves: they will be able to take what is relevant in Sandton and adapt it for Nkowakowa. But the fact of the matter is that trainees are in need of specific practical guidelines on how to handle their own peculiar work situation and work environment.

Trainees do not contribute to the content of courses. In most courses the trainees are passive receivers of information and knowledge. There are, therefore, "clear distinctions between those who give and those who receive knowledge".[6] This does not mean that trainees are passive and do not participate in simulation exercises, role playing and group work. The problem is that these trainee activities are so stylized and circumscribed that very little scope exists for any exercise of initiative. This may be one of the principal reasons why there is a notion among many professionals that training seminars exist for entertainment purposes. They attend them, first, because it provides a plus mark on their personal files; second, because it takes them out of the isolation that many professionals, especially in rural areas, experience; and, third, because it is recreational.

Many of the shortcomings thus far discussed simply result from the fact that trainers are not familiar with the work

environment of the trainees. They hide, therefore, behind the relatively safe shelter of the formal lecture. They make their contribution in a theoretical or academic way and leave it to the trainees to apply this body of knowledge in their work situation. Questions from trainees regarding the application of the knowledge they have imbibed to their specific work situation and environment are dealt with in one of three ways:

— The trainer answers theoretically, re-stating what the theory says.

— The trainer tries to give a practical answer, but his limited knowledge results in a naïve approach.

— The question is thrown back to the trainees for "sorting out" *without* the necessary facilitation by the trainer.

The dominance of the lecture method, the theoretical character of lectures, the neglect of field research to produce indigenous training material, and undue reliance on foreign textbooks are all part of this problem.[7]

Courses are disconnected, often unrelated. There is a plentiful supply of training courses on the market. Different experts try to catch the client's eye with different packaged courses on offer. And because of a relatively healthy financial allocation for training in most organizations, there are always buyers for these courses. The end result, naturally, is that the professional finds himself attending courses that are unrelated or else, if there is some relationship, the chances are high that the courses duplicate each other, or, worse, sometimes contradict each other. There is very little sense in subjecting professionals to this kind of experience – and paying good money for doing so.

Courses do not show a logical progression. Tied to the problem outlined in the previous paragraph is the fact that trainees do not progress through a structured or logical learning process as they attend course after course. They may receive a fairly advanced course in management without having the necessary ground knowledge – and only later attend a very simple course in planning. There is no pattern to the training of any one particular professional. One course does not necessarily lead to another. Fairly sophisticated and advanced courses and fairly unsophisticated and simple courses follow each other with-

out any apparent pattern, leaving serious gaps behind them in the knowledge and understanding of those who attend.

Training is regarded as an independent, discrete, time-bound occurrence. Each course gains an independent identity "rather than just one ripple in a constant stream of management development activity".[8] And because most courses are presented by unattached outsiders there is very little or no follow-up. There is also very little or no co-operation between trainer and supervisor. The result is that training remains distinct from everyday work; and personnel development conducted by the professional's supervisor or manager is unlinked (even unrelated) to the training courses presented from time to time. The notion naturally develops that training is limited to the lecture room; that it has nothing to do with day-to-day personnel development within the organization.

The imperatives for successful training

Training is not having the good results that were once anticipated; and it is very difficult to place one's finger on any one particular reason for its relatively humble results. One should perhaps regard all the above problems as contributing factors – and not forget the fact that the overall problem of poverty has increased and become more complex over the last few decades. Thus, while training has floundered in misconceptions and shortcomings, the task of the professional has become even more daunting.

Past failings have taught us something about the imperatives for successful training for development. Current realities in the development environment bear this out.

Training as problem solving

Most professionals look to training for a solution of their everyday work problems. They come to training sessions with great expectations. Questions from the floor during training sessions are usually problem-oriented. They are often short descriptions of scenarios on some such lines as: "in spite of what the trainer has said, this is the reality – what now?" In summary, if trainees are asked at the start of a training session what they hope it will achieve, the solution of work problems features high on

the list. It therefore seems necessary to make training sessions problem-solving ones. Honadle and Hannah regard this as part of what they call "action training" – the opposite of lecture training.[9] It has been pleaded earlier that training be relevant to the work situation. This relevance hinges upon a specific orientation to solving problems, and ample time should be allowed for discussing different problems identified by the trainees themselves. As Shrivastava and Tandon put it: "The training arises out of specific needs of participants as articulated by them".[10]

It goes without saying that a problem-solving orientation demands that training be situation specific. General theoretical inputs may have a place, but cannot be left as theoretical inputs. Trainer and trainees must go through an exercise to relate the general and theoretical to their particular situation. One of the main aims of any training course, therefore, should be to solve the local problems of professionals in their specific work situation and environment.

Open-ended training

This approach to training demands an open-ended approach. It means that the trainer cannot rely on a carefully worked out lecture. The contents of a training session will be subject to change even while it is in progress: the particular needs of the trainees regarding the subject under discussion in any session will decide that session's emphasis. This approach demands dialogue between trainer and trainees (and among trainees themselves) during any training session. It makes for a very fluid (for the trainer, uncertain) situation and necessitates a lot of "on the feet thinking" from him or her.

What should happen during any training session is exactly what we say should happen in the community situation. The clamour for the community to identify its own needs and work towards addressing those needs during a learning process in which the professional plays the role of facilitator, should be true of the training situation, in which the trainees take the place of the community and the trainer that of the professional.

In this type of training the trainer can never be a mere lecturer. He must play the very complex and difficult role of facilitator. He facilitates a learning process in which the trainees, and he, can tackle and deal with the different problems they

experience in their daily work. This trainer is not the omniscient leader, but more a co-traveller on the path of joint exploration.[11] His facilitation task is a very fluid one that cannot really be programmed beforehand; it can take him in any one or more of a number of directions depending on how that particular session progresses.

Training as capacity building

This participatory, open-ended training from which formal lectures are absent and where emphasis is not on knowledge transfer, may be regarded as _capacity building_. Capacity building is the direct opposite of knowledge transfer. Where knowledge transfer offers a fixed "truth", capacity-building discovers this truth through a participatory learning process. Where knowledge transfer relies upon the knowledge of the trainer, capacity building relies on the knowledge and experience of trainer _and_ trainees. Where knowledge transfer starts a process and then leaves its application in the work situation to the trainees, capacity building continues outside the lecture room to the extent that the distinctions between theory and practice and between academic and empirical become ever more difficult to trace. Capacity-building work is not done by the trainer alone but by a team consisting of trainer and trainees, supervisor and management. This kind of training becomes an integral part of the ongoing process of organization, management and system development.[12]

Some authors maintain that the capacity-building approach takes the focus away from the individual and places it on the group or team.[13] It is true that the group features very strongly, but this can never be to the detriment of the individual professional. In the end this individual must understand his duties and overcome his problems, because in most cases his membership of a work team is secondary to his individual responsibilities. Most of his duties are carried out in isolation. His supervisor is often physically removed from him and communication facilities are poor. For these reasons problem identification in a training session is handled through the nominal group technique in order to afford every individual professional the opportunity of bringing his view of his job and the problems he experiences to the attention of the trainer and his fellow trainees.

A knowledgeable trainer

From what has been said so far, it is clear that the trainer should have precise knowledge of the work situation and work environment of his trainees. The problem-solving, situation-specific, open-ended approach also requires of him to have a solid background corpus of knowledge for use in facilitation. This trainer should therefore have a broad knowledge of poverty situations in general and the development administration imperatives in these situations, _plus_ accurate knowledge and insight into the particular work situation of his trainees. Powell calls it "a careful and comprehensive understanding of the existing operational context",[14] and Shrivastava and Tandon regard "familiarization with and orientation to the context and people" as a necessary prerequisite for the trainer.[15] They specifically warn against a trainer's "walking in cold". It therefore seems necessary for the trainer to look into the organizational set-up within which the professionals work, into their work situation and environment. His enquiry can obviously not be exhaustive; it is exploratory. Such an enquiry must give the trainer a sound knowledge of the work situation and environment of the professional and must enable him to identify some of his problems. It must help him to understand something of the organizational background, the organization's mission and objectives, and must give him an idea of the way management thinks and the way in which the professionals lower down accept and interpret this thinking.

Progressive training

A professional must show progress in knowledge and understanding. Training must facilitate this. For this reason there must also be a progression in the training the professional receives. Training should be experienced step by step so that the trainee can progress from the basic to the advanced. This means that training simply cannot take place in one single session. One training session should be followed by a period in which the trainee can apply his new knowledge and understanding and test it to see whether it works. After a reasonable time a second training session must take place that will look into the experience of trainees in the interim and represent an advance upon the first session. This cycle must be repeated a number of times until the trainee has reached an advanced stage of knowledge and understanding.

In order to structure this cycle of training sessions and practical applications, certain practicals to be done by the trainees during interim periods must be prescribed. These practicals should always be linked to the following training session in order to ensure a steadily continuing movement from the previous training session, through the practical, and so on to the next session.

Training as part of management development

Training does not begin and end at the training session. It is not a discrete isolated entity. It must be seen as part of management development overall. When training is isolated as a separate event it becomes an end in itself instead of a means.[16] For this reason close co-operation should exist between trainer and manager or supervisor. The latter must continue what the former has started. Training continues from the training session into the everyday situation. The trainer cannot always be present and so the manager or supervisor takes over training during the trainee's periods of practical work.

Note that training can never be "added on" to the organizational strategy. Professionals must do their job in harmony with the philosophy of their organization and must share the organization's vision. Training too must therefore also be in harmony with the organization's philosophy and vision and must form an integral part of organizational strategy.[17] If part of the organization's strategy, it cannot be anything other than an integral part of management. This means a high compatibility between training and management and an integration of organizational and training objectives.

If training is to be totally integrated with organizational strategy and management practices, it follows that it should enjoy official status. This means, _inter alia_, that training should also include the assessment of trainees and the issue of certificates to the successful. Trainees should be kept in no doubt as to the standing of such certificates _vis-à-vis_ other certificates and diplomas. Obtaining the certificate should therefore be prescribed by the organization and the status respected by management.

The creation of self-reliance, awareness and the correct attitude

Training's main objective is not to transfer knowledge. Its problem-solving orientation has little to do with knowledge transfer, but a lot to do with facilitating self-reliant action in order to solve problems. Any organization's main objective in human resource development should be to have self-reliant officers in the field. Related to this objective is the objective of creating a certain awareness among the organization's professionals. Training must bring awareness among the trainees first, of the environment of deprivation within which they work; second, of the plight of human beings in this situation; third, of the special task of an organization such as theirs in addressing this problem; and, fourth, of the complex nature of this kind of work.

Closely related to the creation of special awareness is attitude development. It is a well known fact that a clinical execution of professional duties is not enough in this line of work. The correct attitude is of prime importance. Many a problem has in the past been experienced as a result of an incorrect attitude among professionals. This "wrong" attitude usually manifests itself in aloofness and a businesslike approach in rendering services instead of in compassionate help in solving a problem. Training must change the former attitude into one of compassion and dedication, a determination to assist the poor to become self-reliant.

Conclusion

Training for development has come quite some way along the road. Very high expectations have been toned down to more reasonable levels. But this is not enough to ensure its success. Its inherited shortcomings must be addressed as a matter of urgency. Training can play a very important role in development; but if its weaknesses are ignored, it is bound to go the same way as many a previous development effort. Training for development is therefore standing at the crossroads. It has the potential to fulfil many of its expectations. It also has the potential to be rendered worthless by its own shortcomings and take the path to redundancy. Wise and responsible decisions at this point are therefore imperative.

This article has done little more than identify a few of training's more important shortcomings and suggest several imperatives. Mere acknowledgement of these will unfortunately not be sufficient. What are needed are wise and responsible decisions from development organizations (who are the clients of training), and trainers and training institutions to deliver the goods: goods in the form of decisions that will put training for development on the high road to success.

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West Africa's river basin organizations

Denis Fair, Senior Research Fellow at the Africa Institute, looks at the potential and problems of a particular type of regional organization in the development of West Africa's water resources.

A conference entitled "African development from a regional perspective" was held by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in 1969. It attempted to assess the possible advantages of a regional over a nation-by-nation approach to African development.[1] Could a regional view permit a more effective use of the limited funds available by overcoming the need to single out particular recipients, especially where development potentialities overlapped international boundaries? Various models were considered, one of them being lake and river basins as a possible spatial and organizational framework for the planning and implementation of multi-purpose international projects. Support for this approach had come from the adoption in 1966 of the Helsinki rules on the uses of the waters of international rivers. This was followed in 1970 by the initiation of an on-going study by the International Law Commission on the law of non-navigational uses of international watercourses.[2] Later, further interest was generated by the United Nations' seminar on river basin and interbasin development held in Budapest in 1975.[3]

Of immediate concern at the USAID conference was that in the early 1960s three international lake and river basin organizations had already been established in West Africa. By the early 1970s the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and a number of Western countries had become directly involved in assisting these multinational

bodies, financially and technically. Their origin lay in the perception that water is "a precious resource to West African peoples", especially that of its larger rivers, the Senegal and the Niger, which flow through the subhumid Sahel region bordering on the Sahara desert.[4] An increased interest in river basin development had been generated, too, by a decrease in the agricultural potential of many parts of the continent, especially for irrigated food production.[5]

The Lake Chad Basin Commission and the Niger Basin Commission, comprising four and nine countries respectively, were established as early as 1964. The Organization for the Management and Development of the Senegal River/*Organisation pour la Mise en Valeur du Fleuve Sénégal* (OMVS) had its origin in a conference held in 1962. Its present composition and organizational structure dates to 1972. In 1978 there followed the Organization for the Management and Development of the Gambia River/*Organisation pour la Mise en Valeur du Fleuve Gambie* (OMVG) comprising three, and later four, countries. In East Africa the Organization for the Management and Development of the Kagera River Basin was established in 1977. Nine countries fall within the basin of the Nile, Africa's longest river, and international agreements on the control and apportionment of its waters date to colonial times. But no formal river basin commission has yet been established to manage and develop its water resources, although an attempt to do so

was made between 1977 and 1981 by Egypt, Sudan and the East African countries. At the national level a number of countries in sub-Saharan Africa have used the river basin model as a development tool, among them Ghana (Volta River)[6], Nigeria (river basin development authorities)[7], Kenya (Tana River) and South Africa (Tugela basin).[8]

Internationally-integrated river basin organizations are, by their nature, more difficult to establish, manage and keep going than national ones. Their quest for hydrologic unity can so easily conflict with national socio-economic and political objectives. "What is best for the basin may not necessarily be the best for the country."[9] But the great advantage of the river basin as a development concept at the international level is still the essential need for a unified approach to the exploitation of its unique natural resource, water. This need, in turn, offers opportunities for the planning and implementation of multi-purpose, integrated projects of many kinds – watershed management, flood control, irrigation and agriculture, drainage, electric power generation, navigation, domestic and industrial water supply, recreation and wildlife conservation.

Clearly, though, the chances of success for an international river basin organization depend heavily upon its strict adherence to a limited number of objectives within the framework of the basin's hydrologic and ecologic unity. Even the water-related projects mentioned above

can involve a multiplicity of objectives and Bloch has shown that at least fourteen individual objectives have been enunciated for irrigation projects alone, in various African countries at different times.[10] The inclusion, then, of a wide range of social, economic and political objectives, in addition to those specifically related to the development of water resources, is clearly a recipe for failure.

This account, and some recent assessments, of West Africa's four lake and river basin organizations illustrates some of the successes achieved and some of the pitfalls experienced by these international bodies in their search for co-operative action.

Senegal River Basin Organization (OMVS)[11]

The Senegal River basin, 300 000 km^2 in extent, encompasses four countries – Guinea in the upper, Mali in the middle and Senegal and Mauritania in the lower reaches. In 1962 the four governments recommended the establishment of an interstate committee for the management and development of the basin and signed a convention to that effect in 1963. The committee got off to a good start. By 1965 $5 million had already been voted from the UN Special Fund for studies directed at increasing the irrigation and hydroelectric capacity of the river and at improving its navigability by building dams in its upper and lower reaches.

Like the Niger, the Senegal is a highly seasonal river. The average annual flow is substantial but the flow in the rainy season was much too great for the uses to which the river was being put at the time and too little for substantial increases in irrigation for the rest of the year.[12] Dam building to regulate the flow was an essential first step to developing the river's fuller potential.

In 1968 the four governments decided to expand their range of operations and created the Organization of Senegal River States/*Organisation des Etats Riverains du Sénégal* (OERS), the aims of which went well beyond those of a purely river basin organization.[13] The intention now was to integrate the economies of the member countries by forming a common market, instituting a monetary system to facilitate trade between them, and formulating joint social legislation and a common labour code. Longer term consideration was to be given to the co-ordination of their constitutional, economic and financial systems. The heads of state also took steps to co-operate more closely with the Maghreb countries (Morocco, Libya, Algeria and Tunisia) and even to establish an OERS military committee.

The organization, in fact, saw itself as the starting point for the closer economic integration of West Africa as a whole. This view was in line with the thinking of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) that such regional organizations could be the building blocks for a larger African economic community able to hold its own against the industrialized countries. Regional unity, it was believed, was the key to the unity of the African continent. In this sense, OERS anticipated the inauguration in 1975 of the Economic Community of West African States (Ecowas), which became operational in 1980.

Within this broader frame of activity, OERS continued to promote the development of the basin. Particularly important was the agreement in principle made in 1970 to build the Manantali Dam in Mali and another in the lower valley, although it was another 16 to 18 years before these structures saw the light of day. Further studies included a five-year pilot scheme for the conversion of traditional methods of agriculture to modern methods of irrigation and a three-phase plan for developing the river's navigational potential.

Stresses, however, soon appeared in OERS, less over a conflict of objectives than over political action. After a *coup d'état* in Mali in 1968 strained relations with its partners, the differences were patched up. More serious was the tension caused in 1970 by Guinea's accusations of an impending invasion by Senegal, which that country denied. Guinea responded by boycotting the meetings of OERS, and Senegal, in turn, resigned from the organization in 1971. Senegal then joined Mali and Mauritania in 1972 to form the OMVS, with the one limited objective of promoting the economic development of the river basin.
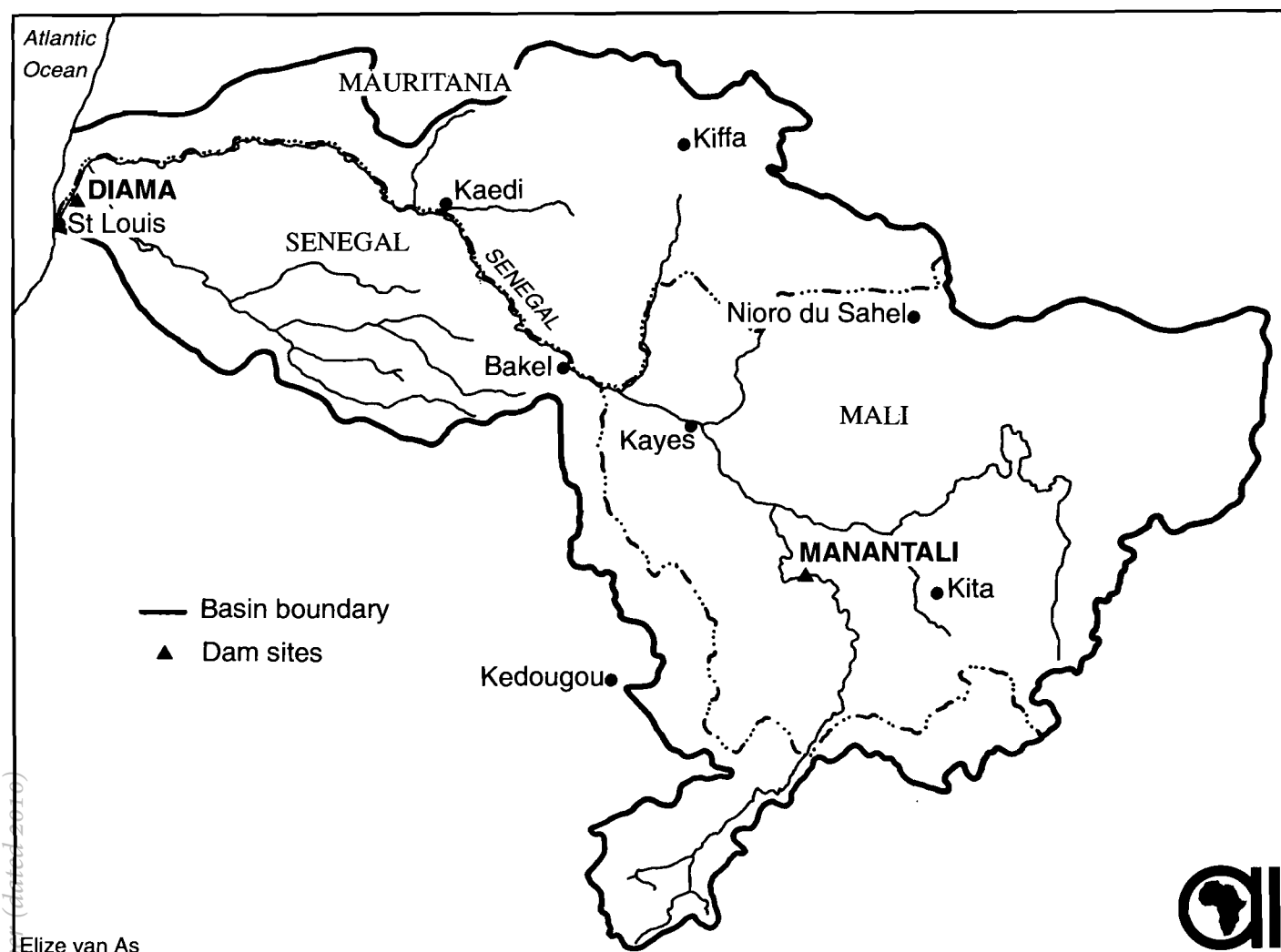
Visser has described the structure, composition, powers and functions of the new body in a well-documented paper.[14] The OMVS consists of four institutions – the conference of heads of state and government, the council of ministers, the high commissariat (the executive organ) and the permanent water commission (a consultative body). The OMVS, with headquarters at Dakar, continued with the OERS plan for the river. This meant seeking funds for the construction of the Manantali Dam and the Diama Dam, near the river mouth, the former to control the river's flow and the latter to stem the encroachment of salt-water from the sea and to hold back the river for navigation. Both dams would make nearly 400 000 hectares available for irrigation and provide domestic and industrial water supplies for the 1,6 million inhabitants of the basin (14 per cent of the total population of the three countries). Included in the plan, too, was the development of the coastal port of St Louis, the inland port of Kayes, ten intermediate staging ports and a navigation channel to give Mali a 950-km waterway to the Atlantic Ocean.

The main problem was raising funds for these projects in an inflationary environment. Not until 1976, following the devastating drought in the Sahel region, did money become available from European, American and Arab sources. Work started on the Diama Dam in November 1978 and on the Manantali Dam in May 1982, the cost of both being put at $830 million. The former was completed in November 1986 and the latter in March 1988. Manantali was the largest single civil works project ever carried out in the Sahel. A joint company was established by the three countries to maintain the dams and manage water supplies.

OMVS continues to face financial problems, however. In some instances donors have agreed to the cancellation of loans and their conversion to grants. Nor have funds been forthcoming for Manantali's 200 MW hydroelectric plant which, including the construction of transmission lines, has been costed at $1 400 million. The navigation project, too, has little chance of implementation since development agencies believe that returns would not justify the substantial outlay involved. In addition, irrigation plans are well behind schedule, only 54 000 hectares having been developed thus far out of the 100 000 hectares planned by 1990.

Other problems have arisen out of the switch from traditional to irrigation agriculture. While yields have increased, incomes have not – because of

Atlantic
Ocean

MAURITANIA

•Kiffa

DIAMA
St Louis

Kaedi

SENEGAL

SENEGAL

Bakel

Nioro du Sahel•

Kayes

MALI

— Basin boundary

▲ Dam sites

MANANTALI

•Kita

Kedougou•

Elize van As

Senegal River basin

the small size of plots, the inadequate use of modern farming techniques, low producer prices, the high cost of inputs, and indebtedness. The resulting low returns have meant that many farmers have reverted to their traditional flood recession techniques, and the governments, bowing to their needs, have agreed to open Manantali for four weeks in the rainy season to create an artificial flood. This means that sufficient water will not be available when required to meet the dam's potential generating capacity or to render the river navigable.

Of immediate and more serious concern, however, has been the friction between Mauritania and Senegal caused by border incidents and conflicting territorial claims. Bloch states that

... some of the most intense land tenure problems in Africa arise during the development of river basins. Riverbank

land is most tightly controlled and the most valuable in the arid and semi-arid regions and its value rises by an order of magnitude with irrigation.[15]

The *Economist Intelligence Unit* confirms that land along the banks of the Senegal River has become "prime agricultural property" since the building of the Manantali Dam.[16] In April 1989 violence broke out along the river between peasants from Senegal and cattle farmers from Mauritania, aggravated by the ethnic differences between them. The violence spread to Nouakchott and Dakar and diplomatic relations were broken off between the two countries. Exacerbating the problem is Senegal's claim that the border does not lie along the middle of the river as determined by a French colonial decree of 1933, but along the northern bank. Mauritania disputes this claim, which gives Senegal

the whole of the river's valuable floodplain. Despite attempts at mediation by the OAU and Mali, further outbreaks of violence in March 1991 have endangered the reconciliation process. The OMVS, regarded as a model of regional cooperation, now finds the river a serious source of dispute and its work has suffered in consequence.[17]

The Gambia River Basin Organization (OMVG)[18]

Senegal and Gambia sought assistance from the UN Special Fund in 1965 for a five-year survey aimed at an integrated conservation plan for the Gambia River. Further studies on other projects followed and the two countries created the OMVG in 1978, much along the lines of the OMVS. Guinea, where the river has its source, joined the organization in

1980 and Guinea-Bissau in 1983. Although the basin is relatively small, it is vital to the regional economic development of the four countries.

The aim of the OMVG was to build a series of dams, two in the upper reaches of the river for irrigation and hydro-electric power generation, and a combined barrage and bridge near the mouth to halt the intrusion of salt-water into potentially irrigable land and to improve Senegal's access to its southern region of Casamance. The headquarters of the organization were transferred from Kaolack to Dakar in 1982 where it would be easier to approach donor countries for development funds. Feasibility studies for the proposed projects have been completed with technical and financial assistance from USAID and UNDP but funding for construction, totalling $350 million, has still to be obtained. Donors have indicated some interest but only if the projects are spread over several years.

Internal financial and other difficulties saw the organization fall into a period of quiescence in the late 1980s. In an attempt to revitalize itself, costs have been cut, the high commission and the general secretariat have been replaced by an executive committee and staff numbers have been reduced. At a summit meeting in January 1991 it was decided to prepare a "global programme" with the aid of donors in order to get the organization's activities moving again.

Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC)[19]

Preparations for the formation of the Chad (later Lake Chad) Basin Commission started in 1962 and a convention and statute were signed by the heads of state of Chad, Cameroon, Niger and Nigeria in 1964. The organization comprises a commission, with a rotating presidency, and a secretariat.[20] The aim is to protect and develop the waters of the lake, which lies in the dry Sahel region. The lake has a catchment area of 427 300 km^2 and is fed by rivers that rise in the wetter regions to the south and south-east.

Early studies by the commission, with assistance from United Nations agencies, covered not only water resources and related agricultural and fishing activities but also sleeping-sickness and tsetse fly eradication, and the
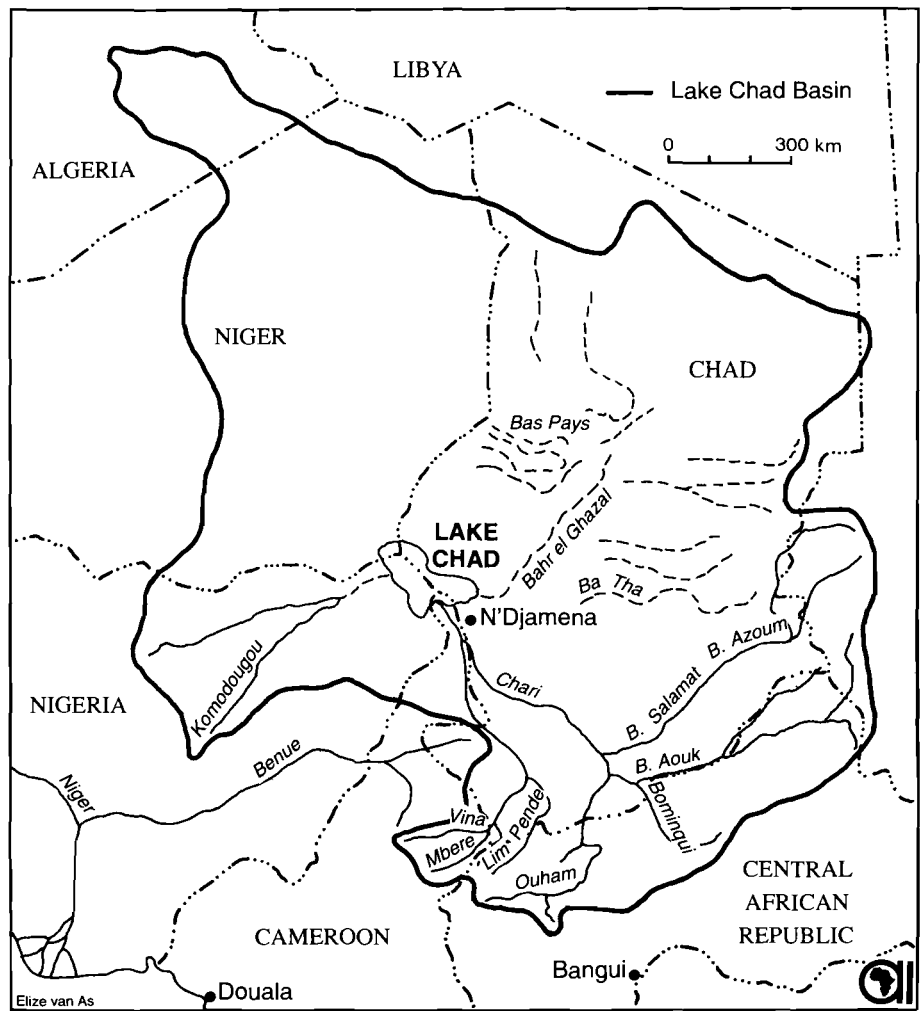

Lake Chad basin

development and co-ordination of transport and telecommunication links. The disastrous effects of the 1968-73 drought prompted the commission to intensify its efforts towards finding a solution to the water problem and to seek donor aid. But between 1976 and 1982, with civil war raging in Chad, its work languished and no meetings were held for four years.

Calls were made to resurrect the "moribund" organization, which had not lived up to the hopes expressed in 1964. The Chadian government complained of a "climate of suspicion" that had persisted among member states as a result of border clashes over fishing rights and accusations that Nigeria had diverted the waters of the lake for its own benefit. Some renewal of activity and trust returned with the drought of the mid-1980s when the lake basin was declared a "disaster zone". This setback led to the

calling of a joint summit meeting of the LCBC and the Niger Basin Authority in 1985 again to seek solutions to the water problem and to call on the international community for help. Little progress was made, however, and at a second joint summit in 1987 the Chadian head of state, who was then acting president of both organizations, again warned of "damaging self-interest" and emphasized the need for a greater political commitment on the part of member states.

In the face of formidable environmental problems and political and financial constraints, it is not to be expected that the commission's achievements have been anything more than modest. An LCBC summit meeting in early 1990 again appealed to donor agencies to give more generously towards protecting the waters of the lake. The basin suffers growing environmental problems. As a result of the
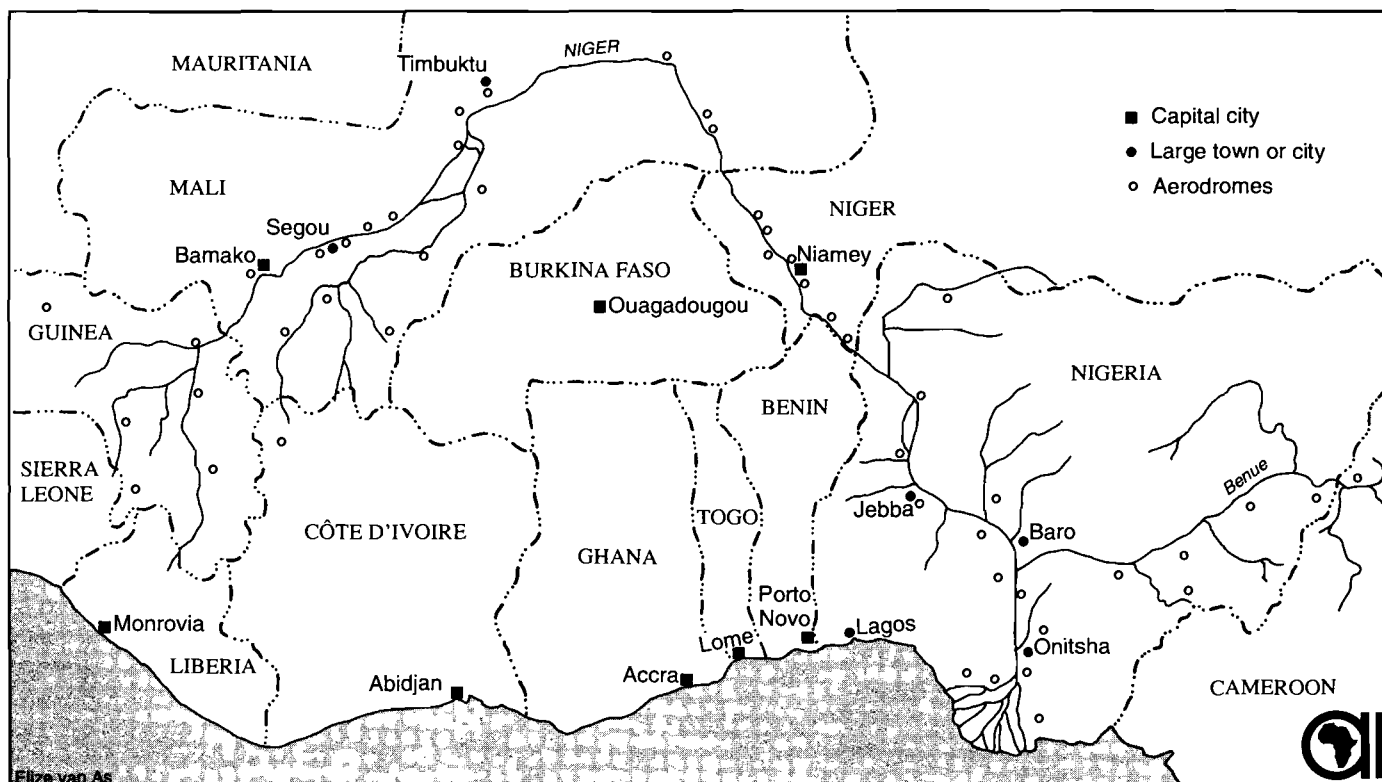
Niger River basin

recurrent drought, the water level of the lake has fallen, its surface area now reduced from 28 000 to 10 000 km². Wind erosion, the deposition of sand on arable land, alkalinization, salinization and the building up of sand barriers are all symptoms of worsening conditions and their deleterious effects upon agri-culture and livestock. The problem is exacerbated by human reaction, which includes deforestation, over-cultivation, over-grazing and the transition of nomads to a sedentary life around the lake; all contributing to conflicting and competing claims to land and water with which the commission, in difficult circumstances, is attempting to cope.

Niger Basin Authority (NBA)[21]

Colonial accords covering the interna-tional use of the Niger River for naviga-tion purposes date to 1885. These were declared invalid, however, by the nine riverine states concerned – Benin, Bur-kina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mali, Niger and Ni-geria – after their independence in the 1960s. In place of the accords a treaty in

1963 and an agreement in 1964 brought the Niger River Commission into being, aimed at promoting co-operation be-tween the member states for the integ-rated development of this 4 200 km-long river and its basin. The institutional structure comprised a summit of heads of state and government, a council of ministers, a technical committee of ex-perts and an executive secretariat.[22]

The early efforts of the commission were directed at improving the navigabil-ity of the river in its middle and upper reaches and a number of studies were undertaken with Dutch financial assist-ance. In the 1970s projects suggested for investigation were expanded to include water supply to towns, pollution control, power generation for the exploitation of the basin's mineral resources, irrigation to increase food production and stock rearing, and industrial to replace artisanal fishing. A comprehensive development plan was also contemplated to counter the effects of drought and a hydrologic forecasting system was embarked upon with UNDP assistance.

By the late 1970s, however, problems began to appear that jeopardized the commission's effectiveness as a regional

organization. Nigeria's head of state complained of the "lukewarm attitude" of member countries, of their failure to pay their dues and of "bureaucratic bottle-necks and a lack of political will". The officials of the commission, he said, "seem dazed and immobilised by the magnitude of the problems they face". In an effort to revitalize the organization, the commission declared itself the Niger Basin Authority in 1980. A development fund was established and a range of pro-grammes proposed. But continuing lack of financial and administrative discipline, loss of credibility with international donors and concern with objectives that were far too ambitious and wide-ranging encouraged "disillusionment" among the member states, fuelled also by the com-plaint that West Africa had too many small subregional organizations. For example, the interests of the Liptako-Gourma Integrated Development Autho-rity, established in 1970 and concerned with a part of the middle Niger basin, overlap in part with those of the NBA.

In a further bid "to shake off its leth-argy" members of the authority signed a new agreement in 1987 aimed at lim-iting its objectives, restructuring its

executive secretariat and improving its finances. In 1989 a five-year programme was adopted to investigate the long-term development of the Niger basin and to strengthen the NBA as a principal data source and reference centre for the region. An appeal was made for increased aid from international donors but in all its years the authority has still not been able to formulate a coherent master plan for the basin.[23]

Some assessments

Gould and Zobrist, writing prior to the unfortunate events of April 1989, consider the OMVS to be the most effective of the four river basin organizations "from a political perspective".[24] It has at least obtained finance for two dams despite criticism of certain ecological and agricultural impacts resulting from these structures. It has been successful, too, in resolving potential conflicts over competing development issues that could have resulted from the construction of the Manantali Dam. These involved, on the one hand, Mauritania and Senegal's interest in regulating the flow of the river for irrigation purposes and, on the other, Mali's concern with the navigation and hydroelectric power projects. A further achievement of the OMVS, in their view, is that it alone of the four organizations has prepared a comprehensive regional plan as a framework for the identification of projects and their fuller investigation. Overall, Gould and Zobrist consider that, with the exception of the OMVS, West Africa's river basin organizations have not been effective as co-ordinating bodies and, in consequence, have not contributed significantly to the economic development of the region. Their planning procedures are deficient, objectives are poorly defined and often unrealistic and political rather than economic solutions are often sought. More is the pity that the OMVS and the LCBC have not been immune to the political conflicts in which their member states have been embroiled.

Also writing before the 1989 setback, Visser's view of the OMVS is that its objectives, responsibilities and authority are well-defined and realistic; they are conducive to the integrated development of resources and the organization has all the powers necessary to perform its functions. Moreover, although decision making is in the hands of the politicians – "effective

cooperation cannot be achieved without political involvement" – technical experts and outside consultants are part of its institutional structure.[25]

He sees the role of these organizations in a hopeful light. He quotes the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) as saying that to most sub-Saharan African countries, when they gained their independence, of first importance was, among other concerns, their own economic development. They therefore tended to regard with caution such international arrangements as the integrated, multisectoral development of river basins. But African leaders are now increasingly realizing that in order to achieve the maximum exploitation of their water resources some degree of co-ordination and/or integration is needed:

Increasing realism towards the problems of the continent is conducive to the creation of structures which provide for feelings of nationalism as well as giving the opportunity to form a joint political will within the parameters of which effective development planning, co-ordination and integration can be reached.[26]

Since independence, both in West Africa and in sub-Saharan Africa as a whole, international and regional organizations have proliferated. They now cover customs and economic unions, specialist agricultural, forestry and fishery groups, aid and development bodies and many more in other fields. All, including the river basin organizations, have been grist to the OAU's mill in its quest for an overarching African economic community which it finally established by treaty at its summit meeting in Nigeria in June 1991.[27] The treaty allows the foundations to be laid over the next three decades of an integrated African economy aimed at developing the human and the natural resources of the continent for the benefit of all its peoples.

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Geopolitics, *glasnost* and Africa's second liberation: Political and security implications for the continent

In the second of a new series of articles on African military and security issues, Dr Simon Baynham, Chief Researcher in Political and Strategic Studies at the Africa Institute, examines the significance for Africa of recent upheavals in Eastern Europe and the USSR, together with new types of aid conditionality emanating from the Western hemisphere. He argues that a new criterion for external economic aid relates to levels of state expenditure on military budgets.

Introduction

A commentator noted earlier this year that when Mikhail Gorbachev succeeded Konstantin Chernenko to the secretary-generalship of the Soviet Communist Party in 1985, it seemed as if it was merely another change in the ruling political/bureaucratic élite. Very few observers – either inside or outside the USSR – thought that Gorbachev could unleash forces that within a few short years would have profound repercussions, not just inside the Soviet Union but also in Europe and across the Third World.[1]

Political and economic reforms in the USSR (*glasnost*: political openness; *perestroika*: economic restructuring) and the rapid replacement of seemingly entrenched and highly repressive regimes in Eastern Europe, blew fresh gales of change over the African landmass. They had major consequences for the continent, catalysing demands for democratic reform and an end to single-party hegemony. From Algeria in the north and Zambia in the south, and from Tanzania in the east to Ghana in the west, Africa's military and one-party dictatorships are

under attack as never before from an increasingly impoverished and deeply disillusioned populace.

In Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Togo, Madagascar and a host of others, students, trade unionists, public servants and the unemployed lumpenproletariat have joined hands to demand political reform, government accountability and democratic pluralism. Many of the more educated opposition have come to view political and constitutional change as an indispensable precondition for the economic regeneration of their countries – where corruption, maladministration, stagnation and decaying infrastructure and services have been the enduring hallmarks of public life for the past quarter century.

Echoing events in Eastern Europe, popular demonstrations and demand for change have been characterized by serious public unrest and bloodshed. In many instances, "copycat" demonstrations have spread from the capital to regional cities and towns and, in some cases, across frontiers to other African states, in a fashion reminiscent of the "domino theory" infection of commun-

ism in South-East Asia during the 1960s.

Western conditionality

Pressure for a radical shake-up has come not only indirectly from the former Eastern bloc but also directly from the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries, which regard the implementation of multiparty politics and open government as a *sine qua non* for structural adjustment and improvements in the economic sphere. Indeed, the two processes – political reform and economic salvation – are seen as inseparable.

Thus Britain, France, the United States and other countries have begun to serve notice on their erstwhile clients that financial aid is conditional, *inter alia*, on political reform and a movement towards free elections. For instance, Paris – which has for decades supported favoured former colonies and the *status quo* in francophone Africa – is using economic inducements (both carrot and stick) to urge Africa in the preferred direction.

Development assistance to the Third World is also increasingly likely to be tied to reductions in military spending. In a paper presented at the Annual World Bank Conference on Development Economics in Washington (25-26 April 1991), Mr Robert McNamara – who served as US Secretary of Defence from 1961 to 1968 and World Bank President from 1968 to 1981 – said that during the previous two decades, developing countries' military budgets grew twice as fast as incomes. According to McNamara, the developing countries are currently spending some $170 billion a year on weapons and their military services, totalling over 4 per cent of Gross National Product (GNP).[2]

He went on to link the question of military expenditure levels to the issue of democratic governance.

> One of the most important effects of military expenditure, which has serious implications for political advance and for economic growth and development in the Third World, is the degree to which it strengthens the political influence of the armed forces at the expense of civilian groups within society. In many parts of the Third World, economic systems function primarily to benefit a relatively limited number of people, and political systems are frequently manipulated to guarantee continued élite dominance. If development that meets the needs of all social groups is to occur, however, there must be, among other things, a relatively equitable distribution of resources. This in turn relies on the existence of a political system that allows all groups to articulate their demands and is capable of producing workable compromises between competing interests. The greater the political power of the security forces, the less likely it is that the requirements for democratic governance will be met.[3]

McNamara added that the post-Cold War era now offered opportunities for the Third World – not least Africa – to cut back on military expenditure so that resources could be reallocated towards investments that would improve the living conditions of the poor. His unambiguous conclusion is worth reproducing in its entirety.

> I strongly urge the linking of financial assistance, through "conditionality" to movement toward "optimal levels" of military expenditures. The "optimal levels" should take account, of course, of the external threat. The "conditionality" could take the form of the proposal contained in *Facing One World*, the report of the Independent Group on Financial Flows to Developing Countries, chaired by former German Chancellor Helmut

Schmidt. The Group, which included ex Presidents or Prime Ministers of Nigeria, Peru, Canada and Korea, urged that, when decisions concerning allocations of foreign aid are made, special consideration be given to countries spending less than 2 percent of their GNP in the security sector. The huge savings that many countries would make by reducing security spending to 2 percent of GNP or less could be used to address pressing economic and social needs. I am conscious that application of such conditionality will be difficult and contentious. Nevertheless, it is I believe an *essential* [*my emphasis*] part of the solution to the waste represented by excessive military spending in poor countries.[4]

The idea of tying development aid to reductions in the security sphere has also been endorsed by another financial heavyweight: the World Bank's recently retired president, Mr Barber Conable. According to him, the World Bank should examine how much a developing state spends on arms when considering making a loan to that country.

> The World Bank has to look at the level of military spending to determine the capacity of a country to deal with development issues in case there is a big diversion of resources into military spending.[5]

It is interesting to stress that the World Bank is the largest single source of aid to the Third World, lending more than $23 billion (R66 billion) per annum. Although Mr Conable's predecessors have been wary of military issues (at least while in office) since the bank is owned by 155 countries, many of which have military dictatorships, it is quite clear that the international community is witnessing a new emphasis by donors on sensible military expenditures, "democratization" and good governance as key yardsticks for Western economic assistance.

With regard to the last two criteria, Lancaster has noted that

> These two goals have some similarities but are not identical. "Democratization" is essentially an extension of the US concern with human rights and aims at encouraging freedom of the media, freedom of assembly, multipartyism, open political contests and fair elections. "Governance" is far more modest in its goals and prescriptions. Priority is given to removing political obstacles to structural adjustment programs and renewed growth. The emphasis is on accountability, transparency, predictability, and the rule of law in government, not on the prescription of specific political structures.[6]

It is important to note that the World Bank and the IMF do not force their policies on anybody. No government in Africa has to make use of their facilities. But those that do are required to fulfil certain lending conditions. Increasingly, however, the banks are insisting that these conditions encompass a move towards democratic institutions and accountability, together with an improvement in the field of human rights. Very few African states score well on any of these counts.[7]

African leaders' reactions

The response by Africa's ruling élites to the internal and external demands for political democracy and responsible government has been mixed. To date, the scoreboard might be divided into three categories.

First, there are those leaders who saw the writing on the wall before popular explosions removed them from office. Thus, a year ago in January 1991, voters in the former Portuguese colonies of Cape Verde and in Sao Tomé and Principe swept the ruling politicians from power after fifteen years of single-party domination.[8] And in March 1991, the West African republic of Benin (formerly Dahomey) became the third recent convert to multiparty democracy when free elections ushered in a new president, Nicephore Soglo, removing President Mathieu Kérékou from office after nineteen years of tyrannical rule.[9]

Other countries or groups of countries that have embarked, apparently genuinely, on the multiparty route include:

- the majority of the French-speaking states south of the Sahara – for instance, Côte d'Ivoire, where Félix Houphouët-Boigny, president since 1960, held two sets of elections in 1991; and Togo, where President Gnassingbé Eyadema "saw the light and conceded serious reforms in the nick of time";[10]
- the three mainland lusophone (and formerly Marxist) states of Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau;
- a number of English-speaking countries including Gambia, Ghana and Sierra Leone. Nigeria is in a slot of its own as it grapples with a transition from authoritarian military domination to two-party civilian rule.[11]

Second, there are a number of African leaders who have also seen the writing on the wall, but who are clearly attempting to "manage" the multiparty debate so as to preserve single-party domination and keep themselves in office. Examples in this category include:

- Zaire, where President Mobutu Sese Seko, who has held continuous office since 1965, has attempted to keep one step ahead of the opposition by creating scores of parties in a time-honoured strategy of *divide et impera*. Although Mobutu promised in April 1990 that he would hand over office to a democratically elected government within a year, no elections were in fact scheduled. It was only after the September 1991 mutiny of unpaid Zairean troops (which prompted thousands of foreigners to flee and saw the dispatch of French and Belgian paratroopers to the vast Central African country) that Mobutu appointed a "crisis government" headed by Etienne Tshisekedi. Tshisekedi's nomination appears to signal that Mobutu's 26-year rule is nearing its end.
- Cameroon, where President Paul Biya's government has reluctantly initiated a process of change, away from the monopoly of power enjoyed by the Cameroon Peoples Democratic Movement (CPDM), but in a fashion that suggests a less than wholehearted commitment to *de facto* multipartyism.
- Tanzania, where the sole ruling party, the *Chama Cha Mapinduzi* (CCM), is under threat from an independent ten-man committee, headed by veteran politician Chief Fundikira, which is stealing the thunder of a twenty-man commission set-up by President Ali Hassan Mwinyi. Critics of Mwinyi claim that his commission is simply a delaying tactic to maintain the *status quo* and that it is merely a manœuvre to legitimize one-party rule and CCM hegemony.[12]

The third group might be labelled the "recalcitrants" or the "die-hards". These are the leaders who have set themselves resolutely against any real political reform and who remain adamant that the *de jure* or actual monopoly of the ruling party must be maintained at all costs. The key countries figuring here are:

- Sudan – a country that has been at war with itself for 25 of its 35 years of independence and where the military dictatorship headed by General Omar el-Bashir shows no signs of moving with a political tide that is beginning to engulf the continent at large.
- Kenya, where President Daniel arap Moi remains rigidly opposed to multipartyism, designating its advocates as "criminals and subversives"[13] and arguing that party pluralism will inevitably engender tribal conflict and country-wide chaos. However, domestic critics counter that such divisions have also festered in Africa's single-party systems.
- Malawi, where the ageing Hastings Banda seems even more vehemently set against reform than is the leadership in Nairobi.
- Zimbabwe, where President Robert Mugabe's ideological support for single-party rule has been endorsed by a face-saving formula whereby other parties are permitted but the ruling Zanu-PF is committed to maintenance of the *status quo* in which the opposition seems doomed to a permanent place in the political wilderness.

Developments in Mali, Somalia and Ethiopia

However, the momentous events in Mali, Somalia and Ethiopia during the first half of 1991 – together with the as yet unresolved crisis confronting President Didier Ratsiraka in Madagascar – cannot have escaped the close attention of Africa's hard-liners. For in March this year, Mali's military dictator, General Moussa Traoré, was arrested and ousted by his own army following four days of anti-government riots in which hundreds of civilians died. As one fortnightly newsletter explained:

> For months [Traoré's] calculation appeared to be paying off, as it seemed that a country as rural and poor as Mali could resist change more easily than a more urbanised country with a larger middle class. Traoré's overthrow has demonstrated that this is not so and has illustrated the danger of resisting change.[14]

Two months earlier, in January 1991, Somali rebel forces achieved a military breakthrough against the central admin-

istration when President Siad Barre and his loyalist "Red Beret" presidential guards retreated under heavy artillery and mortar fire, first to an underground bunker at the international airport garrison, before fleeing Mogadishu in armoured vehicles towards the Kenyan border on 27 January.[15] Not very long afterwards, in May this year, opposition forces under the leadership of Meles Zenawi toppled the embattled regime of Mengistu Haile Mariam following years of debilitating civil war. In both Ethiopia and Somalia, the rebel movements had denounced government offers to discuss democratic constitutions and multiparty elections as simply a tactic to relieve pressures on their regimes.

Conclusions

Looking at these continental conclusions as a whole, what is remarkable is that in the twelve months between the June 1990 and June 1991 Organization of African Unity (OAU) summits, no fewer than nine African leaders lost their jobs – the highest turnover since the OAU was created at Addis Ababa in May 1963. And for the first time in post-colonial Africa, three presidents lost office in the course of just three months earlier this year in free and fair elections. More widely, at least 16 African dictators have been forced to permit opposition parties to operate legally during the past two years.

But while these developments raise real hopes for the better government of Africa, fundamental to any chance of sustained economic recovery, the surge towards multiparty democracy will inevitably mean a painful and extended period of adjustment – with parallel problems relating to domestic and regional security. As these countries move towards democratization on a continent where multiparty elections had become rarer than white rhinos, there is another risk. The risk is that the "second liberation" will change not just Africa's despotic rulers but also the continent's international borders.

However, as *The Economist* put it quite recently:

> That is something Africa may have to put up with. Peaceful secession, based on the freely expressed wish of a people, may be preferable to decades of debilitating civil war. It need not mean a wholesale redrawing of frontiers, or a licence to

every prosperous pocket in the continent to copy Katanga. But, after a generation of independence, Africa may have to shed some shibboleths to catch up with the rest of the world.[16]

Meanwhile the outside world – and especially given the Phoenix-like birth of new states from the fragmentation of the old order in Central and Eastern Europe – is providing a role model for ethnic/regional aspirations across the length and breadth of the African continent.

In the past of course, the OAU (and most of its constituent members) insisted that Africa's colonial borders must remain untouched and sacrosanct. But the OAU might now have to accept some negotiated adjustments to the continent's internal frontiers – especially given last year's go-ahead by Ethiopia's post-Mengistu administration for an independence referendum in Eritrea, together with the actual declaration of independent sovereignty by the predominantly Issaq Somali National Movement (SNM) in northern Somalia.

The OAU's acute dilemma on the issue, and the most likely options or scenarios confronting the continent, were crystalized by a leading British scholar at a Cambridge conference this year when he said that:

> ... although the great majority of Africa's current frontiers will almost certainly remain, there may be occasional cases where divorce along the lines of the Bangladesh secession becomes the answer – or alternatively, an opposition movement may retain tacitly accepted control over its home region, because the central government cannot conquer it and the insurgents cannot gain formal recognition of independent statehood.[17]

It is already becoming clear, however, that the emergence of African countries from the strait-jacket of authoritarian rule presents grave security risks for parts of the continent. In Somalia, for example, the end of Siad Barre's harsh administration has been replaced by murderous non-rule by competing armies in a country that once again openly reveals the grim reality of deep-seated primordial affiliations and inter-clan rivalry and suspicion.[18] Next door, in Ethiopia, the ousting in May of Mengistu by the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) may yet represent something of a false dawn: armed bandits plague the south-eastern region of the country and in the north millions are threatened with starvation. Meanwhile, thousands of polit-

ical and economic refugees are pouring out of Somalia into Kenya and Ethiopia, adding to the complexity of the Horn's problems and imposing painful security stresses on the region.

Yet while moves towards political pluralism are vital for Africa's long-term economic survival, they are not likely to yield quick results. Structural adjustment programmes – and the public sacrifices inherent in them – will put increased pressure on the continent's evolving polities and one can expect continued turmoil as a result. In short, multiparty systems will have to deal with the same (and for some time probably worse) economic dilemmas faced by their predecessors.

Earlier in this essay the positive consequences for Africa of reform in the socialist bloc were emphasized, as was the impact of the superpower rapprochement that, *inter alia*, paved the way for Namibia's independence and raised prospects for the end of other conflicts in the subcontinent. Yet the democratic revolutions in Eastern Europe, and the sensational developments that have occurred in the international system, may have far-reaching repercussions for Africa that may have negative consequences for the continent.

As Salim Lone has pointed out, the situation in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe is turning out to be infinitely more challenging for the West than was thought to be the case in the heady days of two years ago. Also the Western European nations are intensely preoccupied with the growing demands of 1992; and the devastating scope of the Gulf War has ensured that the industrialized countries will make the strategic Middle East region their main priority for some years to come.[19] All these developments have pushed Africa down the list of Western priorities. Indeed

> ... it quickly became clear that the much-awaited "peace dividend" – resources freed by the ending of the Cold War arms race – would be directed, ironically, not towards the poorest countries but back towards the very region with which the West had been involved in a major political struggle.[20]

The relaxation of East-West geopolitical tensions has also eroded whatever strategic significance superpower rivalry once provided. Put another way, and to quote Stephen Rosenfeld, an editor on *The Washington Post*, the

West "loses interest by virtue of having won the Cold War .... [Africa] stand[s] a fate worse in some aspects than being fought over – being ignored."[21]

On the other hand, the West has long-standing historical and moral commitments to the African continent. As a consequence – and so long as the contentious but admirable principle of a link between foreign assistance and political/economic reform is maintained – aid from the industrialized countries will continue to flow. So far, the coercion that is inherent in conditionality has not been spelled out in any great detail. Nonetheless, it seems clear that the rest of the 1990s will witness a clearer articulation, or more detailed specification, of the yardsticks (be they political, economic or those relating to human rights and military expenditure) that will increasingly influence donor handouts.

With regard to what appears to be the most recently added dimension of conditionality – that is, the guidelines focusing on defence spending – it is clear that the views and exhortations of people such as McNamara and Conable are unlikely to fall on deaf ears inside the foreign ministries and treasuries of the OECD states. Indeed, even the Japanese (whose terms of conditionality to date seem to be have been solely rooted in the commercial sphere) have jumped on the defence budget bandwagon – as evidenced recently in an address to a Wilton Park conference in England by Mr Yoshi Nogami, Tokyo's deputy director-general of the Middle Eastern and African Affairs Bureau at Japan's Foreign Ministry.[22]

As noted, Robert McNamara has specified that special consideration should be given to countries spending under 2 per cent of their GNP in the security sector. For the past few years, approximately two-thirds of Africa's states have been spending more than 2 per cent of GNP on their armed forces, while eight countries spend at least three times and in two of these cases – Angola and Libya – six times this figure (see table).

McNamara made it clear that the linkage of financial assistance to "optimal levels" of defence expenditure would be difficult and controversial, but he has also stressed that he views such conditionality as an essential check on the profligacy represented by excessive military spending in Africa

Military expenditure (ME) of selected African states 1988

Country	Expenditure US$ million	ME AS % GNP
Angola	1 181	12,0
Botswana	99	8,2
Egypt	6 086	7,8
Ethiopia	447	8,2
Libya	2 996	12,9
Morocco	1 138	6,0
Mozambique	74	8,0
Zimbabwe	386	6,3

Source: United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, *World military expenditures and arms transfers, 1989*, Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, October 1990.

and other parts of the Third World. He added that the global community must play a major role in creating an environment that would make this possible. In his view, actions should include guarantees from the UN Security Council of nations' territorial integrity; substantial limitations on arms exports; and tight control over the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems.

If this cocktail of imperatives can be successfully co-ordinated, there can be little doubt, *ceteris paribus*, that this new facet of "with-strings" or qualificatory aid will result in the steady transfer of resources from the military and security spheres to the civilian sector during the twilight years of the twentieth century.

So long as the major powers heed McNamara's calls for the creation of an enabling environment that makes this possible, bilateral and multilateral conditionality on military budgets may be able to catalyse socio-economic development without reducing national security.[23]

Notes and references

1 Joseph Takougang, "Is multipartyism the answer?", *Africa Events*, April 1991, p 34.

2 "The post-Cold War world and its implications for military expenditures in the developing countries", p 1. McNamara goes on to say that in the period 1978 to 1988, "the Third World imported US$371 billion of arms (nearly US$450 billion at 1988 prices), or over three-quarters of the arms traded internationally.... While these figures reflect the relative lack of domestic production capability in the Third World

and a legitimate concern to protect national sovereignty, there clearly is great scope for reducing Third World military expenditure by reducing arms imports" (p 15).

3 *Ibid*, p 21. The paper continues on the same page: "When security forces claim for themselves a role in guaranteeing internal security for a society, they are not, in most cases, seeking to make all citizens equally secure. Indeed, their actions often create greater instability. All too frequently, the security forces are not protecting a majority of the population from a minority bent on pursuing its own political and economic objectives, instead they are seeking to guarantee 'regime security' (which often means 'military regime security')."

4 *Ibid*, p 22.

5 *Sunday Times* (Johannesburg), 1 May 1991. Mr Conable's views were given to a news conference on 26 April.

6 Carol Lancaster, "The new politics of US aid to Africa", *CSIS Africa Notes*, no 120, 28 January 1991, p 3.

7 *Financial Mail*, 26 April 1991, p 28. In a leading article on the impact of World Bank/IMF policies, the weekly continues on the same page as follows: "Whether bank policies have been a success in Africa is open to argument. Certainly the [World Bank] appears to have evidence of substantial and durable progress in other parts of the Third World, in particular South America. It certainly acknowledges that African countries have indulged in such extreme and intransigent economic and social degradation that too many of its small national economies have became basket cases.

"The extremity of their deprivation may mean that what the bank prescribes will take longer than expected to bear fruit. Often, too, progress is slow as African rulers have to be cajoled into the application of policies that are not in the

interests of the socialist bureaucrats that 'liberation' spawned in Africa. But when it comes to the interests of ordinary people – especially farmers – the bank has the most to offer".

8 The election result in Cape Verde came as something of a surprise to the leader of the opposition Movement for Democracy (MPD), Carlos Veiga, a 41-year old lawyer. The MPD won some 65 per cent of the seats. "The irony of it all is that Cape Verde, under the [ruling African Party for the Independence of Cape Verde], has been a relatively stable and prosperous country in the region. The party of Prime Minister Pedro Pires had hoped to win most of the 79 parliamentary seats on a platform of political continuity .... [Cape Verde] is the first of Portugal's five former colonies in Africa to abandon Marxist dogma and one-party rule, and liberalise its economy after the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe." *Africa Events*, February 1991, p 23. In Sao Tomé and Principe, the ruling party lost to the opposition Democratic Convergence Party, which won 30 out of the 55 parliamentary seats. For further details, see Pierre Botha, "Multiparty elections in Sao Tomé and Cape Verde", *Africa Institute Bulletin*, vol 31, no 5, 1991, p 4.

9 The almost Byzantine complexity of Benin's independent history up to and after Kérékou's October 1972 coup is examined in Simon Baynham, "Praetorian politics and the Benin raid", *Army Quarterly and Defence Journal*, vol 107, no 4, October 1977, pp 422-34.

10 *Africa Confidential*, vol 32, no 7, 15 April 1991, p 2.

11 It is interesting to note that Nigeria's large northern neighbour, Niger, also began talking (in September 1991) about implementing a two-party system similar to the Nigerian model.

12 In fact the debate on multiparty pluralism was actually initiated not by Mwinyi but by the former president, Julius Nyerere. "Inspired by reforms in Eastern Europe – and (according to one diplomatic source) severely shocked by the collapse of the state apparatus in the ill-named German Democratic Republic – Nyerere, still CCM chairman, came out with a shock announcement ... in February 1990, by questioning the appropriateness of Tanzania's single-party system, forcing CCM diehards to sit up when he said that 'what is happening in Rumania, Hungary and East Germany can also happen here if we don't change'". Simon Baynham, "Tanzania 1990: Economic and political developments", *Africa Insight*, vol 20, no 4, 1990, p 258.

13 It seems paradoxical that the politically obdurate Moi presides over one of Africa's most successful economies. For an assessment of the country's relatively positive economic performance, see Simon Baynham, "The Kenyan economy: An

overview", *Africa Insight*, vol 19, no 4, 1989, pp 225-32.

14 *Africa Confidential*, vol 32, no 7, 5 April 1991, p 1. On the same page, the newsletter goes on to say that the coup against Traoré "may now have a knock-on effect in other French-speaking countries which have been unenthusiastic in the implementation of reform, especially Niger and Guinea".

15 The forcible overthrow of Siad Barre began in earnest in May 1988, when the Somali National Movement (SNM) – a predominantly Issaq opposition group from the north of the country – began its campaign by orchestrating unrest in the north and launching unprecedented attacks against government buildings and offices. "In response, the authorities ... started a full-scale military campaign aimed at curbing support for the rebels, a process that saw the systematic saturation bombing and slaughter of civilians. Nevertheless, growing popular discontent against the administration – meshed with renewed

speculation that a struggle for the presidential succession was in progress – led to an intensification of attacks on military targets by a variety of insurgent forces. At the same time, food and fuel shortages sparked off anti-government riots in Mogadishu and provincial urban centres". Simon Baynham, "Somalia – The rise and fall of Siad Barre", *Africa Institute Bulletin*, vol 31, no 5, 1991, p 2.

16 *The Economist*, vol 319, no 7708, 25 May 1991, p 64.

17 Christopher Clapham, "The African state", paper delivered at the Conference of the Royal African Society on "Sub-Saharan Africa: The record and the outlook", St John's College, Cambridge, 14-16 April 1991, p 19.

18 "The clans have subdivided, forming militias around subclans. There are at least three of them among the Darod, and several among the Hawiye. For the eight months since Mr Barre fled to his home region in the west of the country, they have been

fighting. A peace agreement, signed in July, has had little effect. Government, if that means a stable bureaucracy and the rule of law, does not exist." *The Economist*, vol 320, no 7723, 7 September 1991, p 54.

19 "Political liberalization builds in Africa", *Africa Recovery*, vol 4, nos 3-4, October-December 1990, p 10.

20 *Ibid*, p 9.

21 *Ibid*.

22 Mr Nogami said that when Japan allocated its aid, it looked at the proportion of the national budget spent on defence and whether the country in question was moving towards good government and a market economy. For details, see *The Star* (Johannesburg), 3 October 1990.

23 This conclusion, and a distillation of the arguments about the new litmus test on military spending, also appears in Simon Baynham, "The new conditionality: Swords into ploughshares?", *Africa Institute Bulletin*, vol 31, no 8, 1991.

The dilemmas of land policy in Zimbabwe

*Jeffrey Herbst, Assistant Professor of Politics and International Affairs, Woodrow Wilson School, Princeton University, analyses the tensions inherent in the Zimbabwe government's land policy**

Introduction

It is not too much to say that in one way or another the fate of property rights in the land area will be a key determinant of the shape of Zimbabwe's entire political economy in the years to come.

Land was the central issue during the liberation struggle for Zimbabwe and continues to be the most important domestic issue in the post-Independence period. The appropriation of African land by European settlers guaranteed white economic domination and black poverty during the colonial period, and the inequitable distribution of land in Zimbabwe today is the most dramatic symbol of the enduring structures of an unequal society. The evolution of the government's efforts to address the land question is of great importance because of the peasants' expectations that their long-held grievances will be addressed as the new regime redistributes property formerly held by white farmers.

The land question promises to continue dominating Zimbabwe politics during the 1990s because of the expiration of the Lancaster House Constitution and its prohibition on government expropriation of land. In the run-up to the 1990 elections, Zanu

politicians repeatedly stressed the importance of accelerating land redistribution once these unpopular constitutional provisions lapsed. In December 1990 Parliament passed a bill that allowed the government to seize farm land and pay whatever compensation it chose. But this new land policy, with its potentially dramatic challenge to property rights, obviously clashes with Zimbabwe's efforts to reform its economy and promote domestic and foreign investment. A close examination of the politics surrounding land during the first ten years of Zimbabwe's independence also makes it doubtful if the new land legislation has addressed many of the most significant problems that caused the perceived failure of the government's resettlement programme in the first place.

Inequitable land distribution

Land has been a central issue in Zimbabwe ever since the coming of the colonists.[1] By 1910, 23,4 per cent of the land had been appropriated by whites, and 26 per cent had been declared Native Reserves, later to become known as Tribal Trust Lands.[2] The Land Apportionment Act (LAA) of 1930 legalized the division of the country's land, and prohibited members of either racial group from owning land in areas assigned to the other. By this time, 1930, 50,8 per cent of the land had been declared "European," while 30 per cent had been reserved for the African population. The herding of

Africans into overcrowded Reserves and the blatantly discriminatory policies against African farmers, designed to protect fledgling white farmers from competition, meant that "by the end of the 1930's, the agricultural economy of the Shona and the Ndebele, like that of the Kikuyu and most South African peoples, had been destroyed."[3] Not surprisingly, since control over land was essential to the whites achieving economic and political dominance, their appropriation of land became the most important African grievance.

In 1977 the land laws were amended, and racial classifications were abolished, except for the 47 per cent of the land reserved for Africans (now know as Communal Lands). However, since few blacks could afford to buy white farms, the racial division of the land at Independence in April 1980 was not significantly different from what it had been a few years before.[4]

There are also considerable inequalities in the quality of the land held. At Independence, 74 per cent of all peasant land was in areas where droughts are frequent and even normal levels of rainfall are inadequate for intensive crop production.[5] Similarly, in areas where blacks were permitted to own land (previously called African Purchase Areas, but now known as small-scale commercial farming areas), 75 per cent of the land was located in regions where, at best, only extensive crop and livestock farming can be carried on. In contrast, most of the large-scale commercial white farmland

is concentrated in good rainfall areas where intensive crop production is possible. The Communal Lands have a population density of approximately 28 people per square kilometre compared with nine people per square kilometre in formerly white areas,[6] even though the Communal Lands are less able by far to support intensive cultivation and large concentrations of people.

This inequitable distribution of land doomed most peasants to ever-worsening poverty. By 1979, the population of the Reserves exceeded their carrying capacity by approximately two million people.[7] Zimbabwe's major commission of inquiry into incomes and prices, the Riddell Commission, bluntly summarized the economic problems caused by the inequitable distribution of land:

> The most fundamental constraint on raising the incomes of families in the peasant sector to a level that will meet their minimum needs is land shortage.[8]

At Independence in 1980, the nationalist leaders made it clear that redistribution of land was a central element in their vision of Zimbabwe. Robert Mugabe stated in Zanu (PF)'s 1980 election manifesto:

> It is not only anti-people but criminal for any government to ignore the acute land hunger in the country, especially when it is realized that 83 per cent of our population live in the rural areas and depend on agriculture for their livelihood.[9]

The President has also stated that, because of the importance of land in the lives of the people, "We can never have peace in this country unless the peasant population is satisfied in relation to the land issue."[10]

However, despite the importance of this issue to the people, the Zimbabwe government was severely restricted. The Lancaster House Constitution required that all land acquired by the government be purchased on a "willing seller-willing buyer" basis and that owners of any land seized by the government be compensated in foreign currency. The land provisions of the Constitution were an essential part of the bargain between the white government and the black guerrillas and could not be changed for ten years.[11]

The white farmers were formidable opponents for a new government seeking to redress some of the inequalities in land ownership. The provisions in the Constitution, indeed, were symbolic of the key role white farmers retained in

the economy. At Independence, white farmers produced approximately 80 per cent of the country's total agricultural output.[12] Further, they accounted for nearly all the tobacco, tea, coffee, and sugar the country exported. And while black peasant farmers have made enormous strides during the first decade of independence, it is clear that white farmers still dominate the agricultural sector.

What makes the white farmers especially powerful is their extremely good organization. Their status as the most powerful and sophisticated political group in Rhodesia can be traced back to the passage of the Farmers Licensing Act and the subsequent establishment of the Rhodesian National Farmers Union (RNFU) in 1942. To meet the demands of World War II, the colonial government needed the farmers' co-operation in increasing food production. And the farmers were able to use this leverage to persuade the government to pass the Licensing Act. This made it mandatory for all commercial farmers to buy a farming licence from the newly formed Union.[13] To this day, the Commercial Farmers Union (CFU), as the RNFU became after Independence, is possibly the only farmers' union in the world enjoying a government-enforced closed shop. This closed shop allows Zimbabwe's white farmers to undertake costly research and lobbying exercises of enormous sophistication.

Thus, at Independence in 1980, the lines were drawn between a government committed to redressing the inequitable distribution of land and a white farming community whose extraordinary economic dominance stemmed from that same distribution of land. At the same time, the government was committed to working with the white farmers and had agreed to constitutional provisions inhibiting it from any radical changes in land distribution for a whole decade. Indeed, there was probably no more controversial question at Independence than how the new regime would be able to resist the political power of the white farmers and fulfil the promises concerning land that it had made during the liberation struggle.

The evolution of Zimbabwe's land programme, 1980-1990

Upon gaining power in April 1980, the Mugabe government initiated a pro-

gramme to resettle 18 000 families on approximately 1,1 million hectares of land at a cost of Z$60 million.[14] Half this programme was to be funded by the British government; Zimbabwe would pay for the remainder. Seeing the clear inadequacy of this programme in a country where 800 000 peasant families faced severe land pressures, the government soon decided to embark on something much more ambitious. In the three-year *Transitional Development Plan*, published in November 1982 and covering the period 1983-85, the new government stated its intention of resettling at least 162 000 peasant families, "subject to practical financial and economic constraints."[15] This was an exceedingly ambitious goal because it meant resettling approximately 20 per cent of all the nation's peasants. The new programme implied the purchase of nine million hectares (the equivalent of 57 per cent of all white agricultural land before Independence) and an expenditure of at least Z$570 million.[16] Owing to these and other constraints, the government subsequently scaled down its immediate goals. In Zimbabwe's *First Five-Year National Development Plan* (covering the years 1986-1990) the government set a new goal of resettling 15 000 families during each year of the Plan.

The government resettlement programme has lagged considerably behind the admittedly ambitious targets set by these two National Development Plans. Land acquisition and family resettlement certainly did increase impressively during the first three years of independence: by the end of 1983, over 15 000 families had been resettled. But because of the severe economic crisis caused by the unprecedented three-year drought between 1982 and 1984, land purchase and resettlement soon began to level off. After good rains in 1985 and 1986, the programme encountered a number of additional problems, resulting in a slow-down in the total number of people resettled. For example, in the financial year 1986/7, funds were made available for only 2 750 families to be resettled instead of the original target of 15 000.[17] By 1988, the government had resettled approximately 42 000 families on approximately 2,6 million hectares of land.[18] By the end of 1990, the number of families resettled had risen by only 10 000 to a figure of 52 000;[19] and the 162 000

family goal, which the government had once hoped to reach in three years, is nowadays seen as the eventual target for the entire resettlement effort.

Explaining the evolution of the land programme

The reason for the consistent failure to meet resettlement targets has been the subject of considerable debate. By pointing to the constitutional provisions regarding land, many government leaders explicitly suggest that the main reason for failure has been the need to meet the willing seller-willing buyer provisions of the Lancaster House Constitution. In addition, some have suggested that the political power of the white farmers has prevented the government from fully implementing its plans. Thus an investigation of the political, administrative and economic facts influencing the land programme will go some way towards developing an understanding of how the land programme may evolve now that the government is free of the Lancaster House land restrictions.

To truly appreciate the way in which the land programme has evolved, it must be noted that it is pointless to judge the progress of the resettlement programme by the public goals set for it. These goals were never realistic, and the government made virtually no effort to transform its stated targets into reality. Conversations with present and former government officials have revealed that the figure of 162 000 families, which is now accepted by everyone in Zimbabwe to have been the target for the resettlement programme, was developed with little reference to government abilities or the actual situation in the country-side. A former Ministry of Lands official said in an interview: "The 162 000 families figure was just a figure produced. No real calculations went into the figure." Similarly, a Ministry of Lands official in the Mashonaland region noted in another interview; "We were totally mortified by the 162 000 figure. Neither the land nor the money was available for the goal."

It is even unclear whether the goal adopted in 1986 of resettling 15 000 families a year was conceived of as a target that could be translated into an achievable programme. I asked officials of the resettlement programme in each of Zimbabwe's eight provinces what the Five-Year Plan's goal of resettling

15 000 families a year implied for their province. The response of one Masvingo Province official was typical: "I don't know. I have not addressed myself to how many would be resettled here." Or, as one Manicaland Province official said, "Government resettlement goals are not translated into budgets. The goals from the top bear little resemblance to what actually goes on."

The National Plans, therefore, may be read as essentially ideological statements from the regime detailing what it would like to do, not as blueprints outlining what in fact it was actually going to do. The planning and budgeting – the real stuff of government – has never been undertaken, or even seriously contemplated, for resettling 162 000 peasant families. Indeed, the very restrictions of the Lancaster House Constitution may have encouraged Zimbabwe's leaders to make exaggerated estimates of the number of families that could be resettled. After all, when the gulf between rhetoric and reality became obvious, the Mugabe government could always assert that the externally-imposed Lancaster House Constitution kept it from actually engaging in any true programme of radical land reform.

The best way to understand Zimbabwe's resettlement programme is to ignore the targets stated in the different development plans. The starting point for an analysis of the land programme should be the original programme of resettling 18 000 families in three years, the only goal ever supported with a committed budget and real plans. That programme was completed; and resettlement then continued, though at a slower pace. Indeed, the 52 000 families resettled after ten years is not far off the 6 000 families a year goal set in the original budget. This is not a matter for astonishment seeing that governments must run on real budgets and concrete plans. But those who look simply at the societal balance of power miss seeing the facts in this way. Far from being derailed, the only land programme ever seriously planned in Zimbabwe stayed on course more or less happily for a whole decade.

The programme's accomplishments

Although the programme has not achieved its stated aims, what it actually achieved should not be underestimated.

During the first year and a half of independence, the Mugabe government resettled 8 600 families on 520 000 hectares of land. Thus, in only eighteen months, it managed to transfer only 10 per cent less land than Kenya reallocated under its smallholder resettlement schemes between its own Independence and 1976.[20] Kenya has resettled more people (63 000 families had been resettled through official government programmes by the end of 1975), but these figures result in part from better agro-ecological conditions in Kenya, which allow more intensive farming per unit of land. Set alongside this, Zimbabwe's resettlement programme – conducted by a young government with no experience in this area – must be seen as a substantial achievement.

The Lancaster House Constitution must also be examined in its proper context if the evolution of the land programme is to be fully appreciated. The black liberation forces did not win a military victory in 1980. Probably they could have won; but outright victory would have taken a further year or more at the very least, and would have resulted in thousands of additional deaths among black combatants and peasants and the destruction of a large part of the country's infrastructure and of its agricultural and industrial base. The land provision of the Lancaster House Constitution was an essential part of any political solution to the war, because the last settler government could not have compromised unless its most important constituency, the white farmers, were at least to some extent reassured about their future.

Indeed, through the first ten years of independence, the Mugabe government used its strict observance of property rights to attract a considerable amount of foreign aid from around the world. For instance, Dr Bernard Chidzero, the Senior Minister of Finance, Economic Planning, and Development, recognized that the constitutional bargain was essential to Zimbabwe's future:

> We have a constitution that guarantees property rights. It is as watertight as any constitution you can ever imagine. We cannot therefore expropriate or nationalize without compensation, and if we do, it requires changing the constitution and it is not very easy to change the constitution. We have accepted the constitution and we live by it. Therefore, we respect property rights.[21]

The fact that the Mugabe government was attentive to the rights of white farmers, arguably the most racist section of the white population and the backbone of Ian Smith's Rhodesian Front, did much to add to Zimbabwe's prestige.

Constraints

There is, of course, no doubt that the method of purchase mandated by the Lancaster House Constitution has been a major constraint on the land programme. The government has consistently been unable to appropriate the funds needed to purchase anywhere near the amount of land the programme's stated goals would require. However, in the early years of the programme, land-acquisition costs amounted to only 44 per cent of the total costs incurred in resettlement.[22] So even if Zimbabwe had been free of the Lancaster House provisions, funding would still have been a very significant problem and the government would have had great difficulty in resettling a significantly larger number of peasants. The highly sophisticated and technical approach Zimbabwe has taken to resettlement – involving complex geophysical plans, thoroughly demarcated plots, and the construction of roads, schools, and clinics for each project – has probably contributed as much to the funding problems of resettlement as have land-acquisition costs. This sophisticated approach will no doubt pay dividends in the future; but it is important to recognize that the method of land acquisition demanded by the Lancaster House Constitution was far from the only obstacle to resettlement.

Organizational barriers

While land-acquisition costs are important, other things, too, have influenced the pace of resettlement. First, the government simply does not have the organizational expertise to resettle people significantly faster than it did in the first years of independence. For resettlement in Zimbabwe is an extraordinarily complicated task involving literally government-wide co-operation. One Department of Rural Development document lists twenty-five ministries, departments, and parastatals with a role in the resettlement programme.[23]

Another example. Even at the resettlement programme's moderate pace, the provision of vitally needed water

resources for newly resettled farmers was difficult for the government to co-ordinate. It proved, in fact, the most serious obstacle encountered. In interviews, resettlement officials constantly emphasized the water problem, bemoaning the fact that some peasants had essentially been dumped on newly acquired land while geophysical surveys were still being conducted to search for the necessary water resources that might, or might not, be there.

Of course, if Zimbabwe could have simply seized well-watered commercial farming land, the water constraint would not have been nearly as important. But owing to the Lancaster House provisions, the government was forced to focus much of its resettlement efforts upon land that needed a great deal of preparation before it could be farmed. These Lancaster House provisions, then, by effectively requiring the government to buy the land needing the most work, put tremendous strains on the already weak resettlement bureaucracy.

Apart from their organizational problems, the resettlement administrators have come to realize that the original emphasis on the value of resettlement was over-optimistic. This realization has been prompted by two simple facts that too many people who study Zimbabwe's land problems fail, or refuse, to recognize. First, as a result of population growth alone, Zimbabwe's Communal Lands are producing the equivalent of approximately 40 000 families each year, and nothing can be done to change this fact in the short to medium term.[24] So even if the government managed the Herculean feat of resettling 162 000 families, in four to six years' time the Communal Lands would once more be facing the same land-pressure problems as they did in the early 1980s. Second, there are already 263 000 farm-workers and their families on white farms, and these people will have to be resettled first (since they have nowhere else to go) if the farms on which they work are acquired by the government.[25] While this problem has yet to become significant (because most of the land so far used for resettlement had not previously been farmed, or had been abandoned during the war), it could begin to have an impact in the near future.

The cumulative impact of these facts has caused what one Ministry of Lands official called a "sea change" in thinking

about resettlement. He said in an interview that there had been a "creeping collective consciousness that resettlement alone would not be enough." A provincial official in Mashonaland also mentioned "the realization that resettlement is not going to solve the problems of the Communal Lands." Similarly, a Masvingo official said: "in this part of the world I don't really see resettlement making a major impact."

Instead of focusing entirely on resettlement, government officials have recognized that the land-use patterns in the Communal Lands themselves can and should be changed to increase the land's carrying capacity and provide better economic opportunities for peasant farmers. The history of the Communal Lands is a history of more and more people being forced on to the same piece of land with little attention paid to rational land-use patterns. There is thus great potential for redevelopment here. Although the shift to redevelopment of the Communal Lands has received relatively little attention in Zimbabwe, the Five-Year Plan actually called for a major reorganization of these areas to help 20 000 families a year.[26] And while this target was as unrealistic as the Plan's goal of resettling 15 000 families a year, the fact that the number of families to be assisted by changes in the communal areas is greater than the number to be resettled reflects a basic change in government thinking.

White political power

The bureaucracy's organizational problems, their evaluation of the resettlement programme, and the presence of under-used land have until now, together, obviated the need for white commercial farmers to come into conflict with the government on land policies. For instance, Jim Sinclair, at one time President of the Commercial Farmers Union, noted that farmers had not had to pressure the government on the land issue: "If we believed they could do it [resettle 162 000 families], we'd be a lot more worried."[27] Certainly, as far as the land issue is concerned, there is nothing approaching the co-ordinated pressure tactics the white farmers orchestrate annually in order to obtain higher agricultural producer prices.[28]

While white agricultural power did not come into direct conflict with the

land resettlement programme before 1990, the white farmers did lose a few skirmishes. In terms of actual land law, commercial farmers were unable to prevent the passage of the Land Acquisition Act of 1985. The Act's most important provision was to allow the government the right of first refusal on any rural land being offered for sale.[29] This provision gave the government substantial control over land supply and may have had an effect on the price of land. The Act also established a Derelict Lands Board to enable the government to seize abandoned land.[30]

From observation of more informal government practices, it is also less than clear that white political power significantly influenced government's land policy. For instance, the CFU tried to persuade the government to indicate well in advance which farming areas the resettlement bureaucracy intended turning into resettlement areas so that farmers could plan accordingly. But the government consistently refused to commit itself to identifying the land it planned to purchase. And this refusal to indicate in advance the land it intended to acquire had the effect of reducing the commercial farmers' leverage, because they were forced to make investment decisions though unsure how long they would actually be allowed to remain on the land. If white commercial agriculture was really influencing the land programme, the farmers would at least have been able to force the government into saying which land it was going to transfer to the peasants.

The white farmers have influenced government's thinking, however, in a more subtle manner. The role commercial agriculture plays in the economy of Zimbabwe is so daunting that government officials have, of necessity, been quite cautious in tampering with it. Politicians and civil servants involved in the resettlement programme are well aware that, in a country still reliant on agriculture and unwilling to be dependent upon South Africa for food supplies, changes in land-tenure patterns could have an absolutely disastrous impact on the nation's future if carried out incorrectly. For instance, former Minister Enos Nkala, a hard-line Zanu(PF) supporter who was hardly known for his sympathy for whites during the liberation war, said, "It would be quite possible to distribute everything we found, but after that, what?

The answer is too ghastly to contemplate."[31]

The risk-averse tendencies of the bureaucracy were strengthened by the government's failure to develop a vision of the way in which Zimbabwean agriculture should evolve over the next twenty years or so. No view has emerged concerning what roles white agriculture should play – nor what functions should be left to the communal farmer. As a result, bureaucrats saw the downside of resettlement but were much less clear on the advantages that might accrue from a policy involving certain risks. This attitude, to be expected in a new country undertaking a venture without precedent in the region, was just another fact that has forestalled the need for whites to begin actively pressuring the government.

The political power of the white farmers, therefore, has been important, but by no means consequential, in the government's land-policy decisions. The power these farmers exercised was not so much in direct lobbying as in contributing to an atmosphere of risk-aversion by stressing the importance of their commercial agriculture: they tried to influence the "atmospherics" of the land debate by stressing the dangers of drastic change, by giving wide circulation to reports that argued against quick resettlement, and by highlighting the importance of white commercial farming to Zimbabwe. Emphasizing the need to go slow was particularly easy in Zimbabwe because the government itself had decided to err on the side of caution when changing the agrarian system, and because it had not enunciated a clear vision of the country's agricultural future. In addition, the government simply did not have the organizational ability to resettle peasant families at a rate significantly faster than it was doing.

Lack of countervailing political power

Organizational and technocratic decisions were allowed to dominate Zimbabwe's land policy because peasant farmers were unable to bring significant political pressure to bear on the government. The National Farmers Association of Zimbabwe (NFAZ), the mass organization representing Zimbabwe's 800 000 peasant families, was only a small, non-political organization

before Independence.[32] Naturally, the organization has faced severe logistic and organizational problems in expanding into a national lobbying group designed to represent the total interests of the country's smallholders. As a result, the NFAZ has not had a particularly powerful voice in the political conflict over land policy. As one extension official noted in an interview:

> The peasant farmers aren't really organized to present their views. The channels barely exist for peasant farmers to have a national voice... . There is no mechanism [for peasant farmers] to actually have an impact on the Ministry of Lands ... . There is no way to translate land pressure into policy.

There does exist another black farmers' union in Zimbabwe, but it has not had a very significant impact on the resettlement programme either, although for different reasons. The Land Apportionment Act of 1930, which legalized the division of the colony's land, did create certain areas where land could be bought outright by blacks. These 9 000 or so black freeholders are now represented by the Zimbabwe National Farmers Union (ZNFU). The ZNFU is in a conspicuously poor position to influence the land programme and has had little impact on government policy. As outright landowners, the small-scale farmers the ZNFU represents were sometimes accused of collaborating with the colonial regime during the liberation struggle; and the existence of black farmers committed publicly to individual ownership has caused some friction with the new socialist government. In addition, this group of farmers has shown neither the productivity of white farmers nor the spectacular gains of peasant farmers.

After years of silence, the ZNFU began to argue that master farmers and agricultural institute graduates (rather than the communal farmers represented by the NFAZ) should be resettled on land purchased from white farmers.[33] Indeed, the President of the ZNFU openly criticized the 162 000 family goal as "unprofessional" because the wrong people might be resettled.[34] While there is not an explicit alliance between the ZNFU and the white farmers on land, it is clear that the interests of black freeholders are probably more closely aligned with those of white farmers than with those of the black peasants.

The 1990 Land Law

With the expiration of the Lancaster House Constitution, the Mugabe government quickly moved to enact land legislation that, it asserted, would enable it at last to meet its long-postponed goals concerning resettlement. The Act in question gives the government the right to confiscate land and pay whatever compensation the state believes is fair. The farmer has no appeal against the land valuation judgment. It appears that the government at one time considered including an appeals provision, but decided later to make no concessions to white farmers at all on this point.[35] The celebrations that broke out in Parliament after the bill was passed provided a poignant reminder that many in the country viewed this new Act as finally signalling the triumph of black revolution after ten years labouring under the provisions of the Lancaster House agreement. To the government, the new legislation marked a dramatic break with the (perceived) failure of the land policies of the past. As President Mugabe noted,

> We failed to achieve our target of acquiring enough agricultural land to resettle 162 000 communal farmers for various reasons. The position has now been renewed.[36]

It remains, however, unclear just how dramatically the new land legislation will affect the politics of resettlement in Zimbabwe. There are, in fact, several significant reasons for believing that the new legislation will have much less of an impact than is believed by the many who celebrated when the provisions of the Lancaster House Constitution were swept away. Zimbabwe may be facing a significant political problem here because the nation's leaders have raised considerable expectations concerning what the new law can achieve – although in fact they will probably not be able to resettle families at a significantly faster pace than before.

First, the new legislation goes against the thrust of Zimbabwe's economic policy for the last ten years and its recently announced economic reform programme. As noted above, Zimbabwe used the Lancaster House restrictions to demonstrate to the world that property rights were taken seriously in the country and that no investor would ever have to fear confiscation. Now if there is to be new investment under the economic reform programme, businessmen must be certain that the government is enforcing property rights. Indeed, as North and Thomas make clear in their economic history of Europe, government enforcement of property rights is an important precondition for savings and investment.[37] The new legislation, for the first time in independent Zimbabwe, suggests that property rights are now in doubt. For instance, Enock Dumbutshena, Zimbabwe's first black Chief Justice said the land legislation "flies in the face of all accepted norms of modern society, and the rule of law."[38] The current chief of the judiciary, Mr Justice Gubbay, has also criticized the new land legislation.[39] Similarly, the head of the International Monetary Fund has warned Zimbabwe that the new land legislation may threaten investor confidence.[40] Of course the government has declared that it will not take land from "productive" farmers. But the spectre of the government's constantly threatening to evaluate productivity and continually intervening in the land market will only further increase uncertainty on the role of property rights.[41]

It is probably impossible at this point for Zimbabwe to disentangle the issue of land from the more general question of investor confidence and property rights. Indeed, the continual emphasis over the last ten years on Zimbabwe's respect for property rights has all but guaranteed that each and every investor will closely monitor the evolution of the land issue and may very well decide not to invest if Zimbabwe follows a confiscatory land policy. Nor will investors be reassured by the rhetoric emerging from top leadership. For instance, shortly after the land law was passed, President Mugabe said:

> Our view in the party and government is that nothing must stand in our way to the acquisition of any land we identify and designate for resettlement. Whilst we concede the principle of fair and reasonable compensation, we cannot brook any contentious arguments or disputes in court on this subject.[42]

Indeed, Zimbabwe's leaders seem to have gone out of their way to lock themselves into a confrontation over property rights. For instance, the Minister of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Development, Witness Mangwende, said in early 1991 "The land question is a time bomb which must be solved now."[43] This extraordinarily dangerous rhetoric may

be left over from the period when Zimbabwe's leaders knew that, whatever their stated intentions, the Lancaster House Constitution provided a credible guarantee of property rights. Since the new land legislation was passed, however, such impassioned rhetoric on land will have a direct effect on investor confidence. Zimbabwe may yet proceed with *de facto* expropriation of white farming land. But the costs will be high indeed.

In addition, the new land legislation probably does not even touch on some of the real obstacles to resettlement. It certainly takes political power away from white farmers. But, as we noted above, the formal exercise of white political power has never been a real determinant of the pace of resettlement. Indeed, the relative ineffectiveness of direct white political power was once again made clear during the debate on the new land legislation. For instance, Minister Mangwende told white farmers that

> The [land] policy is not negotiable. The only useful debate that government is willing to entertain about the resettlement programme is on the implementation of modalities.[44]

Many of the bureaucratic obstacles that have afflicted the land programme over the last ten years are still there. The organizational weaknesses afflicting the resettlement bureaucracy have not been resolved. As a result, it is unclear if the government can significantly increase the speed of resettlement. As one British diplomat noted,

> We have a problem where government capacity to implement the [resettlement] programme has deteriorated. Here we are looking at the capacity to plan or effectively appraise projects in the programme and management of actual implementation.[45]

The Ministry of Agriculture itself has admitted that a shortage of manpower is seriously hampering resettlement efforts.[46] Further, efforts to rein in spending in order to control the budget deficit, a key aspect of Zimbabwe's new reform programme, may hinder the development of an administrative cadre capable of managing significantly larger resettlement plans, all the more so since the country's new economic reform programme calls for a 25 per cent reduction in the civil service.[47]

Finally, Zimbabwe still lacks a vision of how agriculture will evolve in

the future. Indeed, it is striking that political leadership now talks of resettling 110 000 additional families, thereby bringing the country to the 162 000 family goal originally propounded in the early 1980s. The fact that this goal has no rational basis has not affected the plans announced and probably indicates that relatively little additional planning has been done on how agriculture will evolve. As the quotes from President Mugabe indicate, resettlement in and of itself seems to be the goal (rather than any true reform of agriculture) as Zimbabwe enters the twenty-first century.

The lack of vision is important because it means that the government is still susceptible to arguments that significant increases in resettlement will be a direct threat to the country's agrarian base. Indeed, suggestions that the new land reform will grievously weaken Zimbabwe's agrarian sector are already being made by white farmers with renewed emphasis. For instance, at a crisis meeting to discuss the new land legislation with Minister Mangwende, white farmers estimated that fulfilment of the government's resettlement pledges would cause total agricultural production, currently at Z$836 million, to drop by $190 million; and exports, which presently totalled Z$570 million, to decrease by Z$161 million.[48] These arguments can also now be combined with the more general fear that the new land legislation will affect overall investor confidence. When putting forward this argument, the white farmers may have powerful allies in the bilateral donors, the IMF, and the World Bank, both of whom are concerned that expropriation of land will irreparably threaten investor confidence in Zimbabwe. We may thus infer that the land law does not really touch the most important means by which white agrarian power has traditionally been expressed, and that while Zimbabwe's leaders demonstrate great bravado when addressing peasant audiences, they may hesitate before taking significant new steps that would dramatically change the nation's agricultural pattern.

Other factors that caused the resettlement bureaucracy to re-evaluate the benefits of resettlement are still present. Although Zimbabwe has been highly successful in disseminating contraceptive technology, population growth in rural areas will continue to outrun any conceivable resettlement effort. Indeed,

during the first decade of Zimbabwe's independence, while the goal of resettling 162 000 families was being re-affirmed, it has been estimated that another 300 000 families, more or less, were being created in the rural areas. The black farmworkers' problem will also have to be confronted if Zimbabwe really does begin to resettle families on what has been prime white commercial agricultural land.

The clash between the political leaders' genuine desire to accelerate the land programme and the numerous organizational and political barriers to resettling more than 6 000 families a year will produce considerable frustration. One way in which the government may try to distract attention from its failure to reach its new goals may be to expropriate some of the land actually owned by the black freeholders, represented by the ZNFU. It is perhaps in response to this threat that the head of the ZNFU has warned the government not to run down commercial agriculture into "another communal type" and has commented favourably on many of the proposals the CFU had put to the government.[49]

Conclusion

The land question symbolizes many of the contradictions of post-Independence Zimbabwe. The liberation struggle was fought in large part because of the inequitable distribution of land; but the country has not only preserved the old structure of land ownership but gained considerable prestige by not challenging the property rights of the white farmer. In the 1990s the government wishes to encourage investment, but is now embarking upon a land programme that could severely shake the confidence of precisely those investors it needs to attract. How successful the Mugabe government is in resolving these contradictions will be a key determinant of the country's ability to meet the development challenges of the 1990s.

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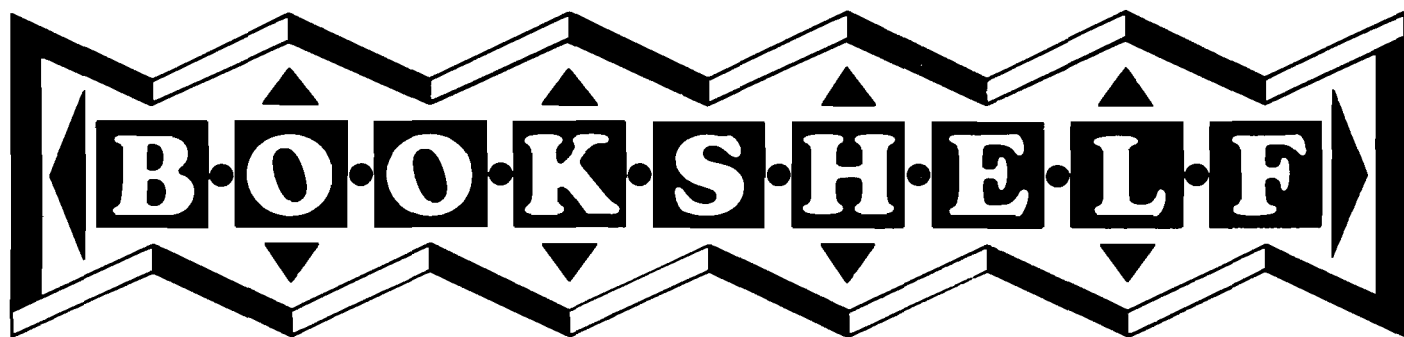
Review

Gilles Perrault, **Notre ami le roi.** *Paris: Gallimard, 1990. 367 pp, ISBN 2-07-071981-2.*

The publication, in August 1990, of Gilles Perrault's book on King Hassan II caused great concern in Moroccan official circles. It was not long before *Notre ami le roi* disappeared from the shelves: the entire stock had been bought up by the Moroccan authorities. The extent of the Alouite sovereign's concern may be measured by the fact that in November he complained to the French foreign minister, Roland Dumas, for the fact that the publication of Perrault's work had been permitted.

A reading of the book fully explains the reaction of the Moroccan government. This biography of Hassan II reads as a horror story, in which the King is depicted as a despot whose interests seem limited to the persecution of his enemies and to the enjoyment of buffoons and easy-going women.

This brief synopsis may arouse doubts about the relevance of reviewing a book of this kind in a scientific journal. However, both the importance of the topic and some aspects of Perrault's work seem to justify analysis.

Of all the Maghrebian countries Morocco is the one retaining a form of government compatible with local traditions, both political and religious, in spite of some aspects of the *Makhzen* that cannot be easily equated with orthodox Islam. In a region divided by a fierce struggle between Western-style socialism and a rising wave of Islamic fundamentalism, Morocco may play a most important role by providing a moderate conservative solution, as Saudi Arabia has been doing in the Middle East. The same assessment applies to King Hassan, a man of charisma and also a wielder of real power. Although the Alouite sovereign is the head of "a constitutional, democratic and social monarchy" he does not merely reign. He also rules and exercises extensive powers, since he "presides over the council of Ministers", which is responsible simultaneously to the King and to a popularly elected Chamber of Representatives. In addition, the monarch enjoys extensive powers regarding the dissolution of the Chamber of Representatives and fulfils the latter's function until a new Chamber is elected.

With regard to Perrault's book itself, one should start by saying that, however biased it may be, *Notre ami le roi* is not a lightly written work of sensationalist journalism. Its author was able to integrate his analysis of the present monarch and regime within the broader framework of a past full of paradox, which helps to explain an even more paradoxical present. Perrault's analysis of Morocco's recent past is a valid one, pointing out those aspects most important in the shaping of independent Morocco:

> The little more than nominal character of the Cherifian sovereigns' power over most of their Empire.

> The role played by the French protectorate in the centralization of the *Makhzen*, a process that, in the long run, favoured the consolidation of the monarchy. Although subjection to France placed the Sultan into a humiliating situation of dependence, the protectorate served the interests of the dynasty since, once the colonial yoke was broken, the Alouites' power was far more real than in 1912.

> The role played by Islam in the construction of contemporary Moroccan nationalism, is in fact instrumental in the shaping of the differences distinguishing independent Morocco from the neighbouring republics of Algeria and Tunisia.

This positive appreciation of Perrault's analysis of Morocco's recent history is also applicable to his analysis of that country's contradictory present. He identifies fundamental factors such as the combination of popular fidelity to the throne with a desire for major reforms; the coexistence of socialism and an authoritarian monarchy; the constitutional character of a monarchy based, nonetheless, on the concept of divine right to rule; and the possibility of agrarian reform that has left wealthy landowners better off than before.

A reading of the book produces the impression that the main objective of its author was to present King Hassan's regime as a totally despotic state, ruled by a sovereign who is presented as a combination of a bloody tyrant and of a womanizer, not without a good deal of courage, demonstrated at the massacre of Skhirat, and even more, when his Boeing was attacked, over the Mediterranean, by rebel pilots of the Moroccan Air Force.

Perrault offers the reader an image of the Cherifien monarchy matching the classical descriptions of Eastern despotism: the brutal torture of political prisoners, summary

executions, faked suicides of disgraced politicians, heavy sentences imposed on defendants who seem genuinely ignorant of their participation in rebellion, political prisoners kept in the most degrading conditions at remote gaols, the incarceration of the relatives of political adversaries, and prisoners kept in gaol after the completion of the sentences imposed in court. A rosary of scenes that seemed extracted from a horror film moves in front of the reader while the author discusses the trials of the presumed participants in the July 1963 plot, of the commandos of Basri and of the personnel of the air base of Kenitra suspected of involvement in the attack of the royal plane; the punishment of those officers and men involved in the massacre of Skhirat, the persecution suffered by General Oufkir's family after his disgrace and pretended suicide; the inhuman conditions at the gaols of Fazmamart and Kenitra, provide enough concrete examples of the above enumerated violations of what the Western world considers as basic human rights.

It is not easy to ascertain the veracity of the events described by Perrault, even though he provides very detailed information concerning names, dates, places and other circumstances related to those situations discussed in his book. Whatever the level of accuracy of Perrault's analysis, however, the kind of situation he describes does not differ greatly from that found in other non-European countries and, as such, cannot be used impartially to demonstrate that Morocco is ruled by a particularly evil government.

Perrault's short analysis of Morocco's economic situation suggests that he is not altogether impartial in his approach. He mentions the poverty of the majority of the population, the enormous costs of the war in Western Sahara, a growing external debt, ever rising food prices, and so on. Once again, this is a situation similar to that found in most non-industrialized countries, as a result of a combination of circumstances that, in general, are only partly the government's fault. It is interesting that Perrault's brief reference to the economic situation omits any mention of a positive kind since King Hassan's succession.

King Hassan's own memoirs, *The challenge*, published by Macmillan in 1978, note the remarkable successes achieved in the fields of housing, health, education, construction, agricultural modernization, industrialization and mining, despite a constant battle with problems caused by the demographic explosion that characterizes the late twentieth-century Maghreb. It is true that historical criticism considers that memoirs do not constitute, in general, very reliable sources of information, since they may be used by their authors in defence of their reputations. Nevertheless, any defendant is entitled to present his case, and monarchs should not be deprived of this right. As such, it seems that the sovereign of Morocco is entitled to present his case and to claim what he intends to have done for the benefit of his country. Besides that, the information presented by him on economic matters is backed by what seems to be valuable statistical data, which may help a well-prepared reader to draw his own conclusions.

Whatever suspicions one may entertain about the accuracy of Perrault's work, it certainly deserves to be read, since it represents an example of a common Western approach to the analysis of non-leftwing Third World regimes.

Eduardo Serpa

Famine and survival strategies *by Dessalegn Rahmato. Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 1991. 247pp. ISBN 91-7106-314-5.*

The principal questions in this study of famine in Ethiopia are: What do peasants do in the face of severe food crisis and ecological stress, and how do they manage to survive on their own? Community co-operation and post-famine recovery are important to the answer. The book centres on a case study conducted by the author in the Awraja district in the Ambassel Wollo province in north-eastern Ethiopia, the region hardest hit by the 1984-85 famine. Rahmato also critically examines other literature on famine response.

Renamo: Terrorism in Mozambique *by Alex Vines. York: University of York, 1991. xi + 176pp. ISBN 0 85255 354 4.*

The author describes Renamo as a successful rebel movement that has limited the secure government presence to the towns and operates in all ten provinces of Mozambique. He also shows that what makes Renamo different from most successful rebel groups is that the equation between popular support and rebel strength does not generally apply. Most of Renamo's support from the Mozambican peasantry is obtained by means of terror and coercion. The study attempts to demonstrate that Renamo is a military-based organization, not an umbrella for numerous groups of un-coordinated "armed bandits", or loosely aligned warlords, as is sometimes depicted. Vines also looks at the depth of South African influence over Renamo's tactics and objectives.

Amilcar Cabral's revolutionary theory and practice: A critical guide *by Ronald H Chilcote. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1991. xii + 292pp. ISBN 1-55587-058-9.*

The study introduces Cabral's writings on colonialism and imperialism, nationalism and national liberation, class and class struggle, and the state. Also included are verbatim texts of Chilcote's interviews with leaders of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde, to assess the impact of Cabral's thinking on those who followed in his path. A comprehensive bibliography of works by and about Cabral completes the book.

Mauritius: Democracy and development in the Indian Ocean *by Larry W Bowman. Boulder: Westview Press, 1991. xiv + 208pp. ISBN 0-8133-0508-X.*

Larry Bowman provides the reader with a historical background, a look at the diverse cultural heritage and the issue of language, the politics of independent Mauritius, the economy and Mauritius's international relations. The book also contains many photographs of prominent personalities and places of interest. Describing Mauritius as the emergent "little tiger" that hopes to become "the Hong Kong of the Indian Ocean", the author outlines the remarkable economic growth experienced in the 1980s by a country that has not needed new standby agreements with the IMF since 1986. He concludes by saying that the challenge for Mauritian leaders and the public in the 1990s will be to sustain what is unique about the island without sacrificing either core cultural values or the island's physical beauty.

Malawi and Madagascar: The political economy of poverty, equity and growth: A World Bank comparative study *by Frederic L Pryor. Washington: Oxford University Press, 1990. vii + 470pp. ISBN 0-19-520823-4.*

This book is the first of several volumes emerging from the comparative study, *"The political economy of poverty, equity and growth"*, sponsored by the World Bank. The study was undertaken to provide a critical evaluation of the economic history of selected developing countries in 1950-85. Malawi and Madagascar were paired for joint study because they represent two low-income East African countries with similar initial conditions of development. The author shows how Malawi, popularly regarded as an example of African capitalism, may be viewed as more socialistic than Madagascar in its ratio of public expenditure and public investment to gross domestic product.

African economic reform: The external dimension *by Carol Lancaster. Washington DC: Institute for International Economics, 1991. viii + 82 pp. ISBN 0-88132-096-X.*

According to the author, Africa needs not only increased financial support, but more coherent support from the developed countries to fight its poverty, debt and dependency on foreign aid. Too often international agencies and governments within and without the region have worked at cross-purposes, wasting their resources and energies on well-meaning but un-coordinated and even conflicting initiatives. The study proposes a new initiative involving the cancellation or concessional rescheduling of public bilateral debt of reforming African countries through a new international mechanism that would replace existing ones such as the Paris Club and the World Bank Consultative Groups. The end-result would be the building of a system in which economic need and performance, not political favouritism, would play the principle roles in how debt and external financing in general are managed.

Choosing sides: Alignment and realignment in the Third World *by Steven R David. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991. xii + 247 pp. ISBN 0-8018-4122-4.*

Taking as case studies four African countries — Egypt, Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan, the author investigates the reasons why their leaders changed their alignments during the Cold War. His findings have led him to question many of the accepted generalizations about Third World behaviour in international relations. He argues that the political decisions on alignment are made by leaders determined to maximize their personal political survival rather than considerations of the preservation of the state against external threats. He also maintains that the end of the Cold War notwithstanding, it will remain important to understand the international performance of Third World states.

Extension alternatives in tropical Africa *by Jon Moris. London: Overseas Development Institute, 1991. 184 pp. ISBN 0-85003-105-2.*

Noting that the debate about agricultural extension services has been dominated by financial considerations, Jon Moris argues that it should rather be a knowledge of field constraints that informs the policy choice between alternative institutional structures for extension in Africa. He draws on twenty-five years of personal experience of development programmes in Africa to make suggestions for improving African extension performance.

Rent-seeking and economic growth in Africa *by Mark Gallagher. Boulder and Oxford: Westview Press, 1991. xi + 185 pp. ISBN 0-8133-8283-1.*

An increasing number of expatriate development practitioners have now begun to record and reflect on their experiences in Africa. In this book Mark Gallagher, a former foreign service officer with USAID, asks why it is that the usual economic variables do not account for the differences in growth among African countries nor the declines in per capita incomes. He also speculates on why policy reforms have proved so difficult. His conclusion is that this is because some people in Africa benefit from harmful policies. This leads him to the important concept of "rent-seeking". Using data from twenty-two African states, he also analyses the relationship between rent-seeking and political pluralism.

The urban informal sector in Africa in retrospect and prospect: An annotated bibliography. *Geneva: International Labour Office, 1991. x + 86 pp. ISBN 92-2-107747-0.*

This bibliography lists much of the literature on a sector that has become of increasing interest to those concerned with development, and in particular urban poverty. The annotations on urban Africa are considered in the context of other work done on Asia and Latin America. The literature is classified under a number of headings: general and sector-specific studies; formal-informal linkages; credit and finance; education and skill formation; women in the informal sector; policies and constraints; and direct interventions.

The Horn of Africa: From war to peace *by Paul B Henze. London: Macmillan, 1991. xii + 248 pp. ISBN 0-333-51359-2.*

Looking at the roles played by the United States and the Soviet Union in the Horn (Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia and Sudan), the author concentrates in the first part of the book on the long road to the present. The following section focuses on militarization, crisis and degeneration, to demonstrate how and why the Horn of Africa became one of the world's prime disaster areas. In the third part he tries to point the way to a better future for the people who live in the region. In an appendix the author also discusses certain topics that did not fit into the narrative, but are important for their bearing on the major themes of the book, such as Eritrea, Tigre and some explanations of names in the Horn.

Making adjustment work for the poor: A framework for policy reform in Africa. *Washington, DC: The World Bank, 1991. viii + 141 pp. ISBN 0-8213-1640-0.*

The document deals with the World Bank's understanding of the links among conceptual, empirical and policy issues involved in the integration of social and economic policies and programmes. The broad theoretical underpinnings of the Social Dimensions of Adjustment (SDA) Programme in Africa policy approach are explained. This sets the boundaries for investigative studies on the social dimensions of adjustment and provides the necessary economic rationale for empirical work to be both consistent across countries and helpful for policy design. The study then explores the major policy issues that must be faced by governments to integrate social dimensions in the design of their structural adjustment programmes and development plans.

Politics in modern Africa: The uneven tribal dimension *by Kenneth Ingham. London: Routledge, 1990. viii + 248 pp. ISBN 0-415-02278-9.*

Starting off with the imperial legacy, Ingham looks at Uganda, Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, Senegal, Guinea, Zaire, Angola and Zimbabwe and discusses each country's response to their newly-acquired independent status. There is still little evidence of any desire to dismember the countries which came into being at independence, yet local loyalties exerted a powerful influence upon many people and undermined the working of the new state because of the non-fulfilment of the expectations raised by independence. The author concludes that "tribalism" is in only limited instances the root cause of Africa's problems. It is its availability to reinforce the discontent created by inadequately administered economies that constitutes its main threat to stability.

The dynamics of Soviet policy in sub-Saharan Africa *by Michael Radu and Arthur Jay Klinghoffer. New York: Holmes & Meier, 1991. ix + 146 pp. ISBN 0-8419-1226-2.*

In the light of the Soviet Union's deteriorating African posture in the 1980s and the Reagan administration's policy of selective support for anti-Marxist forces, which quickly raised Soviet costs in Africa, and with the growing indications that a process of reassessment of Soviet commitments in the Third World in general is gaining speed in Moscow, the authors identify the need to take a fresh look at Moscow's attitudes, goals, and capabilities in Africa.

Apartheid city in transition *edited by Mark Swilling, Richard Humphries and Khehla Shubane. Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1991. xx + 377 pp. ISBN 0-19-570585-8.*

Leading academics and specialists in the field of local government analyse the causes, nature and challenges of the myriad problems facing South African cities, both now and in the future. They examine key policy issues such as a single tax base for the currently segregated components of our cities, urbanization, access to urban land, housing and transport. They also consider the role of citizens and municipalities in the new system of local and national government. Among the contributors are: Rodney Davenport, Simon Bekker, Ann Bernstein, Fanie Cloete, Chris Heymans and Lawrence Schlemmer.

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