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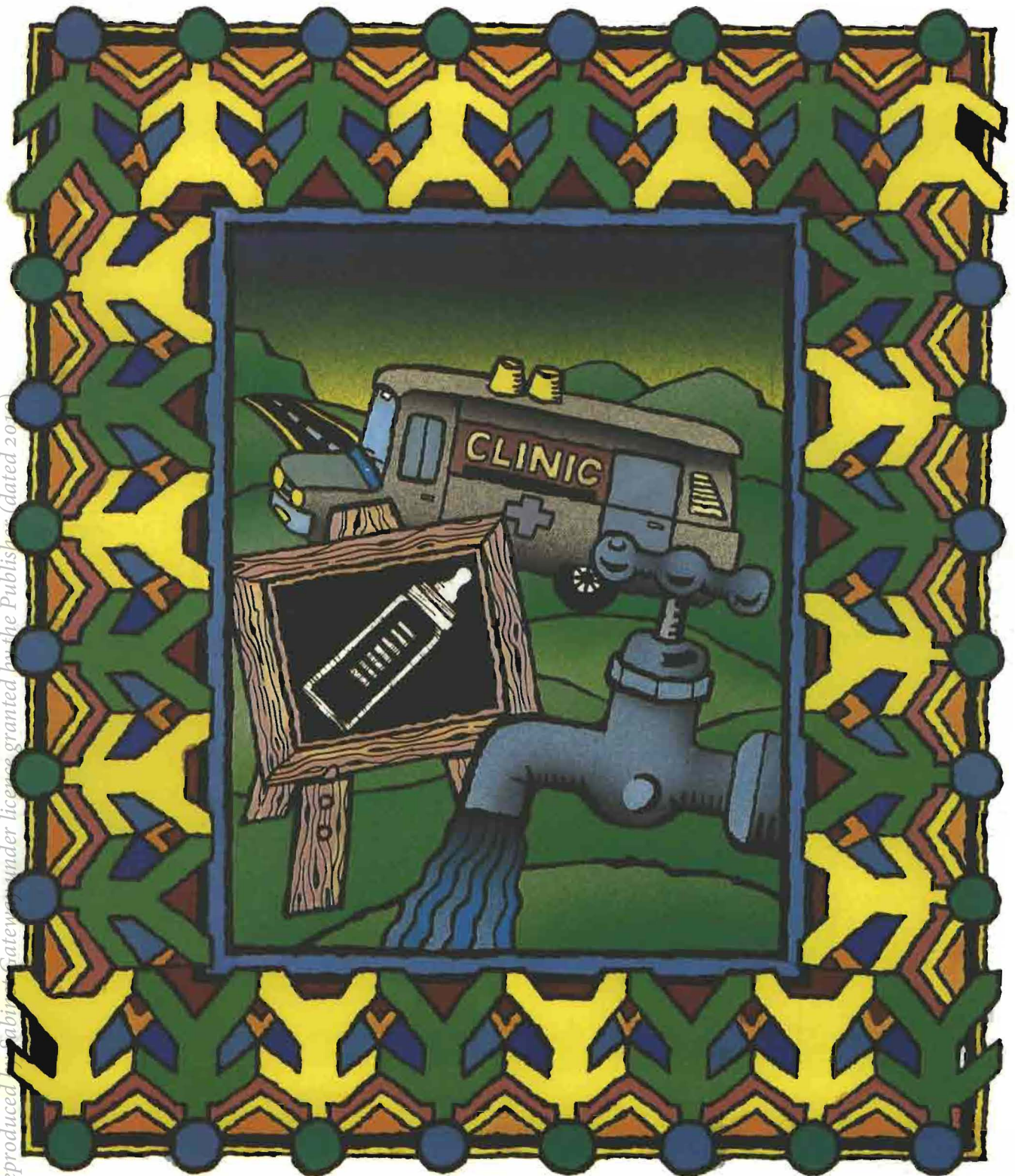
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# INSIGHT

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The Editor  
P O Box 630  
PRETORIA 0001  
Republic of South Africa  
Telephone: (012) 28-6970  
Telefax: (012) 323-8153

**Editor:** Richard Cornwell  
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# Africa's hope for rescue from the south

*Erich Leistner, Director, Africa Institute*

Future African historians may well decide that the worst calamity to befall their ancestors in the twentieth century was the uninhibited flow of so-called "development aid" from the industrialized countries. Apart from corrupting Africa's élites, this "aid" has seriously retarded the continent's "growing up" by sparing it the necessity of facing economic reality.

As with individuals, countries shielded from the obligation to come to terms with the reality of their own constraints, needs and possibilities cannot attain maturity, and remain dependent upon the goodwill of others. The end of the Cold War and the beginning of democratization in the former Soviet Bloc, together with the industrial world's greatly reduced concern about supplies of raw materials, have shocked African leaders into realizing that the days of unstinted largess from overseas donors are over.

With "aid" increasingly subject to "conditionality" in terms of democratic government, observance of human rights, and sound economic policy, African leaders are now looking for new lenders of support. Frantic hopes are placed upon the supposedly unbounded wealth that a "new", democratic South Africa is expected to share with the rest of Africa, more specifically sub-Saharan Africa.

South African businessmen, diplomats and scholars visiting black African countries, regularly have to contend with these expectations. Their attempts to explain South Africa's actual position are often met with polite disbelief. The visual impact of South Africa's bustling metropolises with their fleets of late-model cars, their gleaming high-rise

buildings, functioning telephones, and luxurious suburban villas is greater than mere statistics on unemployment, housing, education and the like.

So far, even sobering words from spokesmen of black South African political movements have made no impression. Thus, Thabo Mbeki, the ANC's external affairs director, has warned that, far from coming to the region's rescue, a future government may instead pursue policies harmful to its neighbours – for example, by reducing the number of foreign workers in order to ease unemployment in South Africa.

If South Africa's rapidly normalizing relationship with the rest of sub-Saharan Africa is not to get off on the wrong foot, it is imperative that its future partners be familiarized with the country's structural social and economic realities. A conference organized in Windhoek in early September 1991 by General Olusegun Obasanjo, the former Nigerian president, appears to have begun the process of "re-education".

An article in *The Star* (Johannesburg) of 11 September quotes two Nigerian participants: "This is very sobering. We have been euphoric." ... "We have been brought up to believe there was tremendous economic progress in South Africa, especially in technological expertise. Won't someone please reassure me that our basic assumptions were not wrong." As the writer of the article says, the conference may have painted too bleak a picture, but has begun to deflate exaggerated expectations.

Discussions on institutional patterns of economic and other interaction will

soon have to take place between South Africa and neighbouring states. All the participants will inevitably have a great deal to learn. South Africans will, for instance, have to appreciate that pursuit of their own national interest demands that they carefully take into consideration the needs of their neighbours too. The other countries, in turn, will have to realize that even under the best conceivable circumstances, the "new" South Africa will not be able to dispense appreciable financial aid, and that for all practical purposes it will play its role as the region's "engine of growth" only by way of commercial exchanges in respect of goods, power, water, transport, tourism, research and diverse other services.

If South Africa succeeds in revitalizing its economy and attracting foreign investment, it will be capable of generating the growth impulses that the other economies of Southern Africa need. Since, initially at least, its economic interaction with the region will probably be based on bilateral – rather than multilateral – agreements, the negotiation process is bound to give the other countries a deeper understanding not only of South Africa's problems but also of their own capabilities. The duty of respecting their own contractual obligations will at the same time promote responsibility and maturity.

To the extent that the countries of Southern Africa set an example of responsible and successful regional co-operation, the rest of sub-Saharan Africa will be encouraged to reconsider its needs and possibilities. Then Africa would at last be off to the right start towards economic development.



# Towards human-centred development: Primary health care in Africa

*Jenny Macgregor, Researcher at the Africa Institute, looks at the importance of primary health care in meeting the development needs of Africa.*

Health is a precious thing ... the only thing indeed that deserves to be pursued at the expense not only of time, sweat, labour, worldly goods, but of life itself; since without health, life becomes a burden and an affliction.  
— *Montaigne, Essays.*

Some four centuries on, we may legitimately add that while improved health is an end in itself, it is also a prerequisite for any economic and social development, for only healthy people can make the most of their potential. In the development process, good health is both an output and an input.

In 1977 the World Health Organization (WHO), in its call for "Health for All by the Year 2000", endorsed its belief that health is a fundamental human right and a world-wide social goal. Its 1977 report emphasized that health development is essential for social and economic development; that the means for attaining all three are intimately linked; and that any actions taken to improve health or the socio-economic situation should be treated as mutually supportive, not competitive. Turning its back on high-technology cures, the WHO's goals were to be met through primary health care (hereafter referred to as PHC), a strategy encompassing a decentralized, hierarchical, basic health system, together with community participation and an increased intersectoral emphasis on essential basic pre-conditions for health such as adequate food and water supplies. This

strategy was endorsed a year later in the Alma-Ata Declaration of 1978.

Since then a keen awareness has developed of shortcomings in health services generally, and of the need for policies and programmes more closely answering people's requirements. Many countries have expressed a commitment to primary health care by signing charters, making declarations, and publishing policy statements; and many others have set national goals and described programmes for the organization and management of their health systems on a PHC basis.

Using PHC coverage as a measure of equity, and improvement in health status<sup>1</sup> as a measure of effectiveness, reveal a picture of wide-ranging global gains and losses during the past decade. Most developed countries have already achieved full health-care coverage, though some poor or remote populations may have enjoyed only limited access to it. In the developing countries coverage is very inequitable, the rural and urban poor being particularly disadvantaged. On average, only 61 per cent of people in developing countries have access to primary health care services. In sub-Saharan Africa it is 45 per cent.<sup>2</sup> The degree of ill-health in developing countries remains staggering, child mortality being up to 40 times higher than in the industrialized world; and whereas the average life expectancy at birth is about 72 years in developed countries, it is about 55 years in developing countries.<sup>3</sup>

Presenting the most depressing pic-

ture of all is the African continent, where it is estimated that by the year 2000 one-eighth of the world's population will be living. Africa's average life expectancy is 51 years, compared with Asia's 64 years and Latin America's 67 years.<sup>4</sup> The following table shows under-five mortality rates:

	1950-1955	1980-1985	1995-2000*
World total	240	118	83
Developed countries	73	19	13
Developing countries	281	134	94
Africa	322	182	132
Latin America	189	88	61
Asia	281	113	71

\* Projections<sup>5</sup>

The highest rates in the world are to be found in Angola and Mozambique, where the number of deaths per 1 000 live births is estimated at 350.

## Africa's health problems

In Africa people are at risk from a wide range of communicable and deficiency diseases. Most deaths result from tropical diseases such as malaria, schistosomiasis, river-blindness, and lymphatic filariasis (which causes elephantiasis), all of which are still rife, while endemic diseases such as tuberculosis, polio, whooping-cough, leprosy and African sleeping sickness still strike hard in certain areas. At any one time, half the population of sub-Saharan Africa —

about 250 million – may be malaria parasite carriers, with 90 million new cases of the disease each year.<sup>6</sup> Diarrhoeal diseases transmitted by the human faecal contamination of soil, food and water are prevalent despite measures taken to prevent this, owing to inadequate water supplies and poor sanitation.

Of growing concern is the rapid spread of AIDS. The number of reported cases (many go unreported), is still relatively small everywhere, but is growing rapidly. Even more disturbing are the numbers who have been found to be HIV-positive, and who are therefore likely to be afflicted by AIDS within the next ten years: the World Health Organization has estimated that the number of HIV-infected people in sub-Saharan Africa has doubled since 1987 to 5 million.<sup>7</sup> The disease has already induced sharp increases in adult, maternal and child morbidity and mortality rates, destabilizing communal and family life on a large scale, and intensifying poverty. The cost of care, educational campaigns and prevention will require a significant proportion of already limited health budgets.

Africa's health problems are not confined to infectious diseases, though it is these that are characteristically given most attention because they reflect the pervasiveness and degree of ill-health. Insufficient nourishment afflicting hundreds of millions, reducing their energy and motivation and undermining their productivity, also makes them susceptible to the many parasitic and communicable diseases to which they are exposed. There is no agreement on the causes of under-nutrition. Ignorance, declining food production, drought, political instability, absentee husbands and other social facts and conditions are often cited. What is clear is that there is some connection between certain ailments and poverty. Disease creates poverty; and poverty, continuing the cycle, maintains the conditions that foster disease. (It may be timely to realize that between 1980 and 1985 the number of "absolute poor" in Africa rose to an estimated 270 million, a trend that, unchecked, will give a figure of some 400 million by 1995.) Most susceptible to the poverty-disease cycle are Africans living in the rural areas and urban slums, particularly women and children. That their health problems are of a greater severity and of a

more fundamental nature than encountered elsewhere, highlights the intimate link between health and socio-economic problems.

### Health policy in Africa

Health status is not determined simply by the development of public health services, nor is it a spin-off from economic development. It is the result of a complex interaction of a number of factors, socio-economic and political. In general, attempts to solve Africa's health problems have failed to appreciate that socio-economic and health-care measures must to some extent operate in tandem. Colonial health-care systems, based largely on the notion that health status is determined solely by the development of public health organizations, were orientated towards curative services. The response to the WHO call in the early 1950s for mass campaigns (such as those against malaria and smallpox) to receive the backing of a comprehensive health-care system capable of reaching the most remote rural areas, was generally weak. On independence, therefore, governments inherited centralized, city-based health services geared to meet the needs of the urban élite and excluding people in rural areas. Most of Africa's newly-independent governments incorporated these health services patterned after the developed world. The results were not those expected.

There gradually grew a general awareness (not only in Africa) that existing health services with their urban and curative bias were fundamentally unable to tackle the health needs of the majority of a developing nation's population, and this led to the adoption by some countries of a comprehensive and accessible basic health-care system. For many African governments, disillusioned by a history of fragmented approaches to health problems, the Alma-Ata Declaration was the catalyst leading them formally to adopt PHC and find a place for it in their development plans.

### Primary health care in Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Botswana

If we are to generalize about the make-up of African health-care systems we would say they are characterized by a heterogeneous mixture of government

### Primary health care

PHC implies a departure from the simple equating of health care with the provision of Western medical techniques and Western-educated medical personnel – though it is not a rejection of these. What it does do is offer the possibility of responding in simple, inexpensive and accessible ways to the paramount health needs of developing societies.

#### PHC features the following five principles:

- Universal coverage of the population, with care provided according to need. It is aimed particularly at children and child-bearing women because they are the most vulnerable.
- Services should not only be curative, but should promote the population's understanding of health and a healthy way of life and reach out towards the root causes of disease with an emphasis upon prevention. Vaccination and population-control programmes are important elements in PHC.
- Services should be effective, culturally acceptable, affordable, and manageable.
- The communities to be served should be actively involved in the development of services so as to promote self-reliance and reduce dependence upon others. An important element is the training of local health workers chosen by the villagers.
- The paths taken to deal with ill-health must not be limited to strictly medical intervention because the causes of ill-health are not limited to matters relating directly to health. Areas to be tackled must include education for literacy, income supplementation, clean water and sanitation, improved housing, ecological sustainability, the building of roads, food programmes in times of drought and food subsidies.<sup>8</sup> Historically, the realization that the health status and well-being of people are a product not only of health programmes but also of socio-economic development and the active participation of the people, provided the main impetus for the development of PHC.

and non-government activities, the latter provided primarily by church-backed missions, and include services provided by both modern and traditional practitioners. The spread and reach of government services vary enormously between and within countries, but almost nowhere are government clinics and hospitals the only source of care. Governments typically provide free or low-cost curative care directly through health ministry institutions and by financing and administering preventive care programmes, water and sanitation projects, and other public health activities.

During the past 10 to 15 years many African countries have adopted ambitious health policies and programmes closely associated with development. There have been significant increases in the number of dispersed health units and in the number of health workers assigned to community care; and advances have taken place in the provision of immunization, safe water supplies and maternal and child care. Here we would especially cite Botswana, Tanzania and Zimbabwe. In other countries the provision of services has deteriorated: while 86 per cent of the urban population in Zambia had access to water supplies in 1975, this figure had dropped to 65 per cent in 1983; in the Congo the drop was from 81 to 42 per cent, and in Kenya from 100 to 61 per cent.<sup>9</sup>

Three countries that have adopted the concepts of PHC, put forward appropriate policies, mobilized resources and implemented programmes that have led to improvements in the health of their populations are those we mentioned in our last paragraph – Botswana, Tanzania and Zimbabwe. Let us look more closely at their record.

### Primary health care in Botswana

When Botswana became independent in 1966 it was categorized as a low-income country with extremely modest human development and with an uneven distribution of income. The inherited health-care system was largely curative and urban-based. There were 17 doctors, of whom 10 were in government service, the ratio of doctors to population being one doctor to every 35 300 persons although, owing to the population's uneven distribution, the ratio was as high as 1:67 000 in certain areas. There was only one nurse to every 16 000 people, compared with a

ratio of 1:5 700 for sub-Saharan Africa.<sup>10</sup> The government controlled six hospitals, seven health centres and 11 dispensaries; mission societies controlled four hospitals, two health centres and seven dispensaries. On the whole, health problems reflected an early stage of social and economic development, the diseases most prevalent throughout the country being tuberculosis, venereal diseases, gastro-enteritis and pneumonia. During periods of drought, malnutrition was frequently encountered, particularly among children. Malaria, sleeping-sickness and bilharzia were specific to certain parts of the country. Nevertheless, Botswana's health record in 1966 was better than the average for sub-Saharan Africa – probably the result of the country's dry climate and widespread access to both milk and meat from the large livestock population.

Faced with limited resources and pressing demands for productive investments in all sectors, the government's programme for improving health-care facilities was very restricted. The emphasis on curative medicine continued.

When the National Development Plan for 1973-78 was drawn up, it was noted that the hospitals' curative programme had resulted in few or no improvements. The same diseases were prevalent – venereal disease and tuberculosis even more so. To remedy the ineffectiveness of rural medical services, a decentralized health-care strategy was decided upon. The aim was not only to raise the standard of health care, but also to spread it more widely. Over the period of the National Development Plan, 1973 - 1978, the government established a network of basic health and referral facilities throughout the country. A programme of hospital improvement, as opposed to expansion, was embarked upon to improve the referral system. Training programmes for auxiliary and paramedical staff were accelerated, their responsibilities being focused on the education of the population in the techniques of simple preventive medicine. Specific programmes were set up too, ranging from the emergency combating of smallpox, to tuberculosis eradication programmes. There was also an expansion in the facilities and staff concerned with the administration of health programmes and with the collection of data.

Over the years services have been changed to reflect the primary health

care approach with its stress upon the prevention of disease and the promotion of health. The government has emphasized the expansion of services to reach all communities, especially those in areas remote from the country's principal centres.

Health activities and services are today organized at different levels of sophistication and coverage.

- At the very lowest level is the health post, run and managed by local authorities and local communities. The aim has been to establish a health post in all communities of over 500 persons. Today there are some 400 of these health posts.
- At the next level are 178 clinics, each having at least a registered nurse. Their function is to provide education in health matters, immunizations, limited curative and maternity care and the collection of statistics.
- The principal curative referral facilities are the 13 health centres, the 12 district hospitals and the 3 referral hospitals. The health centres are designed to duplicate on a small scale, in remote areas, most of the simple curative functions usually provided at hospitals. There are 14 general hospitals, of which 8 are operated by the government, 3 by missions (who also operate 6 clinics) and 3 by mining companies.

For a country with such a scattered population, Botswana now boasts a comprehensive network of health facilities: 89 per cent of the population has access to the network, and 85 per cent live within the recommended range of 15 kilometres from a health facility. While the government has avoided a commitment to free health-care for all, the system is highly subsidized, fees being charged on a sliding scale. Botswana's primary health care strategy has also incorporated programmes for the provision and monitoring of safe water supplies and sanitation, health education in schools, together with community participation in the planning, organization and management of the country's PHC. Of particular significance have been the programmes targeted at the protection of vulnerable groups during the protracted droughts that periodically ravage Botswana; the provision of food; temporary employment on village improvement projects;

and the subsidizing of arable farming inputs. In addition there are ongoing supplementary feeding programmes at schools – in 1984 about 22 per cent of Botswana's children were fed at school and another 39 per cent through clinics.<sup>11</sup>

Botswana has made remarkable strides: today its human development is among the best in Africa, particularly sub-Saharan Africa. Its under-five mortality rate fell from 174 in 1960 to 92 in 1988. Life expectancy at birth has risen to 59 years (1987) from 46 years in 1965, and immunization coverage has risen to 85 per cent for children under one year. Nevertheless, the prevalence of under-nutrition in children under 5 is almost 30 per cent, and this contributes significantly to the incidence and effects of childhood infections. The explanation of this state of affairs lies primarily in the government's failure to sufficiently increase the incomes of the poorest households or improve the highly skewed distribution of incomes.<sup>12</sup>

### Primary health care in Zimbabwe

Health services in Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) began in the early part of the present century as a network of hospitals concentrated in urban areas and serving white settlers. Initial attempts by missionaries to establish rural dispensaries and hospitals failed through lack of staff, but in the late 1920s the government (and missions with the help of government grants) began providing some rural health care. By the 1950s a pattern had been established – the bulk of government spending went on running hospitals and clinics, that is, on treating preventable disease rather than spending on preventive measures, while Christian missions became the most important agency providing health care in rural areas. But, largely curative in nature, the missions only partially filled an important gap.<sup>13</sup> During the last few years of the liberation struggle, health services, especially in rural areas, were severely disrupted and forced to curtail their activities. By 1980 some 60 per cent of rural clinics were out of commission and up to 50 per cent of the mission hospitals had been closed.

The health-care system inherited by Zimbabwe's new government at independence in 1980 was both inappropriate and inequitably distributed, a reflection of the country's racial make-up. It was fragmented and fell under five authorities – the ministry of health,

local authorities, religious missions, industry-based clinics, and private clinics. The missions, as we have said, were the most important agency providing health care in rural areas – some 30 per cent of the country's total and 66 per cent of all rural hospital beds.<sup>14</sup> The high concentration of services and personnel in urban areas reflected the government's emphasis on curative care: some 44 per cent of publicly-funded services went to the sophisticated central hospitals which served only 15 per cent of the population, only 24 per cent going to rural health facilities serving the majority of the population.<sup>15</sup> Preventive services accounted for only 9 per cent of the health budget. Compounded by socio-economic racial inequalities, these biases were reflected in infant mortality rates (IMR) which varied substantially by geographical area, race, and class: in 1980 the IMR was 14 per 1 000 for whites (similar to that found in developed countries), 50 for urban blacks and 140 for rural blacks.<sup>16</sup> Under-nutrition was particularly prevalent in Tribal Trust Lands and among children of workers on commercial farms, where measles, pneumonia, tuberculosis and diarrhoeal disease were rife – as were parasitic diseases.

Recognizing the urgent need to redress these imbalances, the new government established a new and vigorous thrust in health care based on the PHC approach. The policy document *Planning for equity in health* gave recognition to the underlying causes of ill-health – poor living conditions and inadequate nutrition and water supply – and guaranteed to transform health care so that all citizens would have access to a comprehensive and integrated national health service.

— As early as September 1980 free health care for everyone earning less than Z\$150 per month – and their families – was introduced, greatly increasing the use of facilities. This Z\$150 limit has remained unchanged although in July 1986 a minimum industrial wage of \$158 per month was laid down. Thus while initially most people in employment were eligible for free health care, scarcely any are eligible today; instead, fees at government hospitals are based on a sliding scale.

— The programme of immunization against six major childhood infec-

tious diseases and the tetanus immunization of pregnant women was expanded. Full immunization coverage increased from 25 per cent in 1982 to 67 per cent in 1988.

— A programme for building hospitals and rural health centres was initiated, and numerous rural clinics and provincial hospitals were upgraded. By the end of 1989 over 450 health centres had been rebuilt and 321 new ones erected.

— A diarrhoeal control programme was launched in 1982, and a department of national nutrition was established for nutrition and health education, for the monitoring of both children's growth and their nutrition, and for the carrying out of supplementary feeding programmes for children. Manpower training and development focused more strongly on the demands of rural health care and on the health needs of the peasant and worker communities. By 1987 some 7 000 basic multi-purpose health workers (from a target of 15 000) had been trained under a village health worker programme. And a programme of education in contraceptive practice has resulted in Zimbabwe having the highest rate of contraceptive use in sub-Saharan Africa – 43 per cent against 14 per cent in 1982 and against an average of 5 per cent for the rest of Africa. In certain areas significant improvements in village water-supplies and sanitation have been achieved.

— The availability of essential drugs is about 60 per cent of the estimated need, compared with 43 per cent before independence.<sup>17</sup>

In the years immediately following independence, public spending on health increased rapidly, by 37,9 per cent in 1981, and 12,5 per cent in 1982. The preventive services share of the budget rose from 7,9 per cent in 1980/81 to 14 per cent in 1985/86, while that of medical care fell from 87,1 per cent to 77,9 per cent, reflecting the change in policy from curative to preventive care.<sup>18</sup> Increasing stabilization problems in the economy after 1983 caused the government to curtail spending, the budget remaining almost static until the 1987/88 budget when an 11 per cent increase over the previous year was allocated. In its latest budget, 4,8 per cent of Zimbabwe's GDP went to health.<sup>19</sup>



In addition, certain economic measures and social reforms were instituted, the most important of these being the setting of minimum wages for all categories of labour, food subsidies, a land resettlement programme, expanded education, and water development and drought relief programmes.<sup>20</sup>

Zimbabwe's achievements in health during the 1980s have been impressive. Millions of people have gained access to basic care for the first time. In summary, life expectancy has increased from 55 to 59 years; infant mortality has declined from 82 to 72 per 1 000 births and maternal mortality has fallen to 90 per 100 000 deliveries; contraceptive levels are the highest in Africa; and the availability of essential drugs is about 60 per cent of the estimated need.

The impact of these changes has nevertheless been limited, for there is divergence between declining death rates and the static quality of life, a situation indicative of a rapid expansion of health care but relatively static economic conditions for the majority. Chronic malnutrition, which continues to stunt the growth of children – urban and rural – remains a major problem, with surveys of nutritional status pointing to limited improvements over the years 1980-83, and little change since.<sup>21</sup> At the root of the problem is the prevailing poverty brought about both by socio-economic inequality and the severe economic constraints faced by the government.

Problems specific to the nature of the health services – and major financial problems – confront the government.

- Health planning is still very centralized.

- Class bias still exists: what were previously black hospitals are still overcrowded and undercapitalized and have poorer facilities than those formerly reserved for whites. Clinics are needed for a number of remote rural communities that are not getting the services they should.

- Serious shortages of staff at all levels have remained one of the biggest problems. Few doctors are in government service, the majority going into private practice, and the high nurse/population ratio of 1:1 071<sup>22</sup> is even worse in the rural areas.

- Drug shortages in rural clinics and district hospitals have driven patients into the main hospitals, leading to much congestion.

- Nutrition programmes have been hampered by drought and lack of resources. Feeding schemes for the under fives and food-for-work programmes aimed at providing the basic food requirements for pregnant and breast-feeding mothers have been badly affected.

- Financing of health care: at present the facility-based patient budget for tertiary, secondary and primary care is 50 per cent, 30 per cent and 20 per cent respectively. Additional investments in preventive and curative care are needed if the country's health objectives for the next century are to be realized.<sup>23</sup> With growing signs of stagnation (and maybe even a reversal) in what was a favourable trend, the simple issue of how to pay for existing services (and their future expansion) offers real and pressing problems.

### Primary health care in Tanzania

Western medicine was introduced into Tanzania in the second half of the nineteenth century by Christian missionaries. The first government medical services were introduced by the Germans towards the end of the century, initially to serve army garrisons, later to care for European settlers. Twelve hospitals were built between 1891 and 1918, providing separate facilities for the different racial groups. British colonial rule (from 1919) continued the system's orientation towards curative services, especially those biased in favour of the urban European and upper classes. Health services for the masses improved very little: the first attempt by the government to address to the health problems of the rural African population came only in 1926 with the introduction of a local authority dispensary system; immunization and health education campaigns were introduced, somewhat modestly, in the 1950s by the missions.

At independence in 1961 the health services were similar to those in most post-colonial countries in that they were largely hospital-based and expatriate-dominated, and with an urban bias. There were four types of medical care: government, missionary, industrial, and private. Government services were organized in three tiers: central (which received more than 60 per cent of the health budget), provincial, and district – the latter acting primarily as a

referral system. Public health work, then known as the sanitation branch, was wholly separated from personal medical services. Of the twenty-one voluntary agencies, most of them missions, few had any formal links with government services or with each other.

Some 130 Western-trained private doctors – 33 per cent of all the doctors in Tanzania – serviced the five principal urban areas with their combined population of 200 000. There was an acute lack of trained personnel; of the 425 physicians, only 17 were Tanzanians; there were 99 hospitals, and 22 rural health centres. Sixteen per cent of the country's hospital beds were in Dar es Salaam where but 1 per cent of the population lived, while some districts lacked a hospital altogether and had no physicians in residence. Traditional medicine was suppressed by both the colonial authorities and missionaries, who indiscriminately labelled all traditional practitioners "witch-doctors".

Initially the colonial emphasis continued, despite recommendations that preventive services to the rural population be expanded. The 1964-69 five-year plan recognized both the need for improved access by the rural population to basic health services and the importance of preventive services in general, but little was done to rectify the problem: urban medical facilities were in fact further developed, and, quite naturally, the effect of continuing the curative medical care system was to further deprive the rural population of services. It was only under the second five-year development plan in the early 1970s that the shift in emphasis made itself felt for the first time, thus falling in line with the principles of the Arusha Declaration of 1967 which emphasized bringing basic health services as close as possible to the people. This emphasis on preventive services has persisted in all subsequent Tanzanian plans.

Over the next ten years the proportion of Tanzania's total health budget allocated to the rural sector more than doubled, reaching 42 per cent in 1981. The 1971 health plan called for 25 rural health centres (RHC) and 100 dispensaries to be opened annually, giving one centre to every 50 000 people and one dispensary to every 6 500. Even more ambitious targets for dispensaries, health centres and hospital beds were set out in the third five-year plan of 1976-80. The preventive health services

offered by these rural facilities included education in such areas as environmental hazards and nutrition and the dispensing of technologically-oriented preventive services such as immunizations, surveillance for remediable childhood problems, and pre-natal and post-natal care. The provision of safe drinking-water was elevated to the status of a national priority in 1971 when the government announced the goal of access to clean, potable and adequate water within 400 metres for all rural dwellers. Pressure to achieve this goal was given impetus with the introduction of the 1975 villagization programme, though an interim goal of four kilometres was set for 1981.

The Alma-Ata Declaration of 1978 was welcomed by Tanzania as embodying the very principles it was struggling to put into practice. Following a sector evaluation that showed the goals of the last development plan to be beyond reach for lack of finance, a new *Long-Term Perspective Plan 1981-2000* was drawn up reaffirming the government's commitment to primary health care. To bring its current strategies closer to the Alma-Ata recommendations while recognizing budgetary constraints, the government embarked upon a major effort to train village health workers (VHW) and establish a VHW in every village that did not have a dispensary or RHC. As a result there was a marked shift in the distribution of health personnel in favour of rural areas.<sup>24</sup>

For the most part Tanzania's health-care network has been brought into being, achieving considerable success in providing basic services to the country's rural population. But the transformation remains far from complete: particularly significant is that the planned shift of resources from a curative to a preventive emphasis has not yet occurred. About 70 per cent of the population live within a radius of less than 5 kilometres from a medical centre, and 45 per cent of the country's more than 8,000 villages are equipped with a permanent medical facility.<sup>25</sup> In rural areas, 41 per cent of the population had access to safe water by the mid-1980s, compared with an average of 19 per cent for rural Africa as a whole. Life expectancy rose from 35-40 years in 1956 to 47 years in 1973; and now, at 53 years, is above average for sub-Saharan Africa, mainly reflecting a lower rate of child mortality.<sup>26</sup> Infant

mortality data show similar favourable trends: in 1967 the infant mortality figure was estimated at 160 per thousand, at 135 in 1978, and at 104 in 1988.

The available data on morbidity rates suggest a mixed trend. Measles appears to be on the decline, but there is no evidence to suggest a decrease in malaria. The most frequent causes of morbidity and mortality are infectious and parasitic diseases, most of which are preventable by early diagnosis, vaccination, improved hygiene and health education. There does not seem to be a decrease in the rates for under-nutrition and malnutrition. The average per head calorie intake remains insufficient, and may undergo large yearly and seasonal fluctuations. There are clear inequalities in access to food between richer and poorer households and between persons of different status within a household. A survey undertaken in 1986-87 by the Tanzania Food and Nutrition Centre found 16 per cent of babies to have low birth-weight, an indication of poor maternal nutrition, while 40 per cent of children under 5 years of age were suffering from moderate and 6 per cent from severe malnutrition.<sup>27</sup>

Nevertheless, overall, Tanzania's achievements have been impressive. But are they sufficient to keep up with population growth, the rate of improvement having decelerated considerably since the mid-1970s. Over the period 1980/81-1986/87, aggregate central government expenditure on health rose nominally, but declined by 9 per cent in real terms. Per capita expenditure hit a high in 1980/81, and by 1988/89 had declined in real terms by 10 per cent. The financial crisis has struck at the basic facilities of the health system – a lack of equipment, drugs and transport – in addition to staff dissatisfaction, a lack of sufficient training opportunities, and the poor management and organization of services especially in the rural areas.

To achieve the targets set out in the Long Term Perspective Plan, would require a doubling of Tanzania's health budgets by the year 2000. The government is currently struggling with this unpleasant fact, given the country's projected population growth. What is needed here is for the government to slow the present rapid pace of population growth by the strengthening of population policies and programmes;

ensure that health policies are effectively implemented; and both alleviate nutritional deficiencies and improve household food security.

## Problems in the provision of health care in Africa

In general, Africa's success in improving health has been both uneven and limited in scope. Urgent corrective measures are required, but African countries are finding themselves increasingly constrained by the state of their national economies. Negative per capita economic growth and large external debts have not only depressed already low incomes and worsened poor living conditions, but are making it increasingly difficult (if not impossible) for governments to sustain their earlier performance or even, in some areas, provide the routine maintenance of what they have achieved in the past.<sup>28</sup> Once more it is the poor and vulnerable – women and children – who are suffering the most.

The acute health and nutrition crises facing Africa are rooted in both the productivity of health-care systems and the health impact of social, economic, political, and environmental facts. Moreover, "changes wrought by economic crisis may exert impacts on both health care systems and non-medical factors."<sup>29</sup> It is commonplace that the international economic climate has had a severe effect on Africa, inducing substantial economic adjustment programmes, that have affected health and nutrition in two ways. One, they have reduced the incomes of poorer groups in the population; and as economic growth has slowed, internal inequality has increased and poverty, which lies at the very root of poor health, has become further entrenched. Secondly, economic adjustment programmes have reduced governments' nutritional and health services. No less significant are other considerations such as climate, high population growth, dispersed communities, widespread illiteracy, drought, armed conflict and the socio-political turbulence that has characterized the continent over the past 10 to 15 years.

The extent to which PHC is flawed not merely in its execution but also in its conception is widely debated. Below are listed and discussed some of the main problems health-care systems face in Africa. They can be summarized under three headings:

## Allocation

Economic support for primary health care has been inadequate – less than 2 per cent of gross national product in half the countries of Africa.<sup>30</sup> Since the late 1970s spending on health as a percentage of total public expenditure has either remained static or declined as a direct result of economic adjustment programmes.<sup>31</sup> Health and nutrition have been affected in two ways: reductions in government expenditure upon already limited services and supplies of drugs, and reductions in government food subsidies or food distribution programmes.

## Internal efficiency

There has been a tendency to spend what little money has been available in urban areas on high-cost and relatively ineffective care, while health programmes in rural areas have been shelved or cut back. This tendency is of course related to the lack of progress in health-care decentralization. Governments have also been too eager to undertake free universal health care without the wealth to finance such schemes. Some even banned private health services (Tanzania, Zambia and Mozambique) on the grounds that they are meaningless in a country where 90 per cent of the population are poor. There are now indications that these governments are moving towards some form of cost recovery.

## Equity

Most Africans simply do not have access to modern medical care since the majority of health professionals and a disproportionate share of facilities are located in urban areas, where only about 20 per cent of Africans live. Reorientation has been restricted in the face of staff shortages and lack of funding. Efforts have been made to bring about a more equitable situation but progress has been limited: inequitable patterns of health care and development established by colonial authorities and entrenched in the early 1960s and 1970s have meant that many governments have been unable to concentrate their health budget on primary care because of the huge recurrent costs of maintaining their expensive hospitals.

## Selective primary health care

Another different, and serious set of problems in the development of PHC

has been the piecemeal approach to the provision of health programmes, sometimes referred to as selective primary health care. PHC is an integrated package; its measures reinforce one another; in isolation each may have little effect. Selective intervention targeted at high risk groups has resulted – we give one example only – in the rapid improvement of certain indicators such as infant mortality rates, but has not contributed to the maintenance of improved nutritional levels and may have masked a fall in the quality of life. Aid agencies are particularly guilty of this “selective programme” orientation. Having set themselves concrete objectives and measurable results to be achieved in some specified period of time, they adopt selective programmes at the expense of two fundamental principles of PHC – intersectoral collaboration and community participation.

## Conclusion

As an integrated approach, PHC is most appropriate to many of Africa's fundamental health problems, but as long as it is reduced to a depoliticized and technocratic strategy it cannot address the more basic causes of under-nutrition and ill-health that are rooted in national economies and society and are, consequently, not amenable to short-term technical solutions. The inner contradiction of PHC, in fact, is that it identifies socio-economic problems, but then incorporates them as if they were purely medical in nature. What PHC must do is incorporate the longer-term strategic goal of equipping communities, through social and economic development, to improve not only their chances of survival but also their health and quality of life. What is needed here is a concentration upon enhancing the capacity of the poor to generate sufficient income to meet their food and other requirements so that absolute poverty and malnutrition can eventually be reduced over a period of years. A last point: while it is accepted that economic growth is crucial in determining whether a country can sustain any progress at all in human development, it must be an economic growth managed and distributed in such a way that its benefits reach out and down into those communities most in need.

## Notes and references

- 1 While statistics provide useful indicators, they give only a partial and often distorted picture: they are often of questionable reliability, and aggregation obscures patterns of internal differentiation. Nor can statistics stand on their own as a measure of health or as an indicator of the causes of health problems because they are closely related to the more general, non-medical social and economic conditions.
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- 11 Botswana, *National Development Plan, 1985-91*, Gaborone: Government Printer, 1985, p 307.
- 12 Cf C Harvey and S R Lewis Jr, *op cit*, p 305.
- 13 R Loewenson and D Sanders, “The political economy of health and nutrition”, in C Stoneman (ed), *Zimbabwe's prospects*, London: Macmillan, 1988, p 136.
- 14 *Ibid.*
- 15 *African Concord*, 19 February 1988, p 20.
- 16 *Southern African Economist*, December 1990/January 1991, p 12.
- 17 *Ibid.*
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- 27 *Vide ibid*; International Labour Organization, *Basic needs in danger*, Addis Ababa, 1982, p xxiv.
- 28 *World Health Forum*, vol 10, 1989, p 419.
- 29 L Chen, "Health policy responses: An approach derived from the China and India experiences", in D E Bell and M R Reich, *Health, nutrition, and economic crises*, Dover: Auburn House, 1988, p 10.
- 30 E Tarimo and F G R Fowkes, "Strengthening the backbone of primary health care", *World Health Forum*, vol 10, 1989, p 75.
- 31 C Baylies, *op cit*, p 72.



# Back to square one: The re-democratization of Africa

*Samuel Decalo, Professor of African Politics in the Department of Politics, University of Natal, Durban, provides a preliminary assessment of the rebirth of democracy in Africa.\**

As unanticipated as the dramatic changes in Eastern Europe, was the emergence of powerful pro-democracy movements in Africa in 1989-90, when massive demonstrations calling for a new political order began sweeping a continent where, some scholars have argued, democracy was never given a chance.<sup>1</sup> Spawned by decades of political authoritarianism, aggravated by economic decay, triggered by the spectacle of the fall of Ceausescu in Bucharest, and prodded by growing aid conditionalities on the part of global donors, by 1991 pro-democracy pressures were methodically transforming the political map of the continent.

The events took most scholars by complete surprise though harbingers of the process were visible as early as 1988 when, for example, Algeria's FLN suffered an electoral trouncing at the hands of a new fundamentalist Muslim party. Many scholars concurred with the idea that "outside the core [industrialized states] democracy is a rarity ... [and] with a few exceptions, the limits of democratic development in the world may well have been reached".<sup>2</sup> The signals from Africa had also been misleading. The administrative softness of the African State – one "excessively authoritarian to disguise the fact that it is inadequately authoritative"<sup>3</sup> – seemingly argued the need for greater, not lesser,

central authority; and the threat to the State appeared to emanate from budding religious fundamentalism and/or radical groups calling for Marxism – the epitome of centralized State power<sup>4</sup> – rather than from "people-power" demanding liberal democracy. Notwithstanding this, within eighteen months every People's Republic had been dismantled, and market economies re-introduced; single party and military rule have progressively been rolled back in favour of bicephalous executives accountable to legislatures elected in multiparty contests as the democratic banner spreads throughout the continent.

Africa's democratic strides are too recent to be assessed, and may in some countries prove to be cosmetic or temporary. The continent still has a long way to go and, as in Eastern Europe, the new democratic hybrids must prove themselves viable, attesting to the opening up of political space and civic and human rights by autocratic rulers who in many instances still cling to the pinnacle of power. Still, whatever the ultimate verdict, the political *atmosphere* in Africa today is ebullient as former awe-inspiring leaders are unceremoniously cut down in size and must scramble to compromise with indignant crowds. Kaunda, for example, was deeply humbled when his pre-independence party headquarters – a Lusaka political shrine – was gutted by pro-democracy crowds, denying at one stroke his historical relevance as father of the nation; Kérékou shed tears of frustration when the National Con-

ference he was forced to convene denied him an interim leadership role in the new Benin; and the proud Mengistu Haile Mariam was forced into ignominious exile when his regime crumbled militarily. If at the time the Berlin Wall fell fully 38 of 45 sub-Saharan African states were governed by one-party systems of varying authoritarian hues, 18 months later *half* had pledged competitive elections and limitations on executive powers, with more committing themselves to change every month.

## The collapse of the hegemonic party-state

The original rationale for constraining political choice in Africa was based on the premise that competitive politics is neither needed nor suitable to the continent; that it can devise other *equally democratic* modes of government.<sup>5</sup> The existence of a multiplicity of parties only politicizes existing social cleavages; multipartyism is viewed as "a system ... [of] institutional tribal and ethnic quinquennial warfare euphemistically known as elections [which] contributes an open invitation to anarchy and disunity".<sup>6</sup> The very idea of an Opposition is summarily rejected, in Malawi even on theological grounds: "[T]here is no Opposition in Heaven. God himself does not want opposition – that is why he chased Satan away. Why should Kamuzu [President Banda] have opposition?"<sup>7</sup> Programmatic differences of opinion can be accommodated within a single "national" party, and if

\*Abridged version of a paper presented at the XVth World Congress of the International Political Science Association, Buenos Aires, on 24 July 1991.

authoritarian rule nevertheless *does* ensue, at least its developmental thrust will lay the background for a better-endowed future generation that can partake of current forbidden fruits.

Later the spread of Marxism in Africa added other rationales for (now vanguard) single-party rule, just as the nationalization of the “heights of the economy” that accompanied Afro-Marxism tapped anti-colonial sentiments and spread the psychologically satisfying myth of an Africa in control of its destiny. Though rationalized as the engine of the revolution that by siphoning middle-man profits would spin off new development projects, the enhanced State sector merely provided patronage and stepping-stones to power. Constant “refuelling” of highly deficitory State sectors, and disdain for cost-efficiency (“capitalist”) principles, were behind the *economic* collapse of the “Marxist” experiment in Africa,<sup>8</sup> just as only slightly less *étatist* policies also brought the “Afro-Capitalist” State to its knees in most of Africa.

One need not rehash the actuarial possibilities of one-party democracy – which *can* be beguilingly appealing. Suffice it to note that the theory and practice of single-party rule is one example of the myth-reality syndrome that plagues much of Africana. With rare exceptions no correlations between one-party rule and either democracy or economic development have been visible in the three decades of Africa’s statehood. Legum concludes: “[T]here is no convincing evidence to show that [single-party states] achieved better results than the old or the extant multi-party states, either in developing a greater sense of national unity or in promoting economic development.”<sup>9</sup> The single-party system was used to govern society relatively benevolently – by Nyerere, Kaunda and Houphouët-Boigny, for example; more harshly but still responsibly – by Banda and Sankara; to venally plunder it – as under Mobutu and Doe; or as a camouflage for personal or class tyranny – as under Bokassa, Haile Mariam or Nguema. In all cases, however, the system “degenerated into a form of oligarchic patrimonialism that was unknown in pre-colonial Africa,”<sup>10</sup> contributing to “the overwhelming majority view ... that Africa is a disaster”.<sup>11</sup>

Instead of Africa’s contribution to the art of governance, the hegemonic

party-state became an “autocratic patrimonial state ... that whether in military or civilian guise, whether capitalist or socialist in official ideology, seems detached from the vital creative energies of the African people and their societies”,<sup>12</sup> with the guiding “party” in reality an atrophied non-entity (Zaire, the Central African Republic), a control mechanism (Benin, Congo, Ethiopia), a debating society (Malawi, Zambia), or a source of patronage for influentials (Kenya, Côte d’Ivoire, Togo). Presidential family cliques and regional political barons – at times joined by trusted soothsayers – have decided policies, options, priorities. Nowhere have the masses been the beneficiaries of alleged remedial benefits of single party rule, and rarely have “national” policies been truly espoused, let alone freely debated, or have societal benefits been distributed equitably. Rather, a small cabal of influentials have eroded all semblance of accountability, legitimacy, democracy and justice in much of Africa. With few exceptions, there has been *neither* democracy *nor* economic development; more often there has been *both* authoritarian government *and* economic decline.

### The re-democratization of Africa

It would be highly ethnocentric to assume the snowballing pro-democracy pressures in Africa are merely knee-jerk reactions to events in Eastern Europe.<sup>13</sup> One cannot exaggerate the psychological effect of the execution of Ceaucescu, or the wide-scale removal of statues of Marx and Lenin, or of the renunciation of Marxism in Moscow and Eastern Europe, since Africans were aware of the fact that their own countries’ “departures from democratic standards ... closely parallel defects exposed in Eastern Europe”.<sup>14</sup> There was certainly a major spillover-effect, but it does not tell the whole story. The continent was ripe for a massive populist upheaval, and a number of internal and external factors played a role in leading the democratic pressures to fruition.

Among the internal variables was the fact that much of Africa was not only at a political dead-end, but economically bankrupt to boot. Over the years all ideological/developmental options had seemingly been tried and found wanting, none succeeding in arresting the

continent’s free-fall into economic oblivion. Mushrooming debt repayment loads had become more onerous than Latin America’s widely publicized ones, while the various structural adjustment programmes and other IMF “fixes” seemed simply not to work in Africa. “The prevailing view of the continent in the mainstream media is of unremitting gloom,” noted one observer; Africa’s total GNP was smaller than that of Belgium (which has less than 2 per cent of its population) while “Africa’s share of world trade is half of what it was a decade ago ... private investment [has] virtually stopped ... [and] at independence Ghana – a classic case – had a larger GNP than South Korea” – which thirty years later was a regional economic superpower while Ghana had become a basket-case.<sup>15</sup> Progressively marginalized, Africa was “not suffering from a temporary crisis ... but from a lasting inability to make itself part of the world economy and to hold onto its share of the market there – let alone increase its share”.<sup>16</sup> Despite an annual in-flow of \$15 billion in aid, standards of living had dramatically declined since independence, *and not just in countries grossly mismanaged*. In Tanzania, for example, urban real wages fell by 65 per cent, and the standard of living by 2,5 per cent annually between 1969 and 1983.

As a continent Africa was at the bottom of every socio-economic indicator. Average life expectancy is 50 years, and in some countries as low as 37; demographic growth is inordinately high, in some states around 4 per cent, the biological limit; and disease and famine periodically ravage the continent, causing hundreds of thousands of deaths. Moreover, the continent is not just the poorest, but the only one *backsliding*; the World Bank has estimated that within 25 years Africa will need twice the current number of hospitals, schools and trained personnel just to maintain existing standards.<sup>17</sup> Yet at the same time functionally redundant civil services continue to consume 60-80 per cent of national budgets, and number more than 50 per cent of non-agricultural employment, compared to 36 per cent in Asia, and 27 per cent in Latin America, resulting in fiscal paralysis, financial constraints on development, and little scope for political manoeuvrability.

This moral, political and economic

bankruptcy of much of Africa has spawned deep societal frustration that, combined with the continent's changed population, has produced explosive bouts of anti-systemic violence. For by the late-1980s Africa's population was substantively different from that of the 1960s. Populations in Africa are much larger than at independence, in some countries (Kenya, for instance) by as much as 300 per cent; they are more modern and urban, with urbanization levels in several states (Gabon; the Central African Republic) also up by over 300 per cent, resulting in heightened needs and expectations. Populations are no longer reverent of political founding fathers, or swayed into politically quietist postures by charisma or ideology. They possess much larger pools of educated youth – with decades of massive educational advances resulting in 95 per cent scholarization levels in some – that are well aware of the democratic options available abroad but denied them at home by élites with little legitimacy intent on ruling forever, errors of omission or commission notwithstanding. As one Zimbabwean critic put it: "You can't have economic problems and fail to blame those who are in charge."<sup>18</sup>

Finally, it is important to note that in the thirty years since independence sophisticated civic and ecological pressure groups have sprung up in many parts of Africa, monitoring local events and violations for parent bodies overseas, and serving as a powerful link between internal and external pressures for change. Daniel arap Moi, for example, was shocked to discover the muscle of environmentalists in Kenya, when foreign funds committed for the construction of Africa's highest tower-building in Nairobi were withdrawn after vocal publicity for the fact that the project entailed ruining one of the city's few public parks. And when Moi vent his fury at the person who had done most to thwart his pet project, fuming that "Kenyan tradition demanded that a woman not criticize a man," the *global* reaction made him aware that "woman power" had reached Kenya as well.<sup>19</sup>

These internal pressures for greater accountability and political democracy in Africa meshed with the changed international picture that brought its own set of pressures for change in Africa, as elsewhere. The stunning and unequivocal collapse of Marxism

resulted in a unipolar world, wiping out the artificially-enhanced global value of the Third World. What happened was a literal devaluation of the value of Africa to the status of irrelevant international clutter. African states dependent upon Soviet fiscal or military largesse floundered first, as their patron withdrew its support. With military "solutions" to multifaceted internal conflicts no longer feasible (civil strife in Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia), such states undertook ideological somersaults to avert internal collapse. (Ethiopia was unable to do so in light of the more generalized nature of the conflict.) Other former Afro-Marxist states followed suit, some reluctantly (Congo), others very rapidly, driven by fiscal bankruptcy (Benin), but all under tumultuous pressure by societal groups of yester-year disillusioned with the sudden nakedness of their former ideological emperor. As the Chairman of the Zambian Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) put it, if the "originators of Socialism" have rejected Marxism as inappropriate "who were African imitators" to become its main proponents!<sup>20</sup>

Even as Marxism contracted inwards, so did the West disengage from much of the Third World. In a unipolar world with no global tug-of-war it is no longer necessary (if it ever truly was) to control sources of mineral supplies or geopolitically strategic localities. France in particular relaxed her jealous neo-colonial (anti-American) bear-hug, parallel to a massive disinvestment from Africa of private French capital. French investments had been in a slow downward spiral since 1980 (accelerating in 1986) dropping from a net annual inflow of *circa* one billion dollars at the decade's beginning to a net *outflow* of \$824 million in 1988 as entrepreneurs, hurting from the continent's political and economic decline, and attracted by opportunities in Eastern Europe and the post-1992 EEC, were "only thinking of packing their bags and quitting Africa. Black Africa no longer interests economic circles."<sup>21</sup>

The collapse of Marxism was just the tip of the iceberg, for a new era of economic rationality quickly dawned. The economic non-viability of much of Africa placed some 30 countries at the total mercy of a thoroughly exasperated IMF. Reinforcing domestic pressures for change there were thus powerful international demands for better govern-

nance, less wastage and corruption, greater civic and human rights, and most importantly a return to market economies. The President of the World Bank put it bluntly when he remarked that hitherto "many of Africa's leaders have been more concerned about retaining power than about the long-term development interests of their people",<sup>22</sup> resulting in huge amounts of foreign aid that reversed direction to become an outward "flood of capital and the buying of big apartments in nice European countries".<sup>23</sup>

The frustration of the international donor community received its most powerful boost from France, which had hitherto virtually sustained, fiscally and militarily, one-third of Africa's states, at times even shielding them from IMF pressures. Since his accession to the presidency, François Mitterrand had been galled by France's residual unconditional obligations to oppressive, kleptomaniac client-states in Africa, whose authoritarian policies and swollen private Swiss banking accounts had tarnished France's global reputation. The erosion of the French entrepreneurial presence in Africa<sup>24</sup> and the end of the Cold War thus provided an opportunity to "re-write" the Franco-African relationship. France's immense leverage in francophone Africa attained immediate results, as Paris, for once very finely attuned to the new line emanating from the IMF (and Washington) began "explicitly demanding political change as a condition for further loans to Africa".<sup>25</sup>

The changes in Franco-African relations were dramatic. Early in 1990 an influential French official publicly suggested that France should disengage from Africa, the "conservatory of the ills of humanity", hinting there was actually no debt crisis in francophone Africa, since "the personal fortunes of Africa's elites outside the continent were greater than the debts of the countries in question"; in 1988 alone the Bank of France had purchased fully \$1,8 billion worth of CFAFr banknotes (freely convertible to French francs) that had been fraudulently transferred to Europe in "full suitcases and diplomatic bags" for the private accounts of corrupt statesmen.<sup>26</sup>

France's new policy was conveyed to French Africa: future aid would be conditional upon the introduction of basic democratic reforms, with higher

levels of budgetary and other subventions accruing to those introducing the most reforms. Moreover, France unilaterally renounced any future military role under existing mutual defence treaties whose loose interpretation in the past had seen French force of arms sustain regimes threatened by domestic insurrection.<sup>27</sup> In June 1990 the *La Baule Francophonique* summit meeting concluded with a declaration that stressed “the need to associate the relevant populations more closely with the construction of their political, social and economic future” for, as Mitterrand more bluntly put it, “the sooner you organize free elections, the better it will be for the youth of your countries who need to express themselves”.<sup>28</sup>

Several African leaders did not believe France’s threat of a military disengagement from non-compliant states. Some had heard similar rhetoric before, while others rejected such blatant “neo-colonial” efforts to dictate reform. This was most notably the case with Chad’s Hissene Habre who saw himself – as a former valued bulwark against Libyan designs in the area – immune to being jettisoned by France.<sup>29</sup> Habre’s fate was sealed by his heavy-handed rule over Southern Chad (which had lost in the civil war) and his unwillingness to move towards national reconciliation. Resident French troops were ordered to remain neutral in their bases as Habre’s estranged Chief of Staff, Idriss Déby, swept in from across the Sudanese border with insurgent troops (and Libyan support) to defeat Habre and chase him into exile. Libya’s complicity in the insurgency was judged of little import; and, attesting to the fact that Déby understood France’s new line, once he entered Ndjamené the new warlord pledged multiparty elections (the first since 1961) and a return to civilian rule.

Most francophone leaders tried to temporize, or postpone the moment of reckoning; one however, Mathieu Kérékou in insolvent Benin, was already being bulldozed by a joint IMF/French juggernaut to liberalize and step down from office, while a few leaders (Bongo; Houphouët-Boigny, for example) had already seen the writing on the wall, and were voluntarily initiating programmes of political liberalization. Paradoxically French pressures for reform were initially very modest. Paris did not counsel, for example, the adoption of what was to become the norm in

much of Africa – the convening of constituent national conferences (*à la France’s Estates General* of the 18th century) to hammer out new constitutions leading to fully-fledged multiparty elections. Indeed originally very minimal changes were envisaged: “the catchwords [were] ‘governance’ and ‘democratization’ rather than ‘democracy’ or ‘multipartyism’ ... less corruption, more financial accountability, better human rights observance and freer judiciaries and media, rather than completely open multiparty systems, for which most Africanists think Africa is not yet suited or equipped”.<sup>30</sup> France’s counsel to Benin, brought to its knees by striking civil servants not paid for over a year, was actually *against* multipartyism and for a single-party system (mass, not vanguard) *à la Côte d’Ivoire*, offering constituency-level choice of candidates. But France’s suggested model of Ivoirien “democracy” was at that very moment being rejected as inadequate by demonstrators in Abidjan, while always maverick Benin (Africa’s intellectual “Latin Quarter” during the colonial era) would not accept anything short of full freedom of association once the road to democracy had been embarked upon.

If change reached francophone Africa via pressure from France and the World Bank/IMF, and militant and Marxist countries via the disappearance of their ideological model, mentor as well as financial and military backers, other countries, mostly in anglophone Africa, while “studiously avoiding comparisons” slowly reached the inescapable conclusion that “the parallels between what has transpired in Eastern Europe and the mounting pressures for change on the continent are becoming increasingly difficult to ignore”,<sup>31</sup> with great resistance yielding to popular demands for a return to square one: the multipartyism of the immediate pre- and post-independence eras.

Most anglophone leaders – not pressurized by London as their francophone cousins were by Paris – tried to hold out, complaining they could not implement austerity structural adjustment plans (involving privatizing parastatals, trimming the bureaucracy and reducing staple foodstuff subsidies) without authoritarian policies. Notwithstanding some support among scholars who perceive in the “praetorian” nature of Third World societies the necessity for

“developmental dictators”,<sup>32</sup> such rationalizations were rejected out of hand by IMF reassessments of the long-term sustainability of SAP’s *in the absence of political “pre-conditions”*. A much more explicit restatement of fundamentals now argued that the SAP’s had no chance of securing economic growth and development unless countries *first* moved squarely into modalities of governance that included accountability, participatory politics, and free-market economies.

Put specifically, “history suggests that political legitimacy and consensus are a precondition for sustainable development ... . Underlying the litany of Africa’s problems is a crisis of governance”.<sup>33</sup> And many radical African intellectuals, while continuing to reject the IMF/World Bank formula for economic recovery are now in agreement that there is “a definite correlation between the lack of democracy in African politics and the deterioration in socio-economic conditions”.<sup>34</sup> Claude Ake, for example, has argued that “the problems of persistence of underdevelopment is related to lack of democracy in Africa ... democracy is not just a consummatory value but also an instrumentalist one”.<sup>35</sup>

Democracy is thus perceived as providing a *politically enabling atmosphere for economic development*. The World Bank unequivocally posits that a *causal relationship* exists between democracy and sustained growth, arguing that it is not mere chance that Africa’s top economic performers, Botswana and Mauritius, are the only countries with true multiparty systems on the continent. Other observers have noted that Kenya, Côte d’Ivoire and Malawi, countries with high growth rates not fuelled by mineral wealth, also manifest *greater* levels of political accountability than states with depressed growth scores. This view is consonant with linkages postulated by scholars of democracy who see, as does Charles Lindblom, a clear link between political freedom, a free-market economy and economic development. In Lindblom’s eloquent words “*only within market-oriented systems does political democracy arise*. Not all market-oriented systems are democratic, but every democratic system is also a market-oriented system. Apparently, for reasons that are not wholly understood, political democracy has been unable to



exist except when coupled with the market. An extraordinary proposition, it has so far held without exception.”<sup>36</sup>

The US Agency for International Development reaffirmed in 1991 its view that “open societies that value individual rights, respect the rule of the law, and have open and accountable governments provide better opportunities for sustained economic development than do closed systems which stifle individual initiative”. And in March 1991 the US Congress reformulated guidelines for aid to “take into account progress towards establishing democracy ... economic reforms and the establishment of a market-oriented economy”.<sup>37</sup> That these new guidelines were much more sincerely applied than previous rhetoric calling for respect for human rights was best visible when Kenya, the darling of the West despite a progressively abysmal record of abuses of human and civic rights, in 1991 found herself virtually cut off from most American aid programmes.

## Re-democratization

While it is difficult to assess the *long-run* significance of what is currently transpiring in Africa, it is equally difficult to underestimate the magnitude of the change itself that is sweeping the continent. It is clear the pressures for democracy are continent-wide, and are irresistible. Even existing democracies have felt the heat, some moving to offer a more equitable share of social, economic and political power to opposition groups – as did Senegal’s Abdou Diouf when he recently invited parliamentary opposition leaders into his cabinet – in an effort to avoid the turmoil in neighbouring countries. Needless to say, the more a regime resembled the discredited Eastern European states, the greater the challenge it has faced for total change. For, as Anglin notes, “most of the departures from democratic standards ... closely parallel defects exposed in Eastern Europe ... . The supremacy of the party over the government, the vanguard party concept, politicisation of the public service and security services, monopoly of party power in perpetuity, subordination of mass organisations (such as trade unions, women’s and youth groups), the media, etc. to party control, the cult of personality, abuses of power including corruption, permanent states of emergency.”<sup>38</sup>

The process of democratization itself is only half-complete on the continent, since it is reaching African states at a different pace, and African political hierarchies are reacting to the pressures with different levels of alacrity. Long-entrenched military regimes are only recently moving, with great reluctance, to implement democratic reforms extracted from them. This since obviously civilianization and democratization (in the Central African Republic, Niger and Togo, for example) will consign scores of hitherto all-powerful officers to political irrelevance. In other countries (Kenya, Malawi, Sierra Leone, Zaire, Zambia and Zimbabwe, for example) African leaders, civilian as well as military, are still dragging their feet, fighting rearguard battles, or strenuously haggling with pro-democracy movements, aware that they are unlikely to remain in power in any new political order.

Zambia and Cameroon are classic examples of *civilian* regimes desperately trying to push back the day of reckoning, hoping the global vogue for democracy will peter out, allowing them to weather out current pressures through time-tested blends of intimidation and patronage.<sup>39</sup> Kaunda, for example, has strenuously argued the irrelevance to Africa of Eastern Europe’s renunciation of single-party rule, whistling in the dark, and to the winds, that “our situation today is in no way similar to the one in Europe ... the circumstances which made us rally behind the one-party system have not changed ... . What we have been doing ever since our hard-won independence Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union are starting to do only now.”<sup>40</sup> Faced by urban unrest of Leipzig dimensions, Kaunda gave in to demands for multipartyism but temporized by appointing a committee to revise the constitution in preparation for a plebiscite – a process that could have dragged on for years. Only further demonstrations made him capitulate, though he is still back-peddalling and stretching out the process of updating voter registration rolls (demanded by the opposition) while attempting to rebuild his rusty party machine, knowing full well that it is unlikely to survive an open election.

Some leaders have no choice but to resist the process, or try to stage-manage it as much as possible, irrespective of its destabilizing consequences. Mili-

tary leaders intent on staying in power (Moussa Traore) as well as crass dictators (Mobutu Sese Seko and Theodoro Mbasogo in Zaire and Equatorial Guinea respectively) know well that to liberalize is to dig their own political graves. The main rallying call in Kinshasa today, for example, is for a national conference *and* Mobutu’s resignation/arrest. Hissene Habre underestimated France’s resolve in disengaging from oppressive and corrupt client-states, but Mali’s Moussa Traore (ultimately overthrown by his own armed forces) simply wanted to remain in office at all costs. So did Mengistu Haile Mariam, who knew he could not physically remain within a new Ethiopia. Other military autocrats (Sassou-Nguesso, Jerry Rawlings, Gnassingbe Eyadema, Andre Kolingba in Congo, Ghana, Togo and the Central African Republic respectively) are only now, with their backs pressed to the wall, conceding what has become commonplace elsewhere in Africa.

To the end Benin’s Mathieu Kérékou retained delusions of his popularity in the country he had ruled with an iron fist for seventeen years – which explains his tears of frustration when denied a central role in the National Conference, and his amazement to discover in the subsequent presidential elections that he was only politically acceptable in his own northern region. Other military leaders are not likely to be as naive as Kérékou. Eyadema, a masterful stage-manager of “spontaneous” popular demonstrations on behalf of his military reign, was completely outmanœuvred by the country’s first genuine popular demonstration – which demanded democracy and his ouster – and to prevent renewed demands for his trial for the 1963 cold-blooded murder of President Sylvanus Olympio, he is now trying to project the image of an honest-broker in the transition to democracy in Lomé, hoping that his relatively benevolent governance record will gain him a future role. In both Brazzaville and Bangui, for widely different reasons, Sassou-Nguesso and Kolingba have by contrast no illusions whatsoever about their continued political relevance in a new democratic order – which explains the military’s marathon-length haggling at the national conference in Brazzaville, and the bitter last-ditch stand put up by Kolingba until July 1991 when he

finally allowed multipartyism unconditionally.

By contrast, civilian leaders who early grasped the long-run significance to Africa of the global rearrangement of power, and promptly came to terms with the new rules of the game, creating political space, clamping down on fraud and embezzlement, liberalizing the State and lifting its more oppressive features, have been able to survive "the trauma of democracy" with enhanced legitimacy. Grasping the inevitability of change and reacting accordingly has allowed African leaders to seize the initiative and lead to fruition the movement for reform, in the process distancing themselves from their own *ancien régimes*. Such leaders have, moreover, pre-empted future *more threatening* political demands by conceding democracy when opposition groups were still disorganized, and any reform but a dream. They were thus in many ways able to set the pace of reform and its all-important ground-rules, maintaining the centrality of their role in the final political outcome, though usually conceding a bicephalous executive as they relinquished executive powers to "clean" technocratic premiers accountable to multiparty national assemblies.

The two best examples of early democratic metamorphoses in Africa are those of Côte d'Ivoire and Gabon. They very cogently illustrate this point, just as the temerity and equivocation of Paul Biya in Cameroon and Kenneth Kaunda in Zambia underscore the danger of trying to cling to power in an era of tumult where "maximization of demands" very rapidly slams the door to half-way compromise, raising the cry for the political demise of incumbent leaders.

Houphouët-Boigny, faced by constant urban unrest and riots (anchored in the collapse of the Ivoirien "miracle") showed his political astuteness by dramatically acceding in full to the demands of the opposition – multiparty politics and presidential and legislative elections – rushing Côte d'Ivoire's democratic transformation before the opposition could expand their demands or realize that they were not geared for the first open electoral contests in thirty years. When the 26 political parties that registered themselves indeed called for a postponement of elections, Houphouët-Boigny turned their very arguments against them – that the country was impatient for competitive elections at

the earliest possible opportunity.

The tactic resulted in elections largely under (*Parti Democratique du Côte d'Ivoire*) PDCI supervision, greased by PDCI largess, with a quasi-PDCI monopoly of the media, and voters unimpressed by the rudimentary electoral skills of the opposition. Notwithstanding the new political space created in Abidjan, the outcome of the three-tiered elections was never in doubt. No opposition party fielded candidates in even half the electoral districts, and the main presidential challenger (Laurent Gbagbo, who garnered 18,3 per cent of the vote) was neither geared to run a national race, nor perceived (outside urban centres) as anything other than a Bete regional power-aspirant to replace Le Grande Vieux.<sup>41</sup> Houphouët-Boigny's flexibility overnight replenished his sagging legitimacy, revived the increasingly complacent ruling party from its doldrums, and prevented the emergence of pressures for a much more fundamental restructuring of power in Côte d'Ivoire.

A similar metamorphosis in Libreville saw the beleaguered Bongo give in to pressures for a convention-brokered rearrangement of power, in which – playing upon everyone's fear of the Fang (prime beneficiaries of democratization) and desire for local power-bases – Bongo presided over a decentralizing of Gabon that assured his demographically-weak but mineral-rich region significant autonomy from the central government! At the same time Bongo's "gracious" acquiescence to a rearrangement of power removed the presidency and his own tenure of it from the bargaining table when only months before his leadership had been at stake. Had he tarried, or hoped for French military support against the massive urban demonstrations, Bongo (who is of the tiny politically-irrelevant Bateke ethnic sliver) would have been swallowed into oblivion by the pro-democracy movement. Indeed, shortly after "democratization", massive riots in Port Gentil (following an unrelated incident) brought in French troops to evacuate the large numbers of French nationals in Gabon's oil-capital. Bongo was pointedly reminded on this occasion that "he would receive no military help in maintaining law and order", since while France "would remain actively involved in the continent [it] wished to stay out of the continent's internal affairs".<sup>42</sup>

## Whither Africa?

What is currently being hammered out in much of the continent is a new democratic charter for the African State; a new dispensation to govern, but this time with constitutionally-entrenched (and to some extent externally-guaranteed) political space, human and civic freedoms and political accountability, within broadly defined market economies. In many ways this is Africa's political rebirth, a return to square one – decolonization, though from *domestic*, politically-monopolistic leaders. At the same time, however, this "second independence" is in many respects (given the severe aid conditionalities in a very unipolar world) a reimposition of international tutelage on Africa by the international donor community! The re-democratization of the continent is of monumental import, but it also carries major negative repercussions; in *the economic domain* nothing has changed with democratization, and little is likely to in the near term, while the "not by democracy alone" argument is *not* without some validity.

An economic New Deal is not on the cards for Africa; current conditionalities do not dangle prospects of increased aid, but rather continuation of existing levels. African states have to run faster (be democratic) to remain in the same place (secure existing levels of aid). Hence few economic benefits are likely to flow in the near future from the democratization of Africa, *even if* "politically enabling environments" do in due course bring in benefits – a contentious question since many African states have little economic potential of *any* significance, which is why entrepreneurs did not flock into them in the past, *irrespective* of ideology or level of democracy! Moreover, the inability of any African state to pull itself up by its own bootstraps has produced donor fatigue, today visible even with respect to humanitarian aid where Kurds are considered before the thrice-salvaged Ethiopians. Former American Assistant Secretary of State Chester Crocker summed it up well when he noted that "most secretaries of state have just wanted to keep African issues off their desks ... . The idea of putting big money into African economic development remains anathema."<sup>43</sup>

On the other hand democratization has flooded countries with *scores* of

narrow ethnic and personal political machines, and thousands of power-aspirants. In little Benin, a country of four million people, the 1990-91 elections were contested by 1 800 candidates from twenty-six political parties, and fourteen individuals sought the presidency in campaigns marked by ethnic voting and political intimidation as if the lengthy one-party interregnum had never taken place. Next door a typically lengthy Nigerian military transition to civilian rule winds up with the flaws of the soon-to-come civilian regime already visible and reminding Uwazurike of the run-up to the doomed civilian Second Republic: "endless rivalries ... negative developmental consequences ... inter-party violence ... the worst forms of unstable democracy ... most parties were narrowly based, tied to some 'great and unassailable' leader who tended to stamp the organization not with any grand ideological vision but his personal biases".<sup>44</sup> The picture is duplicated across the breadth of "democratic" Africa, with some 119 political parties already registered in Zaire.

Not everywhere has political democracy resulted in *social* space. In Algeria the stunning victory of the *Front Islamique du Salut* (FIS) brought severe *constraints* in social and cultural matters as Muslim fundamentalism primarily gained from the country's political liberalization. Apart from religious polarization (discernible in a dozen countries) the prime voting modality visible in Africa's recent free elections has been along ethnic lines, underscoring the continued relevance of subnationalism three decades into statehood. Politicized ethnic sentiment remains the most meaningful force in Africa's syncretic, marginal, non-nation states, implying that politics in the "new democracies" will constantly reflect this tug-of-war with all its deleterious and divisive negative effects.

The destabilizing potential of ethnic politics combined with continuing economic decay, against a backdrop of heightened expectations attending democratization, can produce explosive results. The end to authoritarian rule produces euphoria that "the future is open, and that ideals and decisions count as much as interests and structures".<sup>45</sup> But the concrete experience of other geographical regions in "transition" from authoritarian rule (as in Latin America) suggests that countries not

backsliding have *not* experienced a significant degree of economic advance. And while multiparty elections do transform "expressions of principle to discussions of rules",<sup>46</sup> greater moderation and give and take is entailed in this, which conditions of scarcity and zero-sum mentalities prevent. As Jackson and Rosberg remind us "in many countries the problem of establishing democracy is secondary to the problem of establishing order, stability and civility ... [since] in more than a few countries this basic foundation is still lacking".<sup>47</sup> As one observer commented concretely with respect to Zambia, neither democracy nor even Kaunda's removal will solve a single Zambian problem; indeed, "in the short run, things are likely to get worse".<sup>48</sup>

Some have seen in Africa's social pluralism *the* justification for democracy: "... if there is social pluralism, that is in fact an argument for a democratic form of governance",<sup>49</sup> that is the only kind that can in the long run provide solutions to concrete political problems in the most satisfying manner for most societal groups.<sup>50</sup> But sceptics focus on the alleged *instrumental* value of democracy, and challenge Lindblom's correlation between political democracy and economic development, and the World Bank's equation of less State intervention in the economy with better governance, maintaining that only a "bureaucratic-authoritarian state" can contain fissiparous tensions *and* lead to a free-market economy in the Third World.<sup>51</sup> And born-again radicals find they can after all jettison Lenin and still cling to Marx, arguing that "Africa cannot have 'bourgeois' democracy so long as there is not proper bourgeoisie".<sup>52</sup>

At the same time, a healthier scepticism has recently pervaded even French circles that now question the wisdom of originally imposing blanket conditionalities linking aid to *Western-style liberal democracy* and a multipartyism Africa may not be ready for after all.<sup>53</sup> Possibly surgically precise and issue-specific conditionalities would have been more productive of "democracy" in the long run. Conditionalities could have been linked, for example, to respect for human rights, political and fiscal accountability, freedom of the press and the judiciary, and severe trimming of bloated civil services and deficitary State sectors. Such variations on political conditionalities would have

left *in situ* chastened and externally-circumscribed semi-authoritarian regimes (weeded of their more obnoxious dictators), deemed necessary to keep a lid on societal frustrations and implement the highly unpopular and destabilizing policies required for the return to fiscal normality.

Such ideas are emerging in Western circles as the realization sinks in that "democratic" leaders are today facing exactly the same destabilizing demonstrations their non-democratic brethren (often themselves!) used to face, but without external guarantees of military support. "Democracy" has not given them any legitimacy or staying power, while the economic picture has deteriorated further despite all the reforms of the past several years.

The dilemma comes into focus when we examine Africa's prime "new" democracy – Côte d'Ivoire. Never particularly authoritarian like most of its neighbours, Houphouët-Boigny institutionalized all the reforms called for by the opposition, and then convincingly trounced it in presidential and legislative elections. But the political reforms changed nothing in the economic domain. No new capital is flowing into Côte d'Ivoire; indeed, the outflow is at its severest in Abidjan, which may have lost over half of its 60 000-odd French residents since 1988. Insolvent despite a highly competent premier and austerity policies, by mid-1991 Côte d'Ivoire was considering defaulting on its national debt.

For, notwithstanding Abidjan's "democracy", none of the country's economic parameters have changed an iota. Belt-tightening exercises are simply incapable of ameliorating the country's fiscal crisis and the regime is unwilling to commit political suicide by initiating more traumatic cuts. The latter would involve sharply slashing the country's 130 000-strong civil service (already been pruned),<sup>54</sup> rolling back salaries and fringe benefits (some higher than in Spain and Portugal) of the country's 45 000 teachers, fully privatizing the country's remaining parastatals, and further trimming cocoa and coffee producer prices, whose depressed levels have already resulted in declining production levels and a fall in farmers' income of up to 75 per cent. Such policies would lead to explosive disenchantment with the PDCI in rural areas, and massive unrest in the cities –

without the former era's "immutable"<sup>55</sup> French military guarantee for the civilian order. And even if effected, the draconian policies would still leave in 1991 a fiscal shortfall in debt repayment dues of \$1 billion, that is the equivalent of 100 per cent of Côte d'Ivoire's anticipated State revenues!

Moreover, these "constraints" on democracy in Africa, and others that can also be cited, are lodged within a hitherto very *mechanistic* conceptualization of democracy. However, democracy is not a political system with certain attributes and trappings, but a system of governance sustained by a set of cultural values and a societal democratic ethos. These are not necessarily missing in Africa, but are ingrained, when found, at *subnational levels*, the level that means most for Africans. Even then, acute societal scarcity and competing pressures produce zero-sum mentalities and modalities of interaction that axiomatically are non-democratic. With a history of authoritarian colonial and post-independence rule, in a context of continued scarcity and ethnic strife, democratic values and commitments are difficult to sustain, and the ethos is difficult to spread – the ultimate constraint on democracy.

Larry Diamond has noted eloquently, and correctly, that "it is unrealistic to think that such countries are suddenly reverse course and institutionalize stable democratic government simply by changing leaders, constitutions and/or public mentalities. If progress is made toward developing democratic government, it is likely to be gradual, messy, fitful and slow, with many imperfections along the way."<sup>56</sup> Some countries – the wealthier, more united, astutely governed or important – are likely, with continued neo-colonial bondages and external aid keeping them in line, to surmount the "obstacles" posed by democracy, developing into relatively stable democratic systems. But it is hard to escape the conclusion that many other African states, in the absence of constant munificent benefactors (and when the global fervour with "democracy" possibly goes out of vogue?), will be seen as a bad bet and let loose to drift their own way, some to backslide into political strife, single-party and military rule.

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- 54 Most African civil services could be slashed by 35-50 per cent without commensurate decline in services, assuming residual workers were not bunched up in urban centres as they tend to be.
- 55 Interview with a senior French diplomat, Abidjan, 12 July 1988.
- 56 Larry Diamond, "Beyond autocracy: Prospects for democracy in Africa," in *Beyond autocracy in Africa*, Atlanta, GA: The Carter Center of Emory University, 1989, p 24.

# Cameroon: Jump-starting an economic crisis

*Dr Nantang Jua of the Institute of Human Sciences, Yaoundé, Cameroon, looks at the influence of official corruption on the management of the Cameroon economy.*

The 1980s were a harrowing decade for Africa – a lost decade in its attempt to triumph in these years of developmental challenge. But there was still a glimmer of hope, since the World Bank was arguing that some economies such as those of Kenya, Côte d'Ivoire and Cameroon were still growing. They were depicted as show-cases for other African economies that had shot off as it were on incorrect trajectories.<sup>1</sup> Cameroon, for example, registered a phenomenal annual growth rate of 7 per cent in its GDP until 1986. This led President Ronald Reagan to refer to it as a “shining example for Africa”.<sup>2</sup> This view was also shared by some Africans and Africanists.<sup>3</sup> Given the value of hindsight, it is evident that these assessments were overly optimistic. The Cameroonian growth miracle started petering out in 1986/87 as the GDP fell by 3 per cent. It dropped further by 9 per cent in 1987/88 and by about 6-7 per cent in 1988/89.<sup>4</sup> Determined to reverse this downward spiral, Cameroon joined the growing list of African states that in 1988 had adopted a structural adjustment programme (SAP). Its claim that this SAP was first proposed by Cameroon was rendered hollow by the fact that (in Gerald Helliner's words) it smacked of a “comic theater operation”, that is, a plan designed wholly by the World Bank.

Cameroon's economic performance before 1986 had been impressive because it had supposedly followed a cautious approach or tortoise walk,<sup>5</sup> which hinged on the realization that “if you keep your feet on the ground, you

can feel the holes and go around them; but if you jump, you might land in one and get hurt”.<sup>6</sup> Our quite natural reaction is to ask: What then caused Cameroon to jump? Cameroon jumped as a result of certain policies it adopted, or were thrust upon it, because of its post-colonial character and its position on the periphery of the world economy. But it would be difficult to distinguish between those policies the country adopted deliberately and those it adopted reluctantly or under duress as a result of its client or recipient status. In some instances, the distinction between the two categories is blurred by the fact that supposedly home-spawned policies must often, in order to lure donors, be tailored to meet certain specifications the latter see as *de rigueur*. A case in point is the promotion of “integrated development projects” in the 1970s, *enfants chéris* of the World Bank.

Despite its continuous adherence to its cautious approach to economic development, Cameroon plunged into an economic crisis in 1987. Now, it has often been pointed out that exogenous factors were and are largely responsible for the present economic crisis in Africa.<sup>7</sup> For Cameroon, the truth of this point is borne out by the fact that between 1985 and 1987 the country's export price index in CFA franc (CFAFr) terms dropped by 65 per cent for oil, 24 per cent for cocoa, 11 per cent for coffee and 20 per cent for rubber, bringing about a 27 per cent deterioration in the country's terms of trade.<sup>8</sup> This drop was aggravated by a slide in the value of the dollar against the CFA franc from an

average of CFAFr480 to US\$1 in 1984 to just CFAFr333 to US\$1 in 1986. On the whole, the shortfall amounted to about CFAFr500 billion. This deterioration in export revenue was not matched by a (corresponding) decrease in imports and, coupled with a movement of capital also running against the balance of payments, pushed Cameroon's overall account into a deficit of CFAFr150 billion in 1986-87.<sup>9</sup> I must say at once that while all this is powerful evidence in favour of the exogenous factors thesis, I am still unpersuaded that it renders it conclusive.

I argue in this paper that only a holistic picture can begin to explain the genesis of Cameroon's economic crisis, a picture that also takes into account the failed policies of the state and certain acts of commission or omission of which members of the Cameroon's bourgeoisie were guilty. The conversion of a neo-colonial state into a patrimonial state produced a highly favourable environment for the hegemonic or ruling class to appropriate the entire state machinery and possessions. Symptomatic of this tendency is the pervasiveness of systemic corruption and the expansion of the parastatal sector primarily to provide hand-outs and rewards. The throttling effects of these practices on Cameroon's economic performance only became obvious (or were exacerbated) after 1986 because of the particular way in which its incorporation into the world economy had been effected: the free flow of currency between the CFA Franc Zone and France led to a massive flight of capital to the latter at a critical

junction where it was already evident that Cameroon was on the brink of economic collapse.

At this point I should caution my readers that this is not an attempt to establish “blame ratios”<sup>10</sup> between external and internal causes of the crisis. However, this case-study should provide substantive proof of an emerging thesis that internal causes have contributed (inordinately) to the downward spiral in Africa.<sup>11</sup> Cameroon is a perfect test case because the ecological variables<sup>12</sup> that have played a pivotal role in Africa’s downward economic spiral had only a minimal impact in Cameroon, notwithstanding the drought between 1982 and 1984. This can be inferred, partially, from the fact that the country’s export earnings did not begin to fall until 1986/87.

## The post-colonial state in Cameroon

Despite assertions and exhortations to the contrary, there is overwhelming evidence that Cameroon was “invented” at the Congress of Berlin in 1884<sup>13</sup> and designated a German colony. This metropolitan power succeeded in containing centrifugal forces in the territory only by resorting to authoritarian rule. Following the defeat of Germany in World War I, Cameroon became a mandated territory and later a trusteeship placed under the auspices of France and Britain. In 1960 French Cameroon acceded to independence in inauspicious circumstances. Whereas the *Union des Populations du Cameroun* (UPC) claimed to represent the will of the people, the French designated Ahmadoue Ahidjo as the first leader to govern francophone Cameroon.<sup>14</sup> The results of this one act had extraordinarily wide-ranging ramifications and deeply influenced the nature and evolution of the post-colonial state. Independence in French Cameroon was followed by reunification with British Cameroon in 1961.

Given the polemics that surrounded such a decolonization process, only sophisticated political craftsmanship could have kept Cameroon from disintegrating. This challenge devolved on Ahidjo, who was in power until November 1982. He opted for a system of personal rule, “appropriated the state, becoming ruler-manager with the exclusive right to issue commands and give

political instructions”.<sup>15</sup> The success of this form of governance hinged on the transformation of the juridical statehood of Cameroon into an empirical state<sup>16</sup>, or (perhaps more accurately) a truncated state which did not embrace and exploit its full territorial jurisdiction. This (limited) goal has been referred to by Jean-François Bayart as the “*recherche hégémonique*”<sup>17</sup> which required and entailed an adept command of government apparatus and patronage. An intrinsic feature of Ahidjo’s personal project was the institution of a mode of representation electoral in effect though not in fact, the president’s hand-picked local élites or barons (as well as other members of the “*bourgeoisie d’état*”) serving as transmission belts – the role of the feedback loop being minimized in this instance – between the president and the different ethnic groups.

This paternalism relied to the highest degree on the cultivation of a network of dyadic relationships between Ahidjo and his barons, who were supposed to owe total allegiance to him. Attempts by any of them to build a power base were (mis)construed as betrayal that sanctioned removal from office.<sup>18</sup> The unilateral acts of this “modern prince” were always granted an aura of legitimacy by the single-party Cameroon National Union (CNU) which he created in 1966. The CNU, which was supposed to serve as a forum for the mobilization and education of the masses, embraced as its guiding principles balanced development, planned liberalism, social justice and autonomous development. An examination merely of these principles and Cameroon’s forensic ideology<sup>19</sup> (as enunciated by its leaders, only at rhetorical level) would seem to indicate that Cameroon would take on some degree of socialist coloration. The CNU ideology may have been designed to facilitate the coalescence of a power base of some sort among Cameroonians, most of whom had been gripped by revolutionary and rising expectations in the wake of independence, expectations that constituted at that time a latent ideology. Thus it became incumbent upon the state, ostensibly determined to satisfy popular demands, that these principles assume at least the aura of a practical ideology.

The “*recherche hégémonique*” was the blueprint of a single leader and at the same time a class project embarked upon by the governing class of the new

empirical state. Consequently, attempts to translate these principles into concrete policies led to the birth of the patrimonial state and its over-expansion. This can hardly be attributed to altruism: the governing class, a distinct class in itself, was aware of the gap between its political and economic circumstances and of the fact that the state could serve as an instrument for effecting a marriage between the two. It has been maintained elsewhere that this governing class comprised about one thousand people.<sup>20</sup> But if Bayart’s contention that the traditional élites, the chiefs in this instance, have also been co-opted into this “conflict coalition” is valid, I would submit that this number is rather conservative. The co-optation of the chiefs, prompted by the quest for strength in the state, has been realized by transforming the chiefs into true administrative auxiliaries, thus securing their allegiance and winning them over for good. This enables them to earn salaries ranging between CFAFr100 000 and 300 000, depending upon their status, at the very time when the traditional and tribal basis of their power which guaranteed them pecuniary benefits is being threatened. Note that whatever the composition or size of the hegemonic class, its most prominent feature is its parasitic nature.

The ruling class’s unbounded desire for the accumulation of wealth may have been inadvertently legitimized in 1966 at Garoua by Ahidjo’s exhortation “*Enrichissez-vous*”.<sup>21</sup> This led ruling-class members whose desire to emulate the life-styles of their colonial rulers was insatiable – to look upon their post-colonial state as a “resource in itself”, a widow’s curse: “in a short time top-ranking officials have found themselves in possession of colossal fortunes which in normal conditions, five generations of men in the Cameroonian context would never have been able to put together”.<sup>22</sup> How vastly the country’s resources were pillaged can be gleaned from one instance – a “commission” of CFAFr600 million had to be paid by the company that constructed the new headquarters of the *Banque des Etats de l’Afrique Centrale* (BEAC) in Yaoundé.<sup>23</sup> In another instance the attempt of an international insurance company to buy a building in Douala, a venture that would have generated more than CFAFr200 million in taxes for the public coffers, was frustrated by its refusal to square the man at the head

of one ministerial department.

From the foregoing, it can be deduced that these corrupt practices by venal politicians have seriously affected the national economy. The Cameroonians themselves insist on labelling these all too dysfunctional practices, even if only facetiously, as “*la politique du ventre*”. This term is appropriate, but does not express everything that has to be said, particularly the realization among some of these politicians that their progeny will at least inherit their wealth – if not their positions. Victor T Le Vine’s remark that “the very nature of the coalition, with its tendency to favor ethnic, regional, and economic interests at the expense of competence, operates to bring mediocrity to the top of the political heap”<sup>24</sup> may be apt; but I would go further and contend that these mediocre politicians are very conscious of their mercenary status.

Ironically, this desire for aggrandizement seems to be justified by a perverted interpretation of the parable of talents: *unto every one which hath shall be given*. Realizing the pivotal role of the “modern sultan” or “modern prince” it is not surprising that members of the ruling class have sought to curry favour by buying vital instrumental allegiances through “ethno-clientelism” or a patron-client network. In the process, patrons purportedly swear never to abandon the “House of Muumbi”.<sup>25</sup> It has been argued that these pledges smack of what can be described as an attempt among some patrons and clients to enhance their chances of entry and promotion within the system, whereas, “they amount to false consciousness where they obscure the patron’s promotion of his material interests”.<sup>26</sup> For a failure by any baron to deliver the requisite political goods, the allegiance of his people, to the patrimonial state or the “modern prince” usually prompts his removal from office. The validity of this is demonstrated in the Cameroonian context by Mohammadou Labarang’s purportedly being stripped of ministerial rank because the rate of abstention in the 1988 Presidential election<sup>27</sup> was very high (84,01 per cent) in his constituency, the Adamaoua province. I would even conjecture that the feelings of insecurity that haunt these barons as a result of the high rate of turnover among them, serves only to shift their drive for the illicit accumulation of worldly goods into top gear, if not overdrive.

Yet rapid turnover may be inevitable, allowing for the fact that leadership recruitment in a patrimonial state cannot be predicated on an inclusionary basis. Biya has sought to resolve this problem by increasing the number of ministerial portfolios to thirty and by a constant reshuffling of his cabinet. Between 1982 and 1987 the cabinet was reshuffled eight times. In the process, efficiency may have been traded for political expediency. And since the bureaucracy is by no means a stranger to politics, it is axiomatic that such cabinet changes paralyse administration or at the very least produce ripples in its ranks. This may be confidently attributed to the pervasiveness of graft, a state of affairs scarcely ameliorated by an entirely bureaucratic dread of dealing with anything unfamiliar in the files laid before it in any interregnum for fear of taking adventurous and possibly dangerous decisions.<sup>28</sup>

### The making of a corrupt bureaucracy

The overriding necessity of rewarding clients in a ethno-client network has contributed (beyond all measure) to an over-expansion of the public sector in some areas as well as to its mediocrity. These characteristics are not anomalous; they are intrinsic to the “soft” state. However, they do conflict with the state’s desire to enhance its powers. First, they exert a heavy financial drain upon state revenue, an impact rendered more pernicious by the bureaucracy’s unbridled expansion. Between 1982 and 1987 the number of civil servants increased twofold to reach 160 000,<sup>29</sup> and an estimated 180 000 in 1988. The impact of this growth may be inferred from the fact that in the Ministry of Agriculture, for example, personnel expenditure grew from 83 per cent of the recurrent budget in 1983/84 to 91 per cent in 1987/88, despite the increase in this budget from CFAFr9,5 billion to 17,2 billion in the same four-year period.<sup>30</sup> The magnitude of this increase in the wage bill becomes plain when it is pointed out that this was tantamount to a jump from CFAFr7,9 billion to 15,6 billion. Over that same four-year period, contrariwise, the non-personnel recurrent budget decreased from CFAFr1,6 to 1,5 billion.<sup>31</sup>

That single example is symptomatic of a trend seen in all the other ministe-

rial departments; and this seemingly automatic growth continued even after 1987 when the downward spiral in the economy had set in. By 1989, the state, suffering a shortage of funds, had accumulated more than CFAFr20 billion in payroll arrears for new employees.<sup>32</sup> This amount would have been greater, had not measures been taken to curb malpractice in this area. As a case in point, 20 000 absentee workers were taken off the payroll following “Operation Antelope”.<sup>33</sup> This step was considered a necessary – and sufficient! – sanction for acts of commission prejudicial to the state. No attempt was made to recover moneys lost. “Operation Antelope” was accompanied by measures designed to foster rationalization, such as a nominal freeze in salaries, a reduction in the number of new recruits, the enforcement of the age-limit for retirement from the civil service and a reduction in benefits and allowances for certain categories of personnel. On the whole, these have allowed the state’s wage bill to be reduced by 12 per cent, from CFAFr280 billion in 1986/87 to CFAFr247 billion in 1988/89.<sup>34</sup>

A study of the wage bill alone does not give a complete picture of the measures the patrimonial state undertook to placate the bureaucrats who support it. Their lucrative salaries were complemented by what is referred to as “*avantages en nature*”, which included housing. The housing budgetary allocation increased from CFAFr5,6 billion in 1982-83 to CFAFr10 billion in 1985-86. This is nothing short of alarming when it is realized that these great funds were used to lodge only 5,6 per cent of the state’s 180 000 workers.<sup>35</sup> The size of the carrot was further increased by the lure of cars (ostensibly for official use only) and the practice of picking up the bill for certain basic expenses incurred by some senior civil servants. The pervasiveness of these latter privileges can be gauged, as these advantages, benefiting only a small and restricted class, annually cost the state some CFAFr14 billion for car purchases, CFAFr5 billion for their maintenance, and CFAFr2 billion each for fuel and telephone bills.<sup>36</sup> Politically speaking, this was an acceptable price to pay as insurance against instability in the regime, a sine qua non for the “hegemonic search”. These premiums remained stable until, as the economic crisis was ushered in, the importance of the

state started to depreciate. They were reviewed or overhauled or tinkered with as was called for in decrees numbers 87/975 and 87/972 of 10 July 1987.

Despite these advantages, the parasitic tendencies intrinsic to the governing class still spurred them on to convert their posts into monopoly rent-seeking opportunities. The practice was and remains widespread. One Western banker has observed that "what detracts more from investment than the current crisis is the degree of bureaucracy and *open corruption*".<sup>37</sup> As a matter of fact there seems to be a direct and positive correlation between the size of or the number of levels in the bureaucracy and the level of corruption in patrimonial states. This is not difficult to understand: Weber observed that the "bureaucracies" in patrimonial states were as patrimonial as the basic conception of their states – an exchange relationship predicated on the interests of all parties – which provided their underlying logic.<sup>38</sup>

From this vantage point, I would posit that Biya's decision to promote deconcentration (so as to overcome bureaucratic bottlenecks which were throttling the conduct and conclusion of investment projects) by allowing provincial governors to sign contracts of up to CFAFr100 million in lieu of CFAFr20 million<sup>39</sup> (may have) boosted the opportunities for "soft deviance", the "straddling behavior of strategically situated participants on whom the social organization [depended] to maintain its stability"<sup>40</sup> easily accommodated in the patrimonial state. This practice could have been discouraged only if it had been accompanied by measures implementing the "rigour and moralization" that had become part of the forensic ideology of the Biya regime. Since this did not happen to any large extent, a slow decision-making pace remained the norm; and systemic corruption that could speed things up was still seen as standard accepted practice.<sup>41</sup>

Eventually, even the forces of law and order were not immune to this deviance. By and large, deviant behavior on the part of state authorities only helped to alienate civil society from the state and had debilitating repercussions on the quest for state legitimization. But this was an acceptable option to praetorianism as far as the petty bourgeoisie was concerned. A quick fix was found when the General Delegate for

National Security decided in 1985 that every policeman would henceforth have to wear a name badge.<sup>42</sup> But this did not stymie corruption, and public resentment was demonstrated when taxi-drivers in Douala went on strike in December 1988 to register their exasperation at the fact that even "licit services" to which all taxpayers were entitled were always up for sale!

On the whole, the negative visible results of corruption on state finances were evident when public funds were embezzled or misappropriated. Since the patrimonial state is a "warehouse," barons and senior bureaucrats who manage enormous amounts of public money, acting in collusion with "purveyors," have displayed an insatiable urge to defraud the state. This search for income goes thus:

An office needs reams of paper. Thus, they are ordered. An agreement is made to pay 8 million or 10 million CFAFr for paper that would cost 5 million CFAFr. How is the 3 million or 5 million CFAFr surplus shared? It is shared between the boss (the linchpin), the stores accountant (the controller) and the businessman (the architect) for sure.<sup>43</sup>

Paradoxically, over-invoicing, a technique in the practice of "*la politique du ventre*", persists despite the existence of a price control mechanism. But such a form of kleptocracy is less of an anathema in the face of another practice that consists of paying for supplies that are not delivered at all. One instance: the Cameroonian Ministry of Agriculture disbursed no less than one-third of its stationery budget for stationery that was never delivered.<sup>44</sup>

The social costs of "*la politique du ventre*" cannot be gainsaid. It leads to a haemorrhage in the public treasury. However, a more nefarious practice, one that provokes an ischaemia, that is, an inadequate supply of funds, in this instance the monies that should be flowing into the public treasury, is the prevalence of Customs and fiscal fraud. This practice helps to constrict revenue generation (efforts) by the state, its logical consequence being a contraction either in state activity or in the state's ability to invest in social programmes or projects that exert multiplier effects across the entire economy. The enhanced opportunities for generating regular private income in the Customs service can be gleaned from the propensity of civil

servants in categories A and B to seek recruitment to the Customs service as officers in categories C and D.<sup>45</sup> This may seem irrational: how can a man desire to move from a middle-level to a low-level or even entry position in the state administration. The motives behind this decision become apparent, however, when we take into consideration that there are abundant opportunities in the Customs for the establishment of a mutually rewarding relationship for the promotion of private interests. This contention cannot be sustained if we rely solely on a cursory examination of government documents, which give the impression that there is a high level of professionalism in Customs. For example, Customs revenue collected in any given fiscal year hovered around an average of 99 per cent between 1979/80 and 1983/84.<sup>46</sup> For a corps permeated by corruption (in the opinion of most Cameroonians), this is a matter of astonishment. The anomaly in figures becomes understandable when it is realized that Cameroon's annual budgets, and by the same token the country's estimated revenues, are prepared in the absence of any clear link with the macro-economic circumstances of the country!

The contribution of Customs fraud to ischaemia at the public treasury is clear from an examination of the importation of champagne. In 1987, Customs statistics showed that 92 500 kilograms of champagne were imported to a value of approximately CFAFr164,3 million. But French Foreign Trade Office figures showed that 287 700 kilograms to a value of about CFAFr776 million were exported to Cameroon. Now, the state levies a Customs duty of 240 per cent on champagne, yet Customs paid only CFAFr214,66 million into the state's coffers. This was a meagre sum. Using French statistics, Customs receipts should have hovered around CFAFr1.85 billion.<sup>47</sup> The loss to the state amounted to about CFAFr1,57 billion – 86,6 per cent of the receipts it should have garnered from the importation of champagne. The beneficiaries were Customs officers and the *bourgeoisie d'affaires* involved in this illicit trade. The costs to the national economy and society in general stand out a mile when it is realized that this lost revenue was more than the annual budget of the Ministry of Women's Affairs or about the same as the 1987-88 budget of the Ministry of Mining, Water

and Energy! Besides the toxic effects of this practice on the state treasury, it also helped depress champagne prices in Cameroon to a level lower than the French retail price. These attractive prices contributed to an increased consumption of champagne, a symbol of status, to the detriment of local beers and liqueurs thus producing adverse spread-effects on breweries and distilleries which had established horizontal and vertical links in the local economy. Other instances of the practice are legion and the unfavourable consequences they spawn are deleterious for both the state and local economy.

Attempts by the state to contain this gangrene have been anaemic. This is attributable to the contradiction that exists between the imperative of self-aggrandizement and the demand for ever more goods from the national warehouse to sustain the system itself. Anti-corruption measures undertaken by the state have been largely cosmetic – mostly public-relations overtures directed at an apathetic society. The Financial Disciplinary Committee of the Ministry of Public Service occasionally prosecutes low-ranking government officials such as postmasters, school bookkeepers and, from time to time, a few men of managerial rank. This can be seen as a device that, in a quest to enhance its legitimacy, the state uses to satisfy society's clarion call that sanctions be meted out on deviating bureaucrats. That higher-level bureaucrats are largely immune from trial by the Disciplinary Committee is evidence that Cameroon has an attenuated patrimonial administrative structure<sup>48</sup> in which public discussion and/or criticism of the alleged acts of *some* members of the ruling class is still taboo. Yet, even minor instances of deviance by this class are not always condoned, especially at times when the state is trying to polish its image. This happened just before the 1988 Presidential elections when senior officials in the Ministries of Agriculture, Finance, and Post and Telecommunications as well as a dozen executives from the Cameroon Mutual Agriculture Insurance Company (Ama-cam), one of the biggest insurance companies in the country in which the state holds extensive equity, were arrested for embezzlement.<sup>49</sup>

Early in the Biya regime, Cameroon seems to have been set to embrace a rational legal administrative structure in which even a little gentle deviance was

not going to be accepted, not even from high government officials. But despite Biya's emphasis on "rigour and moralization," Cameroon retained its attenuated patrimonial administrative structure. The unequivocal zeal to prosecute all acts of corruption seems to have targeted only barons from the Ahidjo regime as a result of the Gramscian "momentary political disequilibrium" that followed the political divorce between Ahidjo and Biya. A former General Manager of the National Printing Press was sentenced to twelve years imprisonment and 80 per cent of his assets were seized.<sup>50</sup> In another instance there was a warrant out for the arrest of a former Director of Customs under the Ahidjo regime who supposedly had a CFAFr1.3 billion bank account in the Cayman Islands.<sup>51</sup> This did not have a deterrent effect; corruption continued unabated, proof once again of the axiom "*plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*". But it would be false to marshal this as evidence that things are static. All too well aware of this, Cameroonians have observed that "rigour" means that "some people ... did not play by the rules before, but with the new man (Biya) they have been hit by rigour" or "my boss is surrounded by an iron curtain so thick that rigour cannot penetrate through".<sup>52</sup> Biya's emphasis on "rigour and moralization" has had – *at best* – a placebo effect on the practice of corruption in the patrimonial state: yes, temporary improvement may follow upon even medically useless treatment. For any true change, however, the fundamental basis of the Cameroonian post-colonial state would have to be altered.

### Paralysing the parastatal sector

As indicated earlier the CNU's development policy or state ideology stipulated that Cameroon's developmental policy be based on planned (later communal) liberalism, balanced development and social justice. Determined to translate these into practical ideologies, it set up a burgeoning parastatal sector supposed to serve as a locomotive for development. In the early phase, the development of this sector was partly underwritten by the international community and, by 1988, the state had more than 150 parastatals in its portfolio. The state, alienated from its people, now sought to use its parastatal strategy

as a window of opportunity in its attempts to capture the loyalties and support of society. The goals of the state were laudable and the promise of the strategy overwhelming. But in the context of the patrimonial state, these parastatals were converted into prebends Directors-General or to serve other exclusive interests of the hegemonic class or developmental coalition. Given this penchant of the parastatals to promote "covert" rather than "overt" goals, it is not astonishing at all that, for the most part, they performed inefficiently. Their dependence upon the state for subsidies became a permanent rather than transient feature. This furthered ischaemia at the state treasury; by 1988, annual parastatal subsidies amounted to about CFAFr150 billion. It is almost superfluous to remark that these subsidies were not the tonic the parastatals needed to graduate into self-sustaining enterprises.

The level of subsidies was clearly unsustainable; but it had a political function. Thus the state, whether of Ahidjo or Biya vintage, persisted in maintaining these subsidies, not necessarily for economic or social reasons but out of "political efficiency" considerations. Members of the hegemonic alliance were absorbed into this sector as Directors-General or given the sinecures of Chairman of the boards of directors of these corporations.<sup>53</sup> In certain instances some barons even combined both functions. The litmus test for getting a job in a parastatal was the patronage network rather than qualifications or any considerations of efficiency. I myself would posit that this was as a result of the fact that the parastatal sector seems to have been primarily designed to guarantee for members of the petty bourgeoisie, even if only indirectly, the high and continuous visibility of the state as "a resource in itself". Apart from the more generous salary scales in this sector, other benefits were enormous. Directors-General lived in houses, sometimes their private property, that could cost their companies about CFAFr2 million per month (US\$8 000-10 000 depending on the exchange rate).<sup>54</sup> It is not astonishing that the risk-averse petty bourgeoisie frantically took to the real estate industry so as to cash in on these high rents. This was a rational decision: some of these companies spent about 8 to 12 per cent of their annual bud-gets on housing. Overheads were thus exceedingly heavy.



The fact that these heavy overheads were designed primarily for purposes of political expediency – to provide posts for the clients of various barons – is well shown by the recent decision of the National Produce Marketing Board (ONCPB) to reduce senior positions of authority in the corporation by 50 per cent and the number of agencies from eleven to seven. It is estimated that this restructuring could lead to a saving of an incredible CFAFr4 billion in 1990!<sup>55</sup>

To crown it all, financial management was opaque, or at very best dimly translucent. Malpractices such as these produced a backlash in civil society. In the case of the ONCPB, this was partly sprung by the fact that the corporation, which had a near monopoly in the marketing of its primary commodities on world markets and thrived on the extraction of surplus from the farmers, had a substantial equity in most corporations. For instance, the ONCPB's equity in parastatals that could only have had a remote connection with agriculture was (and is) around CFAFr14,7 billion.<sup>56</sup> In another instance, the ONCPB had to cater for the salaries of Cameroon Airlines.<sup>57</sup> These multiple demands on the resources of the ONCPB almost brought it to bankruptcy. Now that the state is confronted by the “*maximax problématique*” and even the country's resources at their maximum would not be enough to satisfy (much less exceed) the minimum likely demand, the ONCPB too is paralysed and cannot activate its stabilization window, despite the fact that price fluctuations in the world market have pushed the prices of Cameroonian exports below the threshold at which this mechanism should and would have been activated. Most of its funds had indirectly served as grants-in-aid for the predatory bourgeoisie through the ONCPB's subsidization of other parastatals. Incidentally, ONCPB's inability to subsidize prices became plain at a moment when Roger Melingui, Director-General of the ONCPB, had got away with mere dismissal, no more, after having deposited in a European account the CFAFr9 billion Cameroon had just received as compensation under the Lomé regime's STABEX. This money (which was supposed to make up for the shortfall in the prices of Cameroon's coffee and cocoa exports) later ... disappeared.<sup>58</sup> At this confluence of circumstances most farmers decided to “vote with their feet”. Others are

abandoning cash crop production for staple crops. The long-term repercussions of these shifts do not augur well for the Cameroonian economy whose oil production, it is calculated, will be depleted by the year 2000.

The failure to make statutory provision for the sterilization of ONCPB's funds so as to guarantee that the stabilization window did not suffer from cash-flow problems had its *raison d'être* in the logic of the patrimonial state. Failing sterilization, these funds (supposed to be deposited in the Treasury), were open to use in expanding state activities for the benefit of the development coalition. This expansion, in some instances, was designed to benefit the new petty bourgeoisie which was already seeking a material basis for its existence. As a case in point, the state set up the *Centre National d'Etudes et d'Expérimentation du Machinisme Agricole* (CENEEMA). CENEEMA was supposed to have depots all over the country equipped with machinery for hire so that farmers could embark upon intensive farming. One would have thought that CENEEMA (which benefited from ONCPB financing) would target farmers from whom the ONCPB was extracting surplus value so as to help them increase their productivity. But no. The costs of hiring CENEEMA equipment were so high that only those members of the petty bourgeoisie with state or business connections and who aspired to join the ranks of the landed (“*planteur*”) bourgeoisie could afford the facility.<sup>59</sup> The poorer farmers, already faced with a dreadful choice – more food or better housing – just could not afford to hire this machinery at all. The fact that this was a scheme designed to benefit the rich may go some way to justify CENEEMA's having been one of the only three parastatals in the agricultural sector to receive funds from the extra-budgetary account (*compte hors-budget*) in 1984/85 and 1985/86.

Even the great expectations spawned by corporations that were to have tremendous spread effects on the economy were mostly unrealized. The *Mission de Développement des Semences et des Cultures Vivrières* (MIDEVIV), as a case in point, was supposed to develop and distribute seeds and plants, promote and develop the production of cash crops and help in their marketing. The realization of these goals would have had a tremendous multiplier

effect on the economy. But by some perverted logic the corporation tended to focus, out of all proportion, on its marketing function (to the detriment of the other two). Despite this skewed emphasis, it was able to capture only 2 per cent of the market. The insignificance of its market share was offset by the fact that its clientele consisted mostly of members of the governing alliance. We can now, without looking further, begin to understand why the state had to grant MIDEVIV a subsidy of CFAFr77 for each food item it marketed for CFAFr100. This smacks of a direct subsidy to a class already being cossetted in several ways. The corporations' poor performance may be gathered from the fact that the state had to help defray 85 per cent of MIDEVIV's annual budget between 1982 and 1986.<sup>60</sup>

The selfish, or parasitic, nature of this petty bourgeoisie, especially its bureaucratic fraction, is also demonstrated by its unwillingness to implement policies threatening its vested interests. Public interests and considerations of efficiency were and are often sacrificed at the altar of class-centred concerns. This was obvious in the reluctance of the bureaucrats to enforce the “equalization tax” designed to protect the domestic rice market from dumping.<sup>61</sup> Their lethargy was predicated on a fear that enforcement would ultimately translate into higher retail prices detrimental to dwellers in urban areas, where rice consumption hovers around 30 kilograms per person annually, as opposed to a meagre 2 to 4 kilograms in rural areas.

### Some repercussions of dependent development

The costs of the Cameroon's parastatal strategy have burgeoned not only because of their import-substitution (ISI) emphasis, corruption and bureaucratic politics. Parastatals in the export promotion sector, which served notice of the patrimonial state's commitment to venture into “deepening capitalism”, have also suffered from the vicissitudes of the world market, something that does not augur well for the economy. By venturing into this sector in a cautious manner, the Cameroonian government may have genuinely believed that it could still “keep its feet on the ground”. But the gravitational pull in this realm was so strong that it fell flat

on its face – a fall that had dire consequences for its ability to continue deciding who got what and when.

This is glaring in the case of Cellulose du Cameroun (Cellucam), a paper-pulp company that closed down in 1986. Feasibility studies carried out by the Chase Manhattan Bank and the Austrian Voest Alpine in the mid-1970s estimated Cellucam's profit margin at 25 per cent. Buoyed by these conclusions, the state contracted a loan for construction of the plant. It has been estimated that this loan constitutes about 10 per cent of Cameroon's total public debt.<sup>62</sup> Following the free-fall of the price of paper, Cellucam – the most advanced paper manufacturer in the world: it could produce paper from every type, not only from selected types, of wood – started amassing huge deficits. It could not amortize the loan. The price of paper, supposed to be about \$800 a ton, fell below the \$450 mark needed for Cellucam to break even to \$300 per ton.<sup>63</sup> Instead of taking damage-control measures, the state allowed the Cameroon's greatest white elephant to continue operating. Between 1981 and 1985 Cellucam amassed a deficit of CFAFr260 billion.<sup>64</sup> This poor performance simply meant that the state was saddled with the repayment of the loan when it matured. The loan had almost doubled too because it now had to be repaid at CFAFr400 to the US dollar as opposed to the borrowing rate of CFAFr250. Consequently, Cellucam's poor performance, triggered by unfavourable prices in the world market, helped to expose the patrimonial states underbelly, similar to that of a dragon. "Adjustment with falling prices" could only guarantee the permanence of this situation.

This imperative of repaying debts owed by parastatals, whose performance had been hobbled by imperfect market factors at global level, was exacerbated by a massive flight of capital from Cameroon. This was encouraged by the free circulation of currencies, an integral part of the umbilical cord linking the CFA franc to the French franc. So it was that, in joining the CFA Franc Zone, Cameroon mortgaged its future policy options in the monetary realm to the whims of France. This link also guaranteed preferential treatment to French companies in Cameroon. Subsequently, indeed, French compa-

nies have executed a disproportionate share of investment contracts in this market. By 1989, the Cameroonian state owed French private concerns about CFAFr60 billion or US\$176,4 million.<sup>65</sup> Most of this money was to be repatriated to France upon payment. On this point, the monetary linkage constitutes an over-liberal investment code: the failure to domicile earnings in local accounts stifles local financial expansion, contributes to a reduction in the intermediation abilities of local banks, and leads eventually to their financial asphyxiation.

It would be incorrect to contend that French private companies are solely responsible for the capital flight from Cameroon. Local banks have also been very active here. Their gross foreign assets increased from CFAFr7,1 billion in 1978 to CFAFr190,1 billion in May 1985.<sup>66</sup> This increase, mostly in the form of risk-free loans with parent banks, was invariably accompanied by a pro rata decrease in their exposure to the local economy. These banks were lured by the fact that French interest rates were higher than the fixed rates ruling in Cameroon. Whereas in 1978 and 1981 the Cameroon deposit rates were 5,5 and 7,0 per cent respectively, the Paris Interbank rates in those two years were 8 and 15,3 per cent – the differential between the Cameroonian and Paris rates soaring from 2,5 per cent in 1978 to 8,3 per cent in 1981.<sup>67</sup> Cameroon could not unilaterally and without the consent of France take measures to redress this trend. And for the members of the hegemonic class seeking a safe haven in which to launder their illicitly-acquired wealth, this differential only served to make Paris more attractive. It is believed, especially by Cameroon's man in the street, that the prevalence of this practice has contributed, enormously, to the economic malaise in which the country now wallows. One of the more distant consequences of this belief is a general crisis of confidence, one of the outward manifestations of which has been the development of an informal parallel banking system referred to as "tontines" or "njangis" – a system that cannot adequately fulfil the intermediation role proper to banks.<sup>68</sup> *Njangis*, a variant in society's "invisible economy of affection", also serve as a useful financial conduit in a determined society which, suffering already from an inability to make its voice heard on this

particular subject, does not wish to be tied hand and foot to the state banks. This resistance is borne out by the realization that even the financial interventionist function of the country's banks has been permeated by the logic of "ethno-clientelism". A logical consequence of this process, which essentially poses a challenge to patrimonial capitalism or neo-mercantilism, will be the eventual contraction of the state's role.

## Cameroon's economic crisis: Reflections and conclusions

Jacques Depelchin has observed that we can distinguish between two phases of state formation in Africa: one during which the state is merely an instrument for the accumulation of wealth and another during which it is treated by various classes and/or factions as something to be fought over.<sup>69</sup> The heuristic value of this neat categorization seems to be limited to scholarship. At a practical level, the characteristics attributed to these two phases seem to operate simultaneously upon the state. The "momentary political disequilibrium" that occurred in Cameroon in 1984 is a clear reflection of this tendency. The early competition for state power only serves to reinforce the drive for the accumulation of private wealth in those who capture it. Given the conflicts engendered by the simultaneous operation of these two drives, it is almost inevitable that they will jump-start an economic crisis, especially in a context where the "maximax problématique" already obtains. This is evident in Cameroon, despite its "tortoise walk" approach to economic management designed to cushion any shocks arising from a fall suffered while "walking" rather than "jumping". The tortoise walk's inability to absorb these shocks is demonstrated, however, by Cameroon's not having escaped a downward economic spiral – trademark of African economies today.

There can be no doubt that Cameroon's attempts to make the transition from a juridical to an empirical state entailed the use of much revenue. And these efforts were rendered aberrant by the fact that the petty bourgeoisie who secured power in the wake of independence patrimonialized the state. Their questing determination to use the state itself to overcome the lack of organic

connection between its political and economic institutions was inconsistent with their desire to establish a state based on rational legal norms. Since the petty bourgeoisie accorded primacy to the former before the latter, they predicated the coming into existence of the African "post-colonial" state based on "ethno-clientelism" or the taking of pledges never to abandon the "House of Muumbi". This contributed, far more perhaps than any other causative influence, to the birth of an "over-expanded" and "omni-competent" state.

It is in this context that the Cameroonian state was perceived by members of the hegemonic alliance as a "resource in itself". And as financial irresponsibility became the norm, this group appropriated state funds with impunity. Determined to make sure that most of its members had a (fair) share of the goods available in the state warehouse, it created an over-expanded parastatal sector serving primarily as prebends. It was inevitable that these parastatals should show stunted growth as state subsidy became their life-support mechanism. Such a subsidy, coupled with other benefits that were part of the salary package of this ruling class means, in effect, that the state has financed their lavish, if not ostentatious, life-style. Ironically, this life-style, symptomatic of a desire to replace the colonizers in fact rather than be mere caricatures of them, has been financed almost exclusively by the extraction of surplus value from the farmers – a sector marginalized as far as the allocation of state resources has been concerned. One would have thought that the state would work unflinchingly to nurture the goose that laid the golden eggs. It did indeed do this, very briefly, as shown by the creation of agriculture-related parastatals such as CENEEMA and MIDEVIV. But, as we have shown, most of these projects served primarily to facilitate the transition of the ruling bourgeoisie into a planter bourgeoisie, a transition undertaken in order to provide a more solid basis for its existence, subsidize its living costs, or subsidize those of its retainer class.

The interests of the last-named were further promoted by the institution of an attenuated patrimonial structure. Here was an enabling environment in which systematic corruption reigned. And this led to a haemorrhage in the public finances. Such an insatiable quest for unchallenged state-sourced

income did not portend well for a state always on the lookout for new resources as a result of the deleterious influence it had had on the economy. Yet this was not as insidious as the Customs and fiscal fraud that choked off the flow of revenue into the state treasury, partly provoking ischaemia. Its magnitude can be gathered from the fact that the loss of revenue incurred in Customs and the fisc easily surpassed the annual budgets of some ministries. This provoked much-reduced treasury inflows at a moment when the national budget was subjected to a "ratchet effect". A shrinking or wasting in the state became almost inevitable, especially in the face of a precipitous decline in export revenue. Both these facts removed any possibility of the state's stepping out steadily; at best it could only limp along. And this limping was painful, because loans accumulated by the state as it ventured into "deepening capitalism" imposed an additional burden.

Swollen by this distress in the body financial – and exacerbating its effects – was the flight of already scarce capital to France. This flight was a consequence of the huge differentials that existed in interest rates on offer in Cameroon and Paris. One would have thought that given Crawford Young's contention that the "present world system daily breathes new life into the dying image of the (African) state",<sup>70</sup> France would have acted to reverse this trend so as to foster the intermediation powers of the Cameroonian banks. But it did not. As a result, a parallel, informal banking system made its appearance. It was known as "tontines" and these excluded the state. "Tontines" are also a manifestation of a resurgence of the invisible "economy of affection". In the short-term, if not in the medium-term and long-term, the politics of protest or contracting out (a reaction against the patrimonialization of the state) would severely check the state's desire to increase its power and reach and capture Cameroonian society.

A recent decision by the French against the devaluation of the CFA franc,<sup>71</sup> taken in concert with the finance ministers of the CFA Franc Zone, can only help to swell the ranks of Cameroon's sceptics. In the forefront may be the farmers: the overvalued franc can only help to depress the prices of their produce, thus forcing

them to "vote with their feet" or abandon the production of cash crops. The continuous erosion of the state's financial base will (it is feared) only help to usher in a contest among different classes for control of the state, a struggle that might take the form of that "momentary political disequilibrium" of 1984. And all this may well take place at a time when the Cameroonian state will, according to Depelchin's schema, still be going through the *first* phase of state formation.

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# Rumours of rain: Namibia's post-independence experience

*In this shortened version of a recently published paper, Dr André du Pisani, Director of Research at the South African Institute of International Affairs, Johannesburg, surveys the first eighteen months of Namibian independence.\**

Namibia's accession to independence on 21 March 1990 was an inspiring event not only for the people of that country but for the Southern African region as a whole. Independence brought to an end one of the most intractable and wasteful conflicts in the subcontinent; and having gained political freedom, Namibians set about the challenging task of building a nation and defining their relations with the world. Under a profoundly democratic constitution the new government proclaimed a desire to "... achieve a balanced restructuring of the economy and the public service and ... democratize society".<sup>1</sup> Feverishly patriotic, the bright sun on Namibia's blue, white, red and green flag rivalled the radiance of an English garden. At least initially ....

Now, a year later, the real sun beats down mercilessly on a parched earth. For, although recent rains brought relief, Namibia, like other parts of Southern Africa, has been suffering from a crippling drought over many seasons.

## National reconciliation and nation building

Since independence, the politics of national reconciliation have provided the guiding light for this nascent state and nation. To President Nujoma's credit, since the run-up to the 1989 election,

he has made a number of efforts to counter the perception that Swapo is principally an Ovambo party. Less than half of Swapo's 41 elected representatives in the National Assembly are Ovambo. The composition of the cabinet is heartening. Even after the recent reshuffle (see Box, p179) – close on half the ministers hail from ethnic groups other than the dominant Ovambo. Many of the deputy-ministers and departmental heads are non-Ovambo. Two opposition politicians, Advocate Vekuui Rukoro, leader of the Namibia National Front and a Herero, as well as Mr Reggie Diergaardt of the United Democratic Front and prominent in the coloured community's politics, accepted President Nujoma's invitation to serve as deputy-ministers.

However, for an increasing number of Namibians – the peasantry, trade unionists, millenarian ideologues, students, members of the Swapo Youth League and the growing army of unemployed – the government's national reconciliation policy seems opportunistic. They tend to regard the Swapo leadership's efforts here as merely harmonizing the new political élite's interests with those of local and foreign capital, including the predominantly white commercial farming sector. The ruling party is therefore being criticized in its own ranks for "abandoning socialism" and "selling out" to white foreign capital. These matters will undoubtedly be debated at Swapo's forthcoming party congress.<sup>2</sup>

The perceived financial extravagance of the new government: handsome salaries for the men at the top, and their conspicuous consumption – we need only mention the exorbitantly expensive presidential motorcade, complete with wild outriders – does nothing to endear the government to the people at large. Moreover, it serves to stimulate dissatisfaction and disillusionment within the ranks of the party itself.

Responding to criticism concerning Swapo's putative fading commitment and capacity to bring about social justice and populist democracy – twin strands in the party's pre-election programme – Prime Minister Hage Geingob has emphasized that pragmatism and realism informed Swapo policies in Namibia. He has been quite frank about Swapo and the government's acceptance of a mixed economy, and pointed out: "We don't use words like socialism and nationalization at all. They do not appear in our constitution."<sup>3</sup>

Swapo has been remarkably insensitive to the burning issue of its former detainees in its Angolan camps. The public outcry over these missing persons undoubtedly damaged Swapo's cause in the November 1989 elections and it is likely that this issue will remain a touchstone of the government's reconciliation policy. There is also a growing feeling that President Nujoma should spend more time promoting tolerance and reconciliation in the rural areas, where "simmering disputes" have developed between Swapo

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Independence Day, 21 April 1990

Photo: Matthias Messmer

and opposition supporters, particularly in Caprivi and Kavango.

### Restructuring of government services

A programme of "affirmative action" – also provided for in the constitution – to transform Namibia's formerly ethnically-based bureaucracies into integrated (non-ethnic) civil and security services is inherent in the new government's nation-building objectives. Thus the growth in the country's public sector and its overall indigenization are salient features of the new socio-political landscape.

As might be expected from a newly-independent country, one of the first decisions taken was to establish who could claim Namibian citizenship. The Namibian Citizenship Act (No 14 of 1990), promulgated in August, repealed several South African laws and stipulated that citizenship might be obtained through descent, marriage, registration and naturalization. The Act also provides for honorary citizenship as well as for the loss and restoration of citizenship.

The Police Act (No 19 of 1990) and the Defence Amendment Act (No 20 of 1990) established the Namibian security forces and repealed or amended South African legislation concerning police and defence. The president appointed General Petrus Fouché as the first Inspector-General or head of the Police Force. Mr Dimo Hamaambo,

former Commander in Chief of the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (Plan), was appointed as the first Chief of the Defence Force in July 1990.<sup>4</sup>

Military integration took place on the basis of parity, equal numbers being recruited among former members of Plan and the SWA Territory Force (SWATF). The British Military Advisory and Training Team (BMATT) gave valuable assistance in creating the new army whose strength reached some 5 000 during the first year. (Training was initially also provided by the Kenyan contingent of Untag.) The BMATT contract with the government ran out in March 1991 but the team has been asked to stay on. Meanwhile, Namibia has also entered into an agreement with the United States to provide training for military officers.

The obstacles that might be presented to national integration by the ambitions of hardliners among Swapo's pre-independence cadres were clearly illustrated by the controversial appointment of Mr Solomon Dumeni (Jesus) Howala as commander of the Namibian Army in October 1990. Notorious for supervising the liquidation of hundreds of alleged Swapo dissidents in the Angolan bush camps, Howala is now third in line in the defence force, after Defence Force Chief Hamaambo and Chief of Staff Namholo.

Hawala's appointment was an attempt by the leadership to placate those Swapo members who had become disenchanted with the leadership's perceived failure to

live up to the more radical elements in its pre-election manifesto.

### Organized labour

As Swapo secured the majority of the working-class vote, workers naturally have very high expectations. These expectations were fuelled when President Nujoma discussed with Mr Carl List of South West Breweries the dismissal of 335 workers in September 1990. They had responded to a call by the Namibia Food and Allied Workers Union to come out on strike in sympathy with a shop steward who claimed unfair dismissal.

Although the unions hope that independence will of itself encourage an improvement in wages and working conditions, they realize that the unions themselves must be strengthened. Building up that strength must include a massive literacy and general education campaign as well as the setting up of structures for union education and organization. With meagre resources, the National Union of Namibian Workers (NUNW)<sup>5</sup> is embarking on this formidable task in an environment where many employers remain hostile and, as we write, virtually unconstrained by labour legislation.

A new national policy on labour and manpower development was approved by the cabinet and made public on 1 August 1990. Focusing on the army of unemployed (between 30 and 40 per cent of the total labour force of 470 000-500 000) the new policy advocated vocational training programmes, the use of labour-intensive production methods, an easing of regulations hampering economic activities, and the reservation of jobs for Namibian citizens. Special provision was made for the protection of agricultural and domestic workers. Discrimination against women had also to be eradicated. An occupational health and safety division was to be established in the Ministry of Labour and research would be done on manpower development.

Labour Minister Hendrik Witbooi envisaged the introduction of a labour code providing for a national minimum wage, a workers' insurance scheme, and procedures to ensure collective bargaining and the timely settlement of disputes between employers and employees. Planning started on an inde-



pendent labour court to adjudicate in labour disputes.

## Education

Since independence a single education department has replaced the country's separate education departments for different ethnic groups. A National Institute for Education Development was established. New secondary school curricula were introduced (from Standard 6 level). Mother-tongue education was to be provided for the first three years of primary school; thereafter English (the official language) would be the medium of instruction, as it was to be at secondary and tertiary levels. Afrikaans-speaking and German-speaking pupils in government schools would be allowed to study both these languages as subjects (in addition to English) up to Standard 10. The Cape Senior Certificate examination was to be phased out over two to three years and be replaced by the International Certificate of General Secondary Education (ICGSE).

Higher educational standards are imperative for nation building and socio-economic development. While the cold statistics are fairly impressive by African standards – 380 000 pupils in 1990 with a pupil/teacher ratio of 1:32 – the figures do not reflect considerations such as the quality of the education received, the qualifications of the teachers, or the legacy of inequality in infrastructure and social spending on different ethnic groups.

## The Judiciary

The independence constitution provided for a Supreme Court (Court of Appeal) and a High Court with original jurisdiction (Articles 79-80). Both were established in October 1990, by Acts Nos 15 and 16 of 1990 respectively. The Supreme Court is presided over by the Chief Justice (currently Mr Justice Hans Berker) and the High Court by the Judge-President (currently Mr Justice Johan Strydom). Both courts (it was laid down) were to consist of such additional judges as might be appointed by Namibia's President, acting on the advice of the Judicial Service Commission.

The latter body comprises the Chief Justice, the Judge-President, the Attorney-General (Mr Hartmut-Ruppel) and two members of the legal profession, an

advocate (Advocate T J Frank) and an attorney (Mr W H Dicks). Advice concerning the appointment of judges and of the ombudsman (and their removal where necessary) is one of the Commission's principal tasks.

Advocate Pio Marap Teek was appointed Acting Ombudsman in July 1990 in terms of Proclamation No 10 and the Ombudsman Act (No 7 of 1990). The powers and duties of the Ombudsman cover a wide field but are basically aimed at providing recourse for individual citizens who feel they have been treated unfairly by any government official or organ of government.

## National Council and Regional Councils

A National Council to review legislation passed by the National Assembly was provided for in Chapter 8 of the constitution. The National Council was to be composed of representatives of Regional Councils – two from each Regional Council – which, together with the local authorities, would constitute the country's regional and local government system. Chapter 12 of the constitution, providing for these structures, required that the Regional Councils be popularly elected within 24 months of independence, but did not specify their number. This was to be determined through a process starting with a three-member Delimitation Commission whose main task was to be the demarcation of regions and the constituencies within regions.

The President appointed the Delimitation Commission in August 1990. It consisted of Mr Justice Johan Strydom, Prof Gerhard Töttemeyer of the University of Namibia and Mr Martin Shipanga, a businessman.

## The economy in general

Namibia inherited a sectorally-unbalanced economy, with no real GDP growth over the last decade and with a heavy dependence upon energy and capital imports. In short it was an economy which, to paraphrase a well-known British academic writing on Namibia, "produced what it did not consume and consumed what it did not produce".

With independence, Namibia inherited a foreign debt of some R700 mil-

lion, increased by an initial R210 million budget deficit. The new government indicated that it intended to raise loans to finance the deficit and arrange an overdraft facility for the rest with the Bank of Namibia.

Thanks largely to the South African Reserve Bank's high interest rate policy, Namibia's inflation rate fell from 16,4 per cent in July 1989 to 12,7 per cent in May 1990.

Real GDP decreased by 0,7 per cent annually between 1980 and 1989, largely as a consequence of the decline in real gross domestic fixed investment – from R437 million in 1980 to R218 million in 1988 (at 1980 prices). Fixed investment as a ratio of GDP was 18,6 per cent in 1989. The low GDP growth in 1980-1989 was particularly marked in mining and construction, which experienced negative growth rates. Expressed in constant 1980 prices, the contribution of mining declined from R630 million in 1980 to R462 million in 1989. The corresponding figures for construction were R51 million and R32 million. Since mining contributes about one-third of the country's total GDP, the sector's poor performance had a significant effect on the economy overall.

Namibia's economy has not boomed since independence. Mining and commercial agriculture have not attracted investment capital. However, in an effort to uplift certain rural communities and redress the regional imbalances of the past, much foreign aid is being channelled into long-neglected regions and public services. Nevertheless, the economy is resilient and has spare capacity to expand output once market conditions improve. An unfavourable balance of payments as well as the public debt impose a heavy burden on the economy.<sup>6</sup>

The social needs of the new state are considerable: there is growing unemployment, compounded by the demobilization of former members of Plan and SWATF. The escalating crime rate is attributed to the lack of job opportunities. With an estimated urban population of 450 000 (1989), Namibia currently has a housing backlog of 25 000 units – while the population of Windhoek and other towns is increasing rapidly. The level of urbanization has increased from 22 per cent in the 1970s to 28 per cent at the end of the 1980s, and it is expected that more than one-third of the country's population will be

urbanized by the year 2000.<sup>7</sup> Backlogs and disparities are also evident in health and educational services. The World Health Organization has estimated that 176 out of every 1 000 Namibian children born will not reach the age of five. The calorie intake of black Namibians averages 80 per cent only of their daily requirement – in Southern Africa only Mozambicans do worse. Illiteracy among adult black Namibians is calculated at between 60 and 65 per cent.

The more than 40 000 Swapo members who returned from exile during the implementation of Resolution 435 are making additional demands upon the country's inadequate social services, especially in northern Namibia. It has, for example, been reported that Owamboland, Namibia's most populous region, is becoming a "disaster area" – despite the end of the border war. Independence has not brought even a glimmer of prosperity; and the inhabitants, who voted en masse for Swapo, are claiming their share of the country's wealth.<sup>8</sup> Compounding this problem is the impact upon the northern areas of the sudden collapse of an economy which over a period of fifteen years had been artificially stimulated by the South African military presence.

Realism and caution were demonstrated in Finance Minister Otto Herrigel's first budget speech in July 1990.<sup>9</sup> The 1990/91 budget defined the main economic challenges as stimulation of economic growth and reduction of income disparities among the population while at the same time redirecting and restraining public expenditure. Agricultural and rural development together with education and training were identified as priorities for government expenditure. The budget's estimated deficit of R210 million after borrowing has since been reduced to R160 million, with the prospect of further reductions in the 1991/92 fiscal year. During its first fiscal year the new government also managed to reduce the public debt of some R700 million inherited at independence.

## Foreign aid and investment

Independence brought with it improved prospects for Namibia's economy. International recognition has raised hopes of foreign capital inflow and for the opening up of new markets for Namibia's

exports – especially under the Lomé IV Convention. Secondly, the lifting of pre-independence trade sanctions has reopened markets that had been adversely affected or closed for some time. And now that the Namibian government's control over the country's Exclusive Economic Zone is recognized internationally, the way is open for the sound development of Namibia's fishing industry. Provided that the industry can be properly monitored and integrated into the remainder of the economy new jobs are likely to be created here.

Namibia's immediate economic fortunes hinged in some measure on the outcome of the UN-sponsored Donors Conference, held in New York on 21-22 June 1990. Constrained by a small domestic market, a limited manpower base, public debt, infrastructural isolation from the rest of Africa and the uncertainty concerning future control of the country's principal port, the new government succeeded in obtaining pledges from several countries exceeding R700 million in total.<sup>10</sup> This included R186 million to relieve the budget deficit of R560 million (before borrowing). The information made available at the conference had the backing of the World Bank and it was agreed that donor funding would be project-related, with time-scales determined by donor governments. In most instances funding would be forthcoming over 2-3 year periods to allow time for the Namibian government to come up with acceptable development strategies and to prepare projects in detail.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) agreed to pay the salary of the Governor of the new Central Bank, established in July 1990.<sup>11</sup> While continuing to use South African currency, it was envisaged that a new currency (the Namibian dollar) would be introduced within the following two years.

Significantly, the government made the drafting of an investment code a priority. There was success here when in June 1990 a draft was released that did not place restrictions on business activities by foreign investors, except in the case of natural resources, where provision was made for government agencies to have a share (not necessarily a controlling share) in the equity of the company concerned.<sup>12</sup>

With the Investment Code in place, an international investment conference took place in February 1991, coinciding

with the annual consultative meeting of the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC), held in Windhoek. Meanwhile, the Business Council of Namibia had been founded (in November 1990) to facilitate co-operation between the public and private sectors. An investment centre was envisaged to handle enquiries from potential investors and assist them. As these services were already provided by the First National Development Corporation (FNDC) – a legacy of the previous order – a technical committee was established to advise the government on the Corporation's future.

## The major economic sectors Mining

Shortly after independence Minister of Mines Toivo ya Toivo voiced his government's desire to reduce the mining industry's dependence upon South Africa, especially for processing. Although he warned that Namibia would not tolerate excessive repatriation of profits to foreign countries, this did not mean that foreign investors need fear government expropriation of assets.

A new gold mine, Navachab near Karibib, began production in June 1990. This open-cast mine is expected to produce about two tonnes of gold a year and has an estimated life-span of 13 years. It provides employment for about 300 workers and will earn R64 million a year, calculated at an average gold price of R32 000 per kilogram. The mine is a joint venture by three companies, Erongo Mining and Exploration (owned by Anglo American Corporation) being the majority shareholder.

Although a long-term contract to supply uranium to France from 1995 onwards has been secured, confidence in Rössing Uranium is currently not too high on account of declining prices and weak demand. Alluvial diamond mining – the country's other chief foreign-exchange earner – has received a fillip from the opening of previously unexploited areas at Chameis Bay (about 120 km north of Oranjemund) by Consolidated Diamond Mines. Production is estimated at 75 000 carats a year for three years.

The government has been promoting Namibia's mining potential abroad, in particular the prospects of the energy sector. In terms of the Petroleum Products and Energy Act (No 13 of 1990), a

National Energy Fund and a National Energy Council were established. The legislation governing exploration for petroleum, including the establishment of the government-owned Namibia National Petroleum Corporation (Namcor), has been described as "quite straight-forward ... and what is to be expected from a country with virgin territory to be explored".<sup>13</sup>

As a result of the 1974 UN moratorium on foreign investment in Namibia, very little large-scale prospecting for minerals has been carried out over the past two decades. Since independence there has been great interest among mining companies, particularly those dealing in oil, in making applications for exploration licences. This interest has been stimulated by the promising results obtained by drilling in the Kudu Atlantic Ocean gasfield near the Orange River mouth. Indications are that the Kudu gasfield may be one of the largest in the world, but that technical problems might affect its profitability. Exploration for oil is also to take place ashore: a concession has been granted for oil prospecting in a 250 000 km<sup>2</sup> area extending from the coast across northern Namibia to the Botswana border.

### Fisheries

As with other economic sectors, fisheries pose a formidable challenge. In order to control and conserve this important resource, the country's territorial waters and Exclusive Economic Zone (extending 200 nautical miles out to sea) must be policed. This is especially important because foreign fishing fleets have been uninhibitedly exploiting Namibia's fishing grounds before independence – and some still do so. Over-fishing by foreign fishing fleets (including some South African companies) has decimated fishing stocks. The new government therefore soon passed the Territorial Sea and Exclusive Economic Zone of Namibia Act (No 3 of 1990) which amended the Sea Fisheries Act of 1973 and took effect in July 1990. The proclamation of the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), in terms of the United Nations Law of the Sea Convention, is to the advantage of both fishing and mining industries as it reserves exploitation of the natural resources in this 200-mile wide sea area for Namibians.

Even before the passing of the act

the government asked foreign fishing fleets to stay out of the country's ocean territory until complex agreements with powerful foreign interests had been completed. Since then the authorities – with the assistance of the South African Navy – have had to take action against Spanish trawlers fishing illegally in Namibia's coastal waters.

The government has also embarked upon scientific studies relating to the conservation of marine resources and the drawing up of a fishing policy. As the bulk of Namibia's fishing industry is based in Walvis Bay, the sector has a strong interest in the outcome of negotiations on the future of this South African exclave. There are also rumours that the government plans a state-run fishing corporation.

Agriculture Minister Hanekom, whose portfolio until recently included fisheries, estimated that, with an effective management programme, marine resources over five to seven years could earn the country about R3 000 million – ten times the cattle industry's earnings. Thus the authorities tend to be circumspect in the granting of fishing quotas, although the total allowable catch of pilchards for 1991 has been increased to 62 500 tons, after a 20 per cent reduction to 40 000 tons for 1990.

### The land issue

Swapo committed itself to land reform and redistribution in order to redress the unequal possession of land among Namibia's population. (Almost 44 per cent of the total land area belongs to some 4 000 farmers, of whom the bulk are whites; 41 per cent is communal land occupied by some 150 000 families; non-agricultural land controlled by the state accounts for 15 per cent.)

The ruling party's election manifesto promised to transfer "some of the land from the few with too much of it to the landless majority".<sup>14</sup> The manifesto did not indicate how such land would be acquired except to say that "full-scale nationalization" was not intended. Earlier studies by the UN Institute for Namibia suggest that Swapo may follow a gradualist policy comparable to that of Zimbabwe. Some of the land held by absentee landlords (considerably less than the 48 per cent foreign absentee ownership cited by some authors) may be nationalized. Swapo stated that it was to "promote state farms, cooperatives, peasant farming

and to a certain extent private commercial farming".<sup>15</sup>

The government's dilemma in the matter of land redistribution becomes all too clear when it is remembered that extensive livestock-farming – the mainstay of the country's agricultural sector – requires rather large tracts of land in order to be a viable business. The land suitable for dryland cultivation and irrigation constitutes a minuscule part of the total farming area. On the other hand, the average plot of land available to the thousands of peasant farmers in communal areas amounts to more or less 2 hectares (about 5 acres) per farmer. Small wonder, then, that the first year of independence saw very little in the way of detailed proposals for land reform. The government was obviously taking its time in addressing a delicate and complicated issue. It also felt the need to consult the public.

Towards the end of June 1991 Prime Minister Geingob called a national conference to obtain the views of as wide a section of the population as possible on the land issue. Attended by more than 500 delegates, the conference resolved that abandoned and underutilized land be reallocated and brought into productive use; that land owned by absentee landlords – foreigners and non-citizen owners in particular – be expropriated; that "very large" commercial farms and ownership of several farms by one owner not be permitted; that tax be imposed on commercial farm land; and that farm labourers be afforded rights and protection under the labour code. These recommendations were, however, referred to a special technical committee. A consensus document at the close of the conference concluded that although there had been injustice concerning the acquisition of land in the past, "given the complexities in redressing ancestral land claims, restitution of such claims in full is impossible".<sup>16</sup>

### Foreign relations

At the time of writing 40 foreign missions have been established in Windhoek. More (as many as 70) are expected. The training of diplomatic personnel to represent Namibia abroad is receiving high priority and the first foreign missions are being established in the United States, United Kingdom, USSR, Sweden, Nigeria and Zambia; also in New York (UN), in Brussels

(EC) and Addis Ababa (OAU). Further missions are planned in Berlin, Luanda, Harare and Pretoria.

Namibia's accession to the United Nations as its 160th member on 23 April 1990 was regarded as a high point in the new state's foreign relations. As the 52nd independent African state, Namibia became a member in July 1990 of the Organization of African Unity. Meanwhile, the OAU's observer mission in Windhoek had become a permanent diplomatic mission. This office was the first of its kind – it has not been normal practice for the OAU to establish such diplomatic missions. Among the OAU mission's tasks are the representation of African governments without representation in Windhoek and the observation of the South African scene.

In terms of a decision by the Commonwealth heads of state and government in Malaysia in 1989, at independence Namibia was granted membership of the Commonwealth of Nations.

Since independence the Namibian government has concluded a number of economic and technical assistance agreements, confirming the belief that Namibia's foreign policy would be increasingly dominated and determined by economic questions. Some of these agreements have been with the United States, including programmes to promote investment, trade and duty-free access to the US market for Namibian products. A co-operation agreement with the Soviet Union covered joint development projects in irrigation, mineral processing and oil exploration. A number of bilateral agreements on health, defence and fisheries resulted from President Nujoma's visit to Cuba in March 1991.

Namibia's careful, incremental planning has found favour with the World Bank. The Bank has embarked upon detailed studies of the country's social structure and economy.

In November 1990 Namibia was granted Least Developed Country (LLDC) status by the European Community under the Lomé IV Convention. The country will not be listed as an LLDC; but all the benefits, support mechanisms and concessions applying to LLDCs have been granted to Namibia until its position is reviewed in five years time. Namibia was also granted a two-year, 10 500 metric tonne, boneless

beef quota, to rise to 13 000 tonnes for the following three years whereafter the quota will be reviewed. Although the quota is 60 000 tonnes short of the amount hoped for, the EC quota will make the country's cattle farmers less dependent upon South Africa which has, up to now, taken about 80 per cent of Namibia's beef exports.

### Relations with South Africa and other neighbours

Geographic location and economic dependence are obvious factors determining the scope and pattern of a small state's foreign relations. It has been observed that countries with small populations and limited economies tend to enhance their security and economic interests by entering into bilateral and multilateral agreements with regional neighbours.<sup>17</sup>

These findings apply to Namibia – a small and comparatively underdeveloped state – whose foreign policy and relations have come to be based on sober and realistic assessment of the country's economic capacity and needs. Given Namibia's considerable dependence upon foreign aid and investment, its foreign policy is intimately linked to its overall development efforts. Moreover, the country's skewed socio-economic inheritance instils a healthy dose of sobriety and pragmatism in its foreign relations.

Namibia's relations with South Africa are arguably the most critical of all its relations with the outside world. Having waged an armed struggle against South Africa, it is understandable that Swapo should show sympathy with other liberation movements. The fraternal relations between Swapo and South Africa's ANC – which recently received a R1 million donation from the Swapo government – therefore constitute an important dimension of Namibian-South African relations. Formal diplomatic relations are likely to be postponed until the emergence of a non-racial dispensation in South Africa. Meanwhile, regular contact with the present South African government has been ensured by permitting the establishment of a South African Interest Office in Windhoek headed by Mr Riaan Eksteen. A reciprocal arrangement at the South African end is envisaged.

After becoming a member of the

Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC) shortly after independence, Namibia also formally became a member of the Southern African Customs Union (Sacu) in June 1990. Using the rand as its currency, Namibia remained a member of the Common Monetary Area for the time being (see above). Thus the traditional close functional and trade relations between the two neighbours continued, despite Namibia's participation in other regional organizations whose aims are to reduce their members' high degree of dependence upon South Africa.

Namibia achieved full membership of the Joint Monitoring Commission (JMC) in September 1990. With Angola, Cuba, South Africa, the United States and the USSR, Namibia now takes full responsibility for the promotion of peace and stability in the western part of the subcontinent. The JMC has facilitated diplomatic contact, especially between South Africa and other JMC members. Here, at least, it seems as if independent Namibia has been acting as a new conduit for South Africa into Africa.<sup>18</sup>

Of crucial importance to Namibian-South African relations are the unresolved territorial disputes concerning Walvis Bay, the Penguin Islands and the Orange River border.<sup>19</sup> Relations between the two countries cooled somewhat after Namibia declared in December 1990 that the South African residents of Walvis Bay might visit Namibia only if they had valid passports, an arrangement which was followed by a similar requirement on the part of South Africa of Namibian visitors to Walvis Bay.

Formal negotiations on these issues started on 14 March 1991. Two months later (17 May) it was reported that the two governments had agreed to redemarcate the common (southern) border so that it ran along the middle of the Orange River, and that the principal issues of Walvis Bay and the Penguin Islands would be temporarily resolved by placing the harbour and the islands under joint South African and Namibian administration. Judging from the moderate and positive responses on both sides at the time of the announcement, it seemed likely that the incorporation into Namibia of the enclave and the scattered group of rocky islets would be only a matter of time.<sup>20</sup>

Control of the Walvis Bay facilities became even more important to Namibia after the new state had concluded agreements in September and November 1990 providing for economic co-operation and oil supplies from Angola. Oil from Angola will not reduce Namibia's dependence upon energy imports from South Africa, however, as the principal oil storage tanks supplying Namibia are located in the South African exclave. Equally important, South African companies (or South African subsidiaries of transnational oil suppliers) own or control the entire distribution network for petroleum products in the new state. A R250 million installation to refine Angolan crude oil is currently being constructed at Usakos by a Korean-led consortium.

Namibia's interaction with other Southern African countries received impetus after joining the SADCC (Namibia is the 10th member state) and the Preferential Trade Area for Eastern and Southern Africa in April 1990. In January/February 1991 Namibia hosted the 11th Consultative Conference of the SADCC in Windhoek. In his address the chairman, Mr Peter Mmusi (Vice-President of Botswana), spoke of Namibia's "special place" in the SADCC:

Independent Namibia would bring nearer the SADCC dream of a region united from the Indian Ocean in the east to the Atlantic in the west, working harmoniously to bring a better life for all its peoples; independent Namibia would see the end of South Africa's destabilisation and aggression in Angola, and bring nearer the day of reconciliation in that country; and an independent Namibia would make it possible for SADCC to develop transport and communications, trade, travel and other exchanges and ties that will bind the people of the region toward a common future and destiny.<sup>21</sup>

The SADCC gave the green light to Namibia, Angola and Botswana to revive and develop transport routes and power supply lines across their common borders. Construction of a Trans-Kalahari Highway from Gobabis in Namibia via Ghanzi and Jwaneng in Botswana to South Africa has attracted the attention of the French automobile manufacturer, Citroën. Citroën is investigating the possibility of gaining access to the South African and other markets in the subcontinent from an assembly plant to be erected at Gobabis, which is linked to Walvis Bay by rail and tarred road.<sup>22</sup>

The dirt road running through the Caprivi Strip is to be upgraded as the Trans-Caprivi Highway linking Zambia via Katimo Mulilo and Rundu with Walvis Bay. Zambian copper is already being trucked along this route. Recently an ambitious plan was put before the Namibian government to construct an alternative port to Walvis Bay at Cape Frio on Namibia's Skeleton Coast. This plan included the construction of a 1 950 km railway running from the new port through the Caprivi Strip to Livingstone in Zambia.

Namibia and Angola are considering the upgrading of the road from northern Namibia via Lubango in Angola to the port of Namibe (formerly Mocamedes). The plan includes improvements to Namibe's facilities so that Angolan oil can be transported along this route to Namibia.

Construction has started on a transmission line from the Zambezi in Zambia to bring electricity to Katimo Mulilo in Caprivi. Plans are also under way to extend the power-line from Ruacana Falls on the Kunene River to Xangongo, some 80 km inside Angola. However, as Namibia cannot generate enough electricity at Ruacana during the dry months of the year, Swawec, the country's electricity utility, has identified Epupa Falls lower down the Kunene as the possible site for another hydroelectric power station.

## Conclusions

Namibia has mastered its transition to independence well. Political empowerment and participation under a thoroughly democratic constitution have been extended to a much larger electorate. The officially-encouraged climate of "national reconciliation" has enhanced social interaction and strengthened confidence, especially in the local business sector.

In Windhoek, black Namibians are more in evidence in managerial and responsible positions – as officials, in hotel management, as shop and office staff. Change has been much slower in reaching the rural areas – peasants and farm labourers no doubt see little or no difference.

The direction of the economy has not changed much, nor is it likely to. A crime wave feeds on raised expectations amidst Third World poverty, especially in the larger towns and cities.

Unruly border guards – former Plan guerrillas and ex-SWATF members – were withdrawn on 3 September 1990, following reports of undisciplined conduct by border guards and special constables. Yet, in the words of Tony Heard, the former editor of the *Cape Times*:

... it was equally forcefully noted that the decades-long dirty bush war produced no angels; that there are similarly notorious people, from either side, still active in public life. Throwing the first stone is not easy.<sup>23</sup>

The press is as lively as ever, with half a dozen daily newspapers, mostly tabloid, battling it out in various languages. The debate in the press, often personal, belittling and acrimonious, is remarkably free. The independence of the judiciary has been proudly upheld.

The parliamentary opposition remains strong, although, judging by defections, the internal cohesion of the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA) is uncertain. The smaller parties face a precarious future.

While the governing party's careful, incremental planning finds favour with international and local investors, its own constituency is less patient and more critical. Social and economic empowerment is much harder to effect, and also takes longer, than political empowerment. The limitations on the Swapo government's freedom of action are acknowledged. People at large also accept that it takes time for incoming political élites to initiate changes. And they have been told that revenue is in short supply and that much needed expenditures must wait, pending further aid negotiations.

But they also wonder how far the new government really envisages radical change of the kind that most Namibians dreamed of during the long years of the independence struggle – a profound redistribution of education, health and housing resources, and of personal incomes, for example, between the races.<sup>24</sup>

It is true, indeed, that from its inception the Swapo government has shown no inclination to disregard the profound significance of contemporary transformations in world society or the growing influence of the new orthodoxy of market-oriented economies of the World Bank and the IMF. Swapo's 1976 socialist programme seems now only a distant memory.

The country's political leadership

has understandably been absorbed by endless cabinet meetings and by ministerial duties in Windhoek. Only recently have many of them started to move out of the confines of their offices; but even then they have not given the impression of being keen to meet and listen to ordinary people.

In the realm of regional and foreign relations, Namibia has made considerable progress. The country has established wide international and regional links: aid agencies, some 34 accredited diplomatic missions, various international sports contacts, entry to SADCC, the OAU, the PTA, the Commonwealth, the International Monetary Fund and air links with Zambia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, South Africa and Germany. Bilateral agreements on energy, transport, security and trade with neighbouring Angola, Botswana and with Zambia have been concluded. Namibia's accession to the Lomé IV Convention late in 1990 has given exporters access to the lucrative European market. By and large, the country has experienced considerable international goodwill and attracted donor funding for a variety of socio-economic projects – projects that could benefit people living in the underdeveloped rural parts of this vast country.

Bilateral relations with South Africa – the most crucial of all foreign relations – have been characterized by pragmatism and realism. Detailed and constructive negotiations on the future of Walvis Bay and the Penguin Islands have started. There is every indication that a mutually acceptable arrangement may be reached on this important and unresolved question.

Considerable progress has been made with the localization of the state bureaucracy, and efforts are being made to improve and professionalize the civil service which is experiencing vexing problems. Executive patronage does not necessarily serve the bureaucracy well.

The nation-building project has gone well in key respects – the integration of a national defence force and the establishment of a locally recruited police force. But the restructuring has not found favour with everyone. To thousands of peasants in rural areas, the politics of national reconciliation have meant very little in the form of either improved living conditions or social change.

Social problems – rapid urbanization and backlogs in housing, education and

health – are likely to persist for some time. The new government has made a start on low-cost housing schemes, especially in the urban centres; but considerably more resources will have to be directed to social investment.

In terms of its farming potential, Namibia is a marginal, semi-arid area, prone to prolonged and devastating droughts. These have a crippling effect on the economy, for although the mining sector contributes some 30 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) and 72 per cent of export earnings, it contributes little to employment, which is largely in agriculture and agriculturally related activities. Agriculture is therefore of critical importance.

Most Namibian exports face volatile prices. South African demand for Namibian beef and mutton tends to be cyclical, with Namibian supplies being the first to be affected as soon as the market is over-supplied. Karakul pelts are subject to the vagaries of fashion.

Since the early 1970s base mineral prices have suffered both from a long-term decline on world markets and sudden short-term shifts. This trend is likely to continue.

Namibia's manufacturing sector remains underdeveloped, accounting for a mere 4,7 per cent of GDP. Scope for expansion exists mainly in the processing of agricultural products.

Finally, we must always remember, Namibia is a very new state – it has been independent a mere eighteen months – and policy in two key areas, mining and land, still has to be developed and given form. Given the political and economic importance of these two areas, what the government does here will in no small measure determine its future prospects.

## Notes and references

- 1 President Nujoma, Address to the nation on Namibia's Independence Day, Windhoek, 21 March 1990 (mimeo).
- 2 Swapo's Administrative Secretary, Mr Moses Garoeb, announced in April 1991 that Swapo's next congress – the first since 1969 – was to be convened in December 1991.
- 3 Quoted in *City Press* (Johannesburg) 2 December 1990.
- 4 Mr Peter Mueshihange is the Minister of Defence. Mr Lucas Hifikepunye Pohamba, Minister of Home Affairs, is also responsible for the Namibian Police Force.
- 5 The NUNW is a labour federation comprising seven "progressive" trades unions.

- 6 See Namibia, Department of Finance, *Statistical/economic review 1990*, Windhoek, 1990, p 2.
- 7 The urban population growth rate averaged 4,7 per cent per annum during the period 1970-1988, compared with a national population growth rate of 2,8 per cent. Estimates taking us to the year 2000 indicate an urban growth rate of between 4,5 and 6 per cent per annum and a total urban population of between 650 000 (36 per cent of the total) and 770 000 (43 per cent). See Denis Fair "The people and the land" in Erich Leistner and Pieter Esterhuysen (eds), *Namibia 1990*, Pretoria: Africa Institute of SA, 1991, p 20.
- 8 See report on a visit to northern Namibia by Richard Dowden of *The Independent* newspaper in London, published in *The Star* (Johannesburg) 29 December 1990.
- 9 Total revenue for 1990/91 was estimated at R2,36 billion and total expenditure R2,5 billion, including R469 million for education, culture and sport; R352 million for health and social services; R278 million for public works; R272 million for transport and communications; R255 million for defence, police and prisons; R106 million for local government and housing; R102 million for fisheries and water supplies; and R76 million for agriculture and rural development. Government expenditure was only about 5 per cent more than it had been for the previous year.
- 10 The total of more than R700 million included firm pledges by the following donor countries:
 

German Federal Republic	R161 million
United Kingdom	R 45 million
Sweden	R 42 million
South Africa	R 27 million
United States	R 27 million
India	R 31 million
Denmark	R 25 million
Egypt	R 2,6 million
Italy	R 2,6 million
Nigeria	R 2,6 million

 German aid would principally assist rural development and the settlement of refugees – R45 million would be in grants and a further R100 million in loans. Total grants from the Nordic countries amounted to R156 million. Sweden pledged an additional R130 million in long-term grants.
- 11 The central bank was established in terms of the Bank of Namibia Act (No 8 of 1990) with Dr Wouter Bernard, a Dutch banker, as its first governor. The former governor of Lesotho's central bank, Mr Erik Karlsson of Sweden, was appointed deputy-governor and Mr Emmanuel Lula of Uganda general manager. Members of the board include Mr Petrus Damaseb of the Prime Minister's Office, Mr Paul Hartmann, an economist, Mr John Kirkpatrick, former chairman of Standard Bank in Namibia, and Ms Bience Gawanas, a legal adviser.



- 12 The relevant section of the Investment Code reads, "Although joint ventures with investors will be encouraged, the code itself will not require foreign investors to offer an equity stake either to the state or the Namibian private sector". *Business Day* (Johannesburg) 21 June 1990.
- 13 Quoted in *Business Day* (Johannesburg), 22 May 1991.
- 14 See *Swapo election manifesto*, 1989, p 9.
- 15 See United Nations, *Namibia: Perspectives for national reconstruction and development* (abridged version), Lusaka: Namibia Institute, 1986, p 128.
- 16 Reported in *The Citizen* (Johannesburg), 2 July 1991.
- 17 See for, example, Peter Meyns, *Blockfreie Aussenpolitik eines afrikanischen Kleinstaates: Das Beispiel Kap Verde*, Hamburg: Institut für Afrika-Kunde, 1990.
- 18 See Peter Vale, "Namibia: How is the newest country faring?" *The Natal Witness* (Pietermaritzburg), 24 September 1990.
- 19 For an analysis of the legal ambiguities relating to Walvis Bay and the Penguin Islands, see L Berat, *Walvis Bay: The last frontier*, Wynberg: Radix (in association with Yale University Press) 1990. For a geo-economic and political analysis see W S Barnard, "Walvis Bay and the Penguin Islands" in Erich Leistner and Pieter Esterhuysen (eds), *op cit*.
- 20 See *The Saturday Star* (Johannesburg), 18 May 1991 and *The Citizen* 18 May 1991.
- 21 Statement by the Hon P S Mmusi at the 1991 SADCC Annual Consultative Conference, Windhoek, 31 January 1991, pp 1-2.
- 22 Reported in *Sunday Times/Business Times* (Johannesburg), 7 July 1991.
- 23 See Tony Heard "Visit Namibia. It may bring back your hopes" in *The Weekly Mail*, vol 6, no 44, 16-22 November 1990, p 42.
- 24 See Colin Leys "Namibia: Five months after", *Southern Africa Report*, November 1990, p 17

## NAMIBIA'S GOVERNMENT

**President : Sam Nujoma**  
**Prime Minister : Hage Geingob**

Portfolio	Minister	Deputy minister
Home Affairs	Lucas Pohamba	Nangolo Ithete
Foreign Affairs	Theo-Ben Gurirab	Ntumbo Ndaitwah
Education and Culture	Nahas Angula	Buddy Wentworh
Information	Hidipo Hamutenya	Daniel Tjongarero
Mines and Energy	Herman Toivo ya Toivo	Jesaya Nyamu
Justice	Dr Ernest Tjiriange	Vekuii Rukoro
Trade and Industry	Ben Amathila	Anton von Wietersheim
Agriculture, Water and Rural Development	Gert Hanekom	Dr Kaire Mbuende
Defence	Peter Mueshihange	Philemon Malima
Finance	Dr Otto Herrigel	Barmenas Kukuru
Health and Social Services	Dr Nicky Iyambo	Iyambo Indongo
Local Government and Housing	Dr Libertine Amathila	Jerry Ekandjo
Labour, Public Service and Manpower	Hendrik Witbooi	Hadino Hishongwa
Wildlife Conservation and Tourism	Nico Bessinger	Ben Ulenga
Transport, Communications and Works	Richard Kapelwa	Klaus Dierks
Lands, Resettlement and Rehabilitation	Marco Hausiku	Dr Marcus Shivute
Fisheries and Marine Resources	Helmut Angula	
Youth and Sport	Pendukeni Ithana	Reggie Diergaardt
State Security	Peter Tsheehama	

### Notes:

Two new ministries were created and the cabinet reshuffled in February 1991. Mr Helmut Angula, formerly Deputy Minister of Mines and Energy, became Minister of Fisheries and Marine Resources which had been part of Minister Gert Hanekom's portfolio. Ms Pendukeni Ithana, formerly Deputy Minister of Wildlife Conservation and Tourism, became the second woman in the cabinet, taking charge of Youth and Sport which was subtracted from Minister Nahas Angula's Education and Culture portfolio. Deputy Minister Reggie Diergaardt was moved from Trade and Industry to Youth and Culture. Five new deputy ministers were appointed: Mr Jesaya Nyamu (Mines and Energy), Mr Ben Ulenga (Wildlife Conservation and Tourism), Mr Anton von Wietersheim (Trade and Industry), Mr Iyambo Indongo (Health and Social Services) and Mr Barmenas Rick Kukuru (Finance).

# Security issues in Africa: The imperial legacy, domestic violence and the military

*In the first of a new series of articles on security issues in Africa, Dr Simon Baynham, Chief Researcher in Political and Strategic Studies at the Africa Institute, examines a number of anti-colonial struggles and post-independence military conflicts and coups against the backdrop of the imperial withdrawal. By way of a preface to this series, he discusses some socio-economic and political similarities and differences between African countries. His next article will focus on the political, economic and security implications of recent geopolitical developments on the continent of Africa.*

## Introduction: The African continent<sup>1</sup>

In many aspects, Africa's enormous landmass of 30 million square kilometres – some 22 percent of the globe's total – is an area that defies rigorous description. Except for a slender isthmus of territory linking it to Asia Minor, the continent is completely surrounded by sea. Indeed, 33 of its mainland states have ocean contiguities.<sup>2</sup> A century ago, Africa supported a population estimated at 100 million. Today that figure has reached 500 million, double the number for 1960 and growing at 3 per cent each year.

Africa displays inordinate disparities as between its constituent countries in terms of:

- *size*: Sudan's 2,5 million square kilometres (one million square miles) on the one hand, Burundi's 28 000 square kilometres on the other;
- *population*: Nigeria with perhaps 130 million citizens, Djibouti and Swaziland with well under 1 million apiece;
- *GNP/per capita income*: US\$3 100 in mineral and oil-rich Gabon, less than a thirtieth of that in Ethiopia and Chad;

- *life expectancy at birth*: for Algeria and South Africa it is 62 years, for Guinea-Bissau it is 38 years; and
- *adult literacy*: Somalia's percentile figure is 12, in contrast to Tanzania's 85.

Population densities, educational opportunities and health and welfare facilities also illustrate the extreme contrasts between the fifty or so states of modern Africa.

Culturally and linguistically, the continent is doubly divided. In the first place, as between the legacy of deposited institutions and ideas (anglophone, francophone – in Africa and the Indian Ocean, French is the official language of 21 countries – hispanophone and lusophone). Secondly, as between indigenous cultural traits and tongues. Linguistically, Africa is one of the most complex areas on the planet Earth, with a total of around 1 000 languages, some localized, some dialects of a group of languages. Several states employ a major local tongue (for instance, Swahili in Tanzania) officially alongside that of the former metropolitan power. In addition, some 1 200 societies or ethnic/tribal groupings have also been identified. These range from primitive

hunter-gatherers like the pygmies of the Congo basin and the "Bushmen" of the Kalahari, to more sophisticated populations such as Kenya's Kikuyu and, on the opposite side of Africa, the Ashanti of Ghana.

As for its political systems, the region embraces multiparty parliamentary models (for example, Botswana, the Gambia and, for the moment, Zimbabwe), traditional monarchies (Swaziland and Morocco), single-party mobilization machines (Kenya, Malawi and Tanzania), together with an associated mixture of military and quasi-military dictatorships of both conservative (Lesotho) and radical (Libya) ideological orientations.

Frequently, a distinction is drawn between the Arab north and the larger component of the continent usually referred to as black or sub-Saharan Africa. As a rough rule of thumb, it is generally accepted that the Sahara constitutes the northern boundary of the region. Enclosed by this encroaching desert waste to the north and by the Atlantic and Indian Oceans to south, east and west, this vast territory of almost forty states may be differentiated from North Africa, which has been closely linked to the Mediterranean, the

Middle East and Mohammedanism for thirteen hundred years.

Certainly the Sahara has served as a bridge to much trade, warfare and cultural interchange – and Sudan's vast territory straddles and is torn, almost literally, between the two regions – but today it also represents something of a barrier to political relations, Gaddafi's Libya notwithstanding. Unlike the Maghreb countries facing southern Europe, much of the territory south of the desert has developed with little knowledge of the rest of the world. In turn, most of this area was little known to outsiders until comparatively recently. But in spite of this relative isolation, the presence or expansion of Muslim majorities or significant Muslim minorities in countries such as Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Madagascar and Mozambique – together with the activities of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) – may be reducing the differences between the respective subcontinents.

Inadvertently perhaps, the foregoing discussion has over-emphasized Africa's heterogeneity. There are, however, overriding similarities: contact with the West and the capricious carve-up of the continent a century or so ago, subjugation and formal empire, a brief high noon of colonial rule and (for the most part very suddenly) independence – or at least political independence. Then dependence, debt and instability. Today, Africa is the poorest part of the Third World. It might be described as the Third World of the Third World. Indeed, most of the continent has acquired Fourth, or even Fifth, World status in the standard literature. For the region faces a crisis of unprecedented proportions. The physical environment is deteriorating; per capita production of food is in decline; population growth is the highest in the "developing" world and is increasing; civil strife and hunger stalk the region. Against this backdrop of poverty and conflict, it is pertinent to note that, in 1984, Africa's arms imports exceeded the value of external grain purchases for the first time since independence.

In short, the continent confronts a comprehensive range of common circumstances by virtue of its economic peripherality in which it has become subordinated to a world-system dominated by the industrialized nations of the North. This is not to imply that the First World is exclusively responsible for this state of affairs. Far from it.



Algeria, 1960

Culpability also lies in the hands of kleptocratic African élites who have largely ignored the rural masses in favour of the urbanized and who have plundered the state coffers and plunged their countries into a bureaucratic morass of Kafkaesque proportions.

### The historical legacy of violence

To anticipate one major conclusion of this series, the evidence unambiguously suggests that the barometer of violence and the deployment of armed force, both within the sovereign states and as directed from across their borders, has clearly risen in the past three decades. Africa has been bedevilled by civil conflict and warfare ever since the "Year of Independence", 1960. However, it is important to stress that these and related phenomena preceded and did not post-date the attainment of modern statehood. For not only were acephalous societies (such as the Nuer of Sudan) and more formalized polities (such as the Hausa city-states) frequently in a state of conflict – despite the views ardently propagated by, especially, sections of the American academic community, the "Dark Continent" was patently no paragon of peace – but the European imperial powers deployed military force first to probe, then to impose and finally to consolidate their occupation.<sup>3</sup>

Also, contrary to earlier assessments, these processes were characterized by significant instances of local resistance: from that of the Fulani emirates and Samori Touré to, respectively, British and French incursions in West Africa on the one hand, to the violent Maji Maji rebellion against German intrusion in Tanganyika on the other.<sup>4</sup> Subsequently, a number of anti-colonial nationalist struggles or wars of liberation, such as those in Madagascar and Kenya, were accompanied by major bloodshed; while that in Algeria rates as a substantial war by any standards.<sup>5</sup>

### Kenya

In Kenya, the British authorities employed a variety of counter-insurgency techniques to defeat their opponents. Mau Mau units – whose basic military tactic was the use of terror at night – were pursued by special tracker teams; and "pseudo-gangs" of captured or surrendered fighters were "turned" and sent back into the bush to pose as guerrilla gangs to eliminate their erstwhile comrades. The security services took more than three years to break and isolate the rebels in the hills and it was not until October 1956 – four years after the announcement of a State of Emergency – that the main counter-offensive came to a halt. According to official figures, the government forces killed almost 8 000 rebels and lost over 500



Nigeria's civil war. A Red Cross hospital bombed, December 1968

of their own men, most of whom were Africans. Another 2 000 Kenyans were killed by Mau Mau – often in the most gruesome circumstances, as in the notorious 1953 Lari massacre when the inhabitants of several villages were hacked and burned to death by a large gang of heavily-armed insurgents.<sup>6</sup>

### Algeria

The ferocity of the Algerian War of Independence – which began in November 1954 when the *Front de Libération Nationale* (FLN) co-ordinated 70 armed attacks on French settler (*colon*) homes, government buildings, police posts and communications networks – was in a league of its own. Brutal interrogation and revenge attacks were routine on both sides, especially when the conflict escalated as French paratroops under General Jacques Massu swept into Algiers in January 1957. For France, the hostilities had much wider significance when, in May 1958, the military command under General Salan, with the connivance of the former Resident-Minister, Jacques Soustelle, and with the full approval of the settlers, refused to recognize the authority of Paris. These events toppled the Fourth Republic, bringing Charles de Gaulle to power. But to the fury of the *colons*, De Gaulle – realizing the impossibility of a military solution –

moved Algeria towards independence, which was achieved in July 1962. The FLN victory had been attained at an awesome cost: at least one million Algerians (10 per cent of the population) lost their lives. In addition, 17 500 French troops and some 3 000 *colons* died. Fought by a well-organized nationalist movement, it was the bloodiest struggle in colonial Africa.<sup>7</sup>

There were, of course, other liberation struggles against the imperial powers, for instance, the large-scale rebellion led by Dr Félix Moumié in the French part of what eventually became the independent Republic of Cameroon,<sup>8</sup> and the anti-colonial struggles in lusophone Africa (Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde, Sao Tomé e Príncipe), where Portugal – the first European colonizer on the continent – seemed determined until the mid-1970s to pursue a policy of “first in, last out”.<sup>9</sup> And in Rhodesia the guerrilla armies of two major nationalist parties, Joshua Nkomo’s Zimbabwe African People’s Union (Zapu) and Robert Mugabe’s Zimbabwe African National Union (Zanu), conducted an ultimately successful military campaign, not directed against the legitimate colonial authority (Britain) but against the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) leadership of Ian Smith.

However, for all that has been noted above, on much of the continent – for example, in French Equatorial Africa, in the British possessions of Uganda and Tanganyika and in Belgium’s impoverished East African highland trusteeship territory of Ruanda-Urundi – the imperial retreat was a comparatively orderly and peaceful affair.

### Independence and the threat of disintegration

During the decade 1956–66, more than thirty African countries were brought into being, increasing the total number of the international community’s sovereign states by over 50 per cent. Morocco, Sudan and Tunisia started the process in 1956, with Ghana and Guinea following suit in 1957 and 1958 respectively. This trickle became a veritable flood with the creation of fifteen new francophone states, plus a couple of others, in 1960. Included in this total of seventeen were two of the continent’s giants: Congo (now Zaire) and Nigeria.

Despite the unparalleled celerity with which the emancipation from alien occupation occurred, the borders drawn up by the imperial powers at the Berlin Conference of 1884–85 remained largely intact. For the most part, the colonies had become states. Yet the boundaries that had been mapped out by the Europeans were essentially artificial. The arbitrary delineation of “this magnificent cake” (as King Léopold II of the Belgians had it) into separate colonial chunks had a double set of immediate consequences: dividing ethnic communities between different territories – for example, the Ewes were split between, and straddle, Ghana and Togo – and coercively grouping others together into inherently unstable aggregations. Communities that had little or no common history, or that had been traditionally hostile to one another before the arrival of European conquerors, found themselves thrown together as citizens of the same entity. Hausas, Yorubas and Ibos became Nigerians; Ndebele and Shonas shared a new nationality as Zimbabweans.<sup>10</sup>

In short, and as one observer has explained:

The pre-colonial African system ... was abruptly changed by foreign conquest into a collection of states whose shape, balance of forces and population had little if any similarity to what had been evolving prior

to external intervention. Ethnic conflict, secessionism, irredentism and border conflicts became inevitable. The seeds were sown for countless national and international disputes that would give outside powers endless scope for manipulation and intervention in independent Africa.<sup>11</sup>

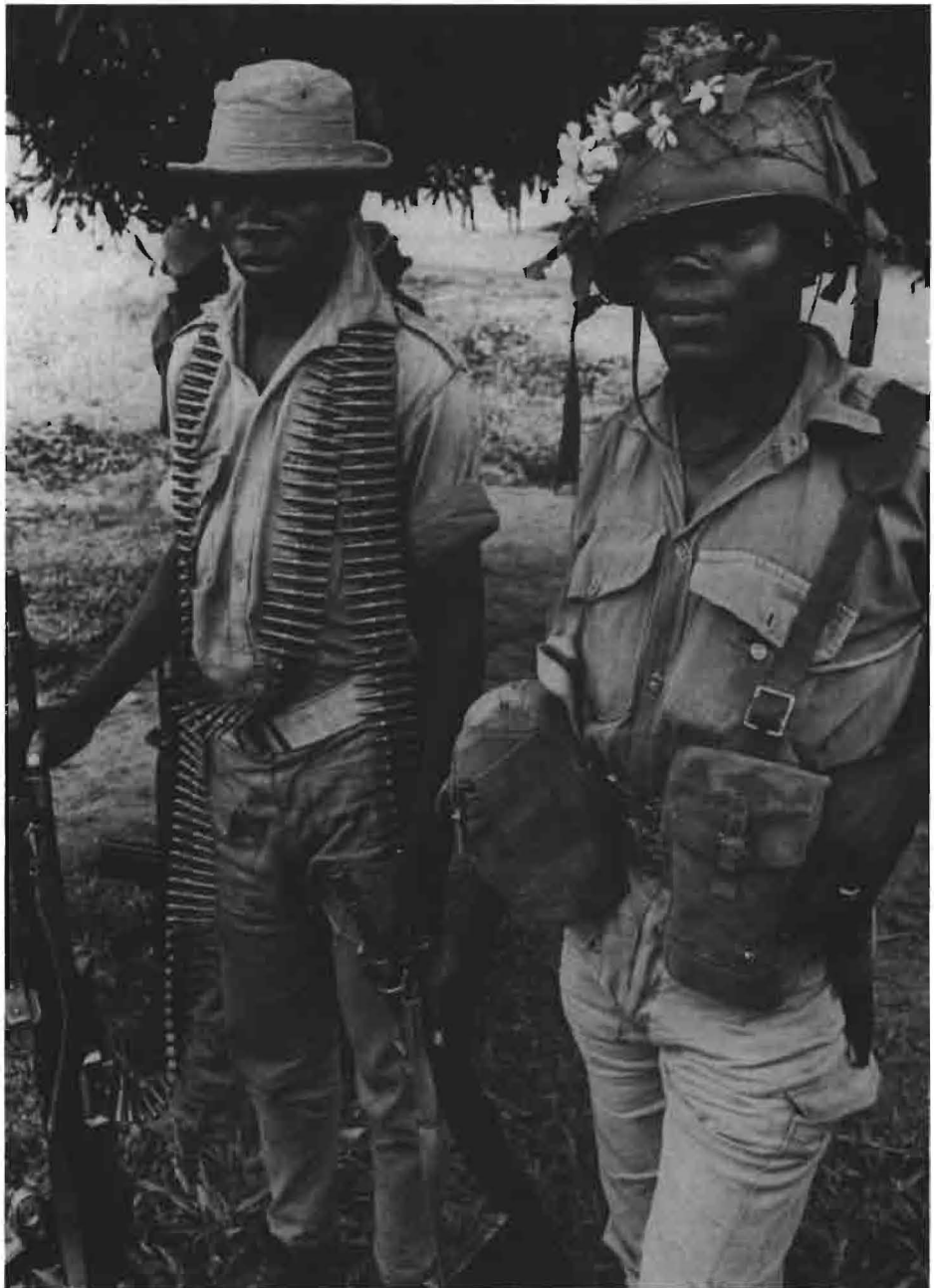
Many of the conflicts in modern Africa were a lineal continuation of the fragmented societal divisions deposited as a legacy by the imperial powers. In a number of new states, the impact of this inheritance made itself felt almost immediately.

### Congo

For instance, five days after the rapid and largely unprepared Belgian withdrawal from the Congo on 30 June 1960, the *Force Publique* (army) units mutinied against their officers and went on an anti-white rampage. These attacks resulted in a mass exodus of Europeans and a swift reaction from Brussels, which dispatched 5 000 paratroops to protect Belgian nationals.

At the same time, the southern copper-rich province of Katanga announced its independence as Shaba under the leadership of Moïse Tshombe. Backed by Belgian business interests and white mercenaries, Tshombe saw no reason why his province's revenues and taxes should go to the central government in Léopoldville (now Kinshasa). Following a request from President Joseph Kasavubu, a United Nations peace-keeping force was sent first to pacify the country and then to put down the attempted secession. Lasting from February 1961 until January 1962 (when Tshombe fled the country), the campaign witnessed heavy fighting between UN forces and the Katangese *gendarmérie* and mercenaries. The brunt of the fighting was borne by Ethiopian and Indian units, supported by aircraft and armoured vehicles. Order was restored by the end of 1963, but not before UN casualties had mounted to some 500 men.

Meanwhile, the confusion was exacerbated when Kasavubu and Prime Minister Lumumba quarrelled about who should run the country. After attempting to dismiss each other, both were ousted in a *coup d'état* by the army commander, Colonel Mobutu. Lumumba escaped, later to be recaptured by Congolese troops who took him to Katanga where, in 1961, he died in mysterious circumstances. Mobutu restored civilian rule, with Kasavubu as



Nigeria's civil war. Federal troops

president and Adoula as prime minister; but in yet another turn in Congo's labyrinthine political upheavals, Lumumba's supporters (now led by Antoine Gizenga) attempted to form a new administration in Stanleyville (Kisangani). For a while, the insurgents were supported by the Soviet Union, which was intent on countering Western influence in the Congo. However, negotiations resulted in compromise and genuine reconciliation in 1964 when Tshombe was invited by Kasavubu to become prime minister.

But once again, peace was short-lived. For in 1964, following the UN military withdrawal, a new rebellion in Stanleyville led to Belgian military intervention (in November) to rescue 2 000 white hostages. Violence continued until 1967, when a mercenary-led insurrection in the eastern provinces was eventually suppressed.

Back in Léopoldville, a new struggle for political power ended in a bloodless coup when Mobutu suspended all political activity in 1965, proclaimed himself president and instituted an authoritarian





Congo: Bukavu in mercenary hands 1967

regime, which provided the Congo with a degree of stability.<sup>12</sup>

## Nigeria

Civil war took somewhat longer to come to the boil in Nigeria; but within seven years of gaining independence in October 1960, Africa's most populous country was engulfed in a savage secessionist war which turned into one of the ugliest conflicts in modern African history. The post-colonial problems in Nigeria were not so much ones relating to inexperience (as in the Congo) but rather of rivalries between three almost autonomous regions: the vast Islamic backward region of the north and the smaller, but wealthier, eastern and western regions, dominated by the Ibo and Yoruba peoples respectively. To all intents and purposes, these areas were separate nations, divided by language, culture and mutual suspicions. The northern population – consisting predominantly of Hausas – were believed to outnumber the southern populations.

At independence, the federal government was a coalition between the north and the east, with the western leader, Chief Obafemi Awolowo, in formal opposition. The accord between north and east, however, soon began to crumble, the tie finally being severed in 1964 when the Ibo party attempted to win parliamentary seats in the north where a large community of Ibos lived.

Meanwhile, the eastern region was encouraged by its growing oil production to oppose northern domination.

Transparently dishonest elections in 1965 led to a pro-Ibo army *coup d'état* in January 1966, during which a number of senior politicians, including the federal prime minister, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, were assassinated. The installation of an Ibo military leader, General Aguiyi Ironsi, prompted northern fears of eastern domination, savage anti-Ibo riots in the north and a second coup during which Ironsi was murdered by northern army officers. In his place emerged General Yakubu Gowon, a northern Christian, who was immediately confronted by separatist demands for the permanent division of the country.

While these issues were being considered and before any conclusions had been arrived at, fresh massacres occurred of Ibos living in the north. In retaliation, Ibos began killing Hausas living in the east. The slaughter continued until virtually all Ibos had fled from the north and all Hausas from the east. Two million internal refugees escaped to the security of their own regions, at which point the Ibos – fearful that they would always be down-trodden in a united Nigeria – decided to declare the independent state of Biafra under the leadership of Colonel Oduwegwu Ojukwu in July 1967.

During the bloody two-and-a-half

year war that followed, Biafra received encouragement from France, Portugal, South Africa, Zambia and the Vatican, while the Nigerian government obtained diplomatic and material assistance from the two superpowers and Britain. Most African states supported Gowon's federal forces. It has been estimated that 600 000 lives were lost as the secessionists struggled against overwhelming odds. Eventually, federal *MiG* fighters, lack of supplies, starvation and disease forced the Ibos to capitulate in January 1970 and Colonel Ojukwu fled into exile.<sup>13</sup>

The secessionist wars in Nigeria and the Congo were not the only ones to occur in the aftermath of independence (as the conflicts in Ethiopia, Sudan and Western Sahara testify); but in all five cases a common and salient factor was the incorporation of incompatible peoples within artificially-imposed state boundaries. In addition, the wars were influenced, and in some cases prolonged, by the intervention of foreign powers – a phenomenon that has recurred repeatedly elsewhere in Africa ever since. Nevertheless, it is important to stress that, despite many similarities, not all civil wars involved secessionist demands. A number of wars have been fought not to split up the state but to decide who should run it. Two of the longest-running were the civil wars in the former Portuguese colony of Angola and the one much further north in Chad. But neither have these been the only other type of uprising against ruling regimes, for in a host of states the breakdown of law and order has resulted in another enduring hallmark of African political behaviour: the military *coup d'état*.

## Military coups

In his 1962 preface to *Black mischief*, Evelyn Waugh wrote:

Thirty years ago it seemed an anachronism that any part of Africa should be independent of European administration. History has not followed what then seemed its natural course.<sup>14</sup>

Similarly, some quarter of a century back, when the "white man's burden" yielded to indigenous political and bureaucratic élites, few observers predicted a prominent role for the post-colonial military forces. At an Ibadan University conference in 1964, for example, Lloyd declared that "in few of



the independent [African] states is the military elite much in evidence in the social and political life".<sup>15</sup> This evaluation was not challenged (in fact it was endorsed) by several leading commentators of the day.<sup>16</sup> Also, inside these territories, the initially dilatory pace of officer indigenization and the continued employment of expatriate staff in the military hierarchy "encouraged both apathy and ignorance about the armed forces among the emerging African elite".<sup>17</sup>

Yet looking back on continental developments from the vantage point of the early 1990s, it seems surprising that the potential impact of the army was not more fully anticipated. Given Third World experience elsewhere – especially in the Middle East and, much more spectacularly, in Latin America – military uprisings in Africa should have come as no sudden bolt from the blue. The apparently insignificant size, and certainly the limited experience and expertise, of the new states' embryonic armies beguiled both scholars and foreign chanceries into ignoring or minimizing the military threat. But rebellion from this quarter – whether in the *golpe de estado* (*coup d'état*) or *golpe cuartelazo* (palace revolt) – has seldom involved more than a few hundred troops.

In Ghana, the National Liberation Council (NLC) came to power in February 1966 when 500 soldiers, out of an army of 10 000, overthrew the regime of Kwame Nkrumah; in Congo (now Zaire), Mobutu "neutralized" the conflict between Lumumba and Kasavubu by occupying Léopoldville (Kinshasa) with 200 or so men in September 1960; while General Soglo of Dahomey (now Benin) was ousted from office by five dozen paratroopers in December 1967. In similar fashion, the most recent African coups – those toppling the military heads of state in Mali (General Traoré on 26 March 1991)<sup>18</sup> and in Lesotho (General Lekhanya on 30 April 1991)<sup>19</sup> – involved a tiny proportion of these countries' total armed forces.

Thus, early predictions to the effect that the imperial legacy in Africa was likely to create armies in the image of the colonial powers – and as such unlikely to interfere in politics – have had to be hastily revised. Throughout much of the continent today, militaries, no matter how small, represent virtually the only disciplined organizations at large. As such, even if not ruling

directly, they are almost unchallenged umpires of who should govern and under what conditions and terms.

At the time of writing (mid-1991), about a third of Africa's states are governed in one form or another by their armies. Most of the *coups d'état* from the modern-day men on horseback have been directed against civilian administrations (often for a second or third time, as the cases of Uganda and Benin so graphically illustrate); but an increasing proportion are staged from within the armed bureaucracies, by one set of khaki-clad soldiers against another: as in Nigeria (1966, 1975, 1985), Ghana (1978, 1979), Sudan (1985). And as noted above, both 1991 *putsches* (Mali, Lesotho) were military-on-military affairs.

Although there had already been a number of *coups d'état* in Egypt (1952), Sudan (1958) and Congo (1960), the main sequence of interventions began in Togo in 1963 when President Sylvanus Olympio was assassinated by army rebels. A new government was installed under the civilian president Nicholas Grunitzky, but he was in turn overthrown by Colonel Etienne Eyadema on the fourth anniversary of Olympio's murder. Eyadema has been in office ever since.

Following the great wave of independence that traversed Africa in the years 1960-63, military coups swept through the continent. There were four coups in 1965; the next year there were six, two within the space of six months in Nigeria. By 1972, Dahomey (now Benin) had seen no less than five *coups d'état*. This record is now equalled by Ghana.

In numerical terms, 31 African states have already experienced military intervention and 19 have been subjected to more than one. On average, there have been three successful coups per annum during the past quarter century – as well as a rash of attempted but abortive rebellions. For every successful coup in Africa, there have been at least two unsuccessful ones. Congo-Brazzaville experienced seven attempted *coups d'état* between 1966 and 1977. More recently, during the past 15 months, there have been confirmed accounts of failed coup plots in six African states.<sup>20</sup> By the beginning of 1987, half the continent's countries were under military rule, in many cases for the second or third time. Some of them (for instance,

Ghana, Nigeria, Sudan and Libya) have been governed by the armed forces for most of their independent existence.

## Mechanics and motivations

How are we to account for the political virility of the African armed forces in achieving such a remarkable success rate in the seizure of office and, secondly, what motivates the military in this respect? There are a number of answers to these questions. On the one hand, the virtual monopoly of organized state violence enjoyed by the military (and police) forces in societies where the central political symbols and institutions are weak has enabled soldiers to seize power with relative ease.<sup>21</sup> At the same time, the concentration of government buildings, party officials and symbols of state in the capital city makes an armed rebellion relatively simple. Once a few key officials and locations have been seized (government ministers, the presidential palace, radio and television stations and airports), the success of the soldiers is virtually assured – confirming Bronowski's observation that "in modern times communications are typically the first target in a revolution ... because if they are cut then authority is cut off and breaks down"<sup>22</sup>

Nevertheless, the opportunity and means for the violent overthrow of incumbent administrations fail to explain why soldiers actually do so with such frequency. Given the impressive volume of literature addressing the causes of coups – why and under what circumstances military forces intervene in politics<sup>23</sup> – it would be superfluous to replicate, even in synoptic fashion, all facets of that debate here. The list seems to be almost endless, ranging from economic crisis, persistent poverty, regional/ethnic rivalries, government repression and corruption, maladministration, personal and corporate ambitions and so on. What is clear, however, is that the interventionist inclinations of the military in post-independence Africa are, to an important extent, a legacy of the way in which the continent was divided during the last part of the nineteenth century. As noted earlier, these predilections are also linked to the pace and manner in which the metropolitan powers withdrew from the artificial states they had created. Critical issues relating to the

distribution of power and the resources associated with the occupancy of political office were left unresolved. No wonder, then, that so many of the new African armies were sucked into the political centre-stage.

### Africanization

Frequently, too, institutional instability within the armed forces was engendered by the total indigenization of the officer corps within a few years of independence. For example, in March 1957, when Ghana attained sovereignty, there were 209 Britons and 29 Africans in its army officer corps. Localization was fully implemented four years later. A similar pattern obtained in the Nigerian Army, which was completely Africanized by 1965.<sup>24</sup> The result of political as opposed to military imperatives, rapid localization led to an erosion of professional skill and, in many cases, to a breakdown in discipline. The accelerated elevation of inexperienced officers to high executive posts generated unrealistic career aspirations at lower levels; and in most cases such expectations were not borne out following the initial wave of promotions. Had recruitment and advancement been more carefully regulated, promotional bottlenecks – a breeding ground for discontent and conspiracy – might have been largely avoided. These and related dislocations had wider repercussions, since a lack of coherence within the armed forces themselves lessens constraints upon military adventurism in the political sphere. Indeed, indiscipline inside the security services is a constant problem for all regimes, civilian and military, that rely principally on force to survive.

### Civil-military relations theory

There is therefore the need to mesh the “internal characteristics” approach to the analysis of civil-military relations with one that stresses the wider social and political environment in which armed forces live. While the former school of thought (in which explanations of military participation in politics are mainly restricted to the inner composition and dynamics of the armed forces) has been traditionally associated with the name of Janowitz,<sup>25</sup> a second and alternative approach is favoured by Huntington. He argues “that the most important causes of military intervention in politics are not military but

political”,<sup>26</sup> thereby accentuating the socio-political and economic circumstances in which the army operates.<sup>27</sup> Finer also maintains that military interference is largely regulated by what he calls the degree of public attachment to civilian institutions or the “level of political culture”.<sup>28</sup> For him, the greater the degree of political modernization, the fewer opportunities the military has for intervention and the less support it will receive. Concomitantly, the lower the development of a well-mobilized public opinion, the more numerous the opportunities for military intervention and the greater the likelihood of public support. It seems clear, however, that both traditions in civil-military relations analysis are important, that the explanatory force of stressing the internal qualities of the armed forces to the exclusion of the external sphere, or vice versa, is limited.

It is also important, following Luckham, to consider the character of the boundaries, and the nature of the transactions, between armed forces and their societal context.<sup>29</sup> As I see it, the African armies exhibit a “fragmented” relationship with their environment. That is, they are caught up in, and are susceptible to, wider social forces because intra-military communal cleavages (ethnic, regional, religious and so on), and to a lesser extent, vertical (class) alignments which cross-cut traditional horizontal affiliations, coincide with societal divisions, making it possible for patron-client networks to be forged between civilian political actors and soldiers.

### Military rule and disengagement

The military’s structural differentiation from society is especially vulnerable once the barracks have been abandoned for political office. For as First noted, once armies step beyond the barracks to engage in public policy-making, “they soak up social conflicts like a sponge”.<sup>30</sup> It is not my intention to examine the nature of military governance here in detail (for many excellent studies on the subject already exist<sup>31</sup>), save to say that administrations run by soldiers seem strikingly similar in many respects to those dominated by civilians. The explanation for this state of affairs is rooted in the nature of politics in Africa.

Since independence, political conflict has converged upon attempts by the

Western-educated élites to gain control of the resources associated with governmental or state power. Invariably, the state is the largest employer of skilled and educated labour in Africa. It is a monopoly source of import and export licences for international trade, as well as the most important origin of contracts to local and foreign business. It is also the major fount of credit, loans and assistance to domestic businessmen and farmers. In addition, the state has almost total control over the distribution of communications, clinics, schools, sanitation and other amenities.

Given this overwhelming concentration of power and patronage, it is hardly surprising that individuals, groups and localities have seemed utterly absorbed with jockeying for representation in, or control over, the central structures of government and through them for influence in a polity whose main function is apparently to provide handouts for its clientele. In a view from the Left, Claude Ake also stresses state domination of the economy:

In Africa, much of the exploitation is done not by individual capitalists, but by the state acting as a powerful entrepreneur ... Many of those who exploit the proletariat do not themselves own the means of production; but they control the power of the state which is used to control the means of production.<sup>32</sup>

The result of this concentration of resources has been the tendency of African citizens (civilian and military) “to associate the government with limitless power, endless wealth and a high prestige”.<sup>33</sup>

The dependence on the government of the majority of individuals who make up the educated élite for their salaries, status and overall economic security means that politics in Africa may be viewed, largely, as a perennial struggle by individuals and groups (both primordial and horizontal) to maintain and extend their economic standing by gaining control over the allocative arms of the state. Many theories of society have stemmed from certain assumptions about the characteristics of the individuals who comprise it. The theory of economic behaviour argued here is that one of the prime motivations of man is the desire to pursue economic goals and to maximize his material satisfactions and social status. And the individuals who have constituted the hierarchy of the armed

forces during the first few decades of independence have been as much a party to, and participated in, the system as their civilian counterparts.

In embracing such an approach, the argument, quite simply, is that armed intervention and military rule should not be viewed (at least primarily) "as an attempt by an external body to mediate between ... antagonistic elite groups or between politicians and masses".<sup>34</sup> Instead, such action should be seen as something quite different: as an attempt by the military (or a section of it) to protect and extend its privileged position and material perquisites in competition with other societal interests. Briefly stated, the rhetoric of altruism and patriotism is for the most part a screen to shield the soldiers' sectional interests; and the maintenance of public order carries with it the maintenance of the domination of those who control that order.<sup>35</sup>

Given their putative strength in relation to civilian groupings and institutions, what then induces the armed bureaucrats to head back to the barracks? In an early study of military rule and demilitarization, Pinkney argued that one country (Ghana) "provided an example ... of a military government keeping to the timetable it had set itself for restoring civilian rule".<sup>36</sup> But he fails to appreciate that this had more to do with threats to the cohesion of the army-police National Liberation Council (NLC) and to the troops in the barracks (following the junior ranks' abortive counter-coup in April 1967) than with the Council's undertaking to abdicate early. At a higher level of originality, Price claims

that the training process undergone by the officer corps of many of the new [African] states is such as to produce reference-group identifications with the officer corps of the ex-colonial power and concomitant commitments to its sets of traditions, symbols, and values.<sup>37</sup>

However, in maintaining that the NLC (or any other junta for that matter) withdrew because "[r]eference-group identification with the British officer corps acted as a counterforce to the perquisites of political office, pushing or pulling the Ghanaian officers to give up the power they had earlier seized",<sup>38</sup> Price exaggerates the impact of external socialization models. Despite some appearances to the contrary, Africa's officers and ranks are not primarily



Nigerian troops with the UN contingent in the Congo, 1964

governed by a historical tradition or professional ethos that deposited their embryonic forces in the course of empire. Rather, their actions conform to traditions and contemporary mores prevailing in their own cultures. In particular, reference is being made here to the soldiers' susceptibility to, and participation in, an indigenous milieu that stresses the primacy of politics as a means of achieving, protecting and advancing private, corporate and communal material advantages.

### Return to barracks

In point of fact, abdication to civilian rulers is invariably *forced* on military juntas – assuming, of course, that they survive the praetorian proclivities of their own primary constituents, the garrisoned troops. For as noted earlier, coups within coups have become a secondary growth industry on their own account. It is now commonplace to remark that military disengagement from overt rule occurs through the cumulation of three conditions: first, the disintegration of the original conspiratorial cabal; second, a growing divergence of interests as between the ruling uniformed bureaucrats and those who have remained behind in the barracks; and third, the political and economic difficulties faced by the regime.<sup>39</sup> Abdication, however, is not the only way out. Recivilianization – an incremental transfer of office from a

semi-civilianized military government to a civilianized one (as envisaged, for instance, by the senior command responsible for ousting General Nimeiri in 1985) or "decompression", to use a term with a similar meaning borrowed from Latin American studies,<sup>40</sup> offers an alternative mode of withdrawal.

But whatever the way out, the road back to barracks is strewn with uncertainties. By surrendering office, soldiers lose not only direct control over the ideological orientation of the state and the allocation of public resources from which they benefit so lavishly under their own rule, but also they risk retribution from vengeful civilians. This is why military disengagement from politics might best be described as "formal" or "conditional", rather than as "definitive" or "absolute". Indeed, to continue with the Ghanaian case-study, one classic example of conditional withdrawal was Flight-Lieutenant Jerry Rawlings' handover to President Hilla Limann in September 1979. Addressing Limann at the ceremony inaugurating the Third Republic, Rawlings articulated his "fervent hope that you will develop sensitivity to the tenets of [my] revolution". Earlier in the speech, he cautioned: "You must be prepared to do justice to all our people. The whole nation is watching you."<sup>41</sup> Rawlings seized office again two years later, thereby earning the distinction of being the only African to have overthrown both a military and

a civilian administration – all in the space of thirty months.<sup>42</sup>

## Conclusion

While there are signs that the era of interminable intervention by the military may be coming to an end, civil-military relations in the majority of African states during the past quarter century have been characterized by a cyclical or *perpetuum mobile* pattern of successive coups, counter-coups and disengagements. It is an assessment reached elsewhere by J'Bayo Adekanye in his study of politics in the "post-military states":

It is rare for the process of demilitarisation to lead to any stable pattern of civilian rule. Much more often, the military's return to barracks is the prelude to a period of weak civilian government which sooner or later ends in re-intervention ... Re-entry takes place because there is no longer anything to prevent it.<sup>43</sup>

The question at the time of writing in mid-1991 is whether this conclusion will continue to hold true during the twilight years of the twentieth century – an issue to be addressed in the section on the "Second Liberation" in a forthcoming article for *Africa Insight*.

## Notes and references

1 This part of the article, together with subsequent material especially on the role of the military in politics, draws on work from a number of my earlier publications. See, for instance, "Armed forces in Africa", in Simon Baynham (ed), *Military power and politics in black Africa*, London: Croom Helm, 1986, pp 1-37; Simon Baynham, *Africa since 1945*, London and New York: Franklin Watts, 1987; and Simon Baynham, *The military and politics in Nkrumah's Ghana*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1988.

2 Algeria, Angola, Benin, Cameroon, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Ghana, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Liberia, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Western Sahara and Zaire. Africa's six island states are Cape Verde, Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius, Sao Tomé e Príncipe and Seychelles.

3 Various theories of imperialism have been advanced by a dozen or so important scholars, including Fieldhouse, Headrick, Kemp, Louis, Momsen, Owen, Penrose, Robinson

and Gallagher. For a brief synopsis of the main arguments, see Simon Baynham, *Africa since 1945*, *op cit*, pp 7-9.

4 For examples of local resistance to imperial intrusions in one part of the continent, see Michael Crowder (ed), *West African resistance: The military response to colonial occupation*, London: Hutchinson, 1971.

5 A variety of factors and events lay behind the rapid spread of African nationalism. These included: the impact of education, the appearance of newspapers, the anti-capitalist/imperialist philosophy of Marx and Lenin, nationalist victories in the Far East and, last but not least, the impact of World War II. The war was probably the greatest catalyst, marking a turning-point in the colonial history of Africa. Large numbers of Africans saw military service between 1939-45, not only in Africa but, more importantly, overseas. This experience widened their political horizons and thousands of soldiers returned home to play a prominent role in the subsequent struggle for independence.

6 Several excellent studies on the insurgency exist, including Fred Majdalany, *State of emergency: The full story of Mau Mau*, London: Longman, 1962; and Frank Furedi, *The Mau Mau war in perspective*, London: James Currey, 1989.

7 Four of the best volumes include Arslan Humbaraci, *Algeria – A revolution that failed*, London: Pall Mall, 1966; Paul Henissart, *Wolves in the city: The death of French Algeria*, London: Hart-Davis, 1971; Alistair Horne, *A savage war of peace: Algeria 1954-1962*, London: Macmillan, 1977; and P Eveno and J Planchais, *La guerre d'Algérie*, Paris: La Découverte, 1989.

8 The two British parts of Cameroon, the Northern and Southern states, were offered a choice of joining either Nigeria or the Cameroon Republic. In 1961, Northern Cameroon voted to join Nigeria; Southern Cameroon elected to join the former French Cameroons in a federation.

9 Considerable Portuguese resources were deployed in its war against the guerrillas. In terms of manpower, it involved a massive burden of 140 000 troops: 50 000 each in Mozambique and Angola, and 40 000 in Guinea-Bissau. In addition, large numbers of Africans were employed by the security forces. Many of these were recruited into specialist counter-insurgency units where they gained a fearsome reputation. The Portuguese secret police (PIDE) was also highly effective in eliminating political enemies.

10 As one writer has noted, "The struggle of African nationalists for independence helped build something approaching a national identity, but as events have shown, it is one thing to unite to fight against a common enemy and another to unite to build a nation, especially within the space of barely three decades." Keith

Somerville, *Foreign military intervention in Africa*, London: Pinter, 1990, pp 3-4.

11 *Ibid*, p 2. Somerville goes on to say (p 4) "The cultural, ethnic and religious differences which were evident in the colonial entities were added to by political and economic policies which favoured one community or one region over another. The existence of valuable natural resources in a particular area of colony usually led to greater infrastructural development and provision of employment in that area and neglect of less economically favourable parts of the country."

12 However, in 1977, exiled Katangans invaded Shaba from Angola only to be repulsed by Franco-Moroccan military forces. The invasion was repeated in 1978, Kolwezi was captured and once again Paris intervened, this time with Belgian assistance. On both occasions, foreign troops were flown in at Mobutu's request. Since then, Shaba has been comparatively quiet. For more detail on the Congo crisis, see the extensive library on the subject which includes P Lumumba, *Congo my country*, London: Pall Mall, 1962; C Young, *Politics in the Congo: Decolonization and independence*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1965; C Hoskyns, *The Congo since independence*, London: Oxford University Press, 1965; and A H House, *The U.N. in the Congo*, New York: University Press of America, 1978.

13 Literature on the Nigerian civil war is very extensive. See, for instance, Suzanne Cronje, *The world and Nigeria: The diplomatic history of the Biafran war, 1967-70*, London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1972; John de St Jorre, *The Nigerian civil war*, London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1972; Tiri Muhammadu and Mohammed Haruna, "The civil war", in Oyeleye Oyediran (ed), *Nigerian government and politics under military rule*, London: Macmillan, 1979; and Alexander Madiebo, *The Nigerian revolution and the Biafran war*, Enugu: Fourth Dimension, 1980.

14 Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1962, p 5.

15 P C Lloyd (ed), *The new elites of tropical Africa*, London: Oxford University Press, 1966, p 9.

16 See, for instance, L W Pye, "Armies in the process of political modernization", in J J Johnson (ed), *The role of the military in underdeveloped countries*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1962, p 69; and W F Gutteridge, *Military institutions and power in new states*, London: Pall Mall, 1964, pp 141-144.

17 C E Welch, "Praetorianism in Commonwealth West Africa", *Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol 10, no 2, June 1972, p 206.

18 "President Moussa Traoré had distinguished himself as one of the most obdurate of Africa's opponents of political reform. For months his 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. It 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." *Africa Confidential*, 5 April 1991, p 1.

- 19 For a detailed descriptive analysis of this event, see Greg Mills, "Lesotho: Palace coup ends Lekhanya's troubled rule", *Africa Institute Bulletin*, vol 31, no 6, 1991, pp 3-4.
- 20 Nigeria and Sudan (April 1990), Madagascar (May 1990), Zambia (June 1990), Comoros (August 1990), Mauritania (November 1990) and Mozambique (June 1991).
- 21 For an analysis of the relative strengths and weaknesses of military organizations vis-à-vis civilian political institutions, see Robin Luckham, "A comparative typology of civil-military relations", *Government and Opposition*, vol 6, no 1, Winter 1970, pp 10-17.
- 22 Jacob Bronowski, *The ascent of man*, London: BBC, 1977, p 100.
- 23 A few early examples include H Daalder, *The role of the military in emerging countries*, 'S-Gravenhage: Mouton, 1962; Johnson, *The role of the military in under-developed countries*, *op cit*; and W F Gutteridge, *The military in African politics*, London: Methuen, 1969.
- 24 Only seven years earlier, there had been 45 African commissioned officers and six times as many British ones. With regard to francophone Africa, one writer has noted that "the armies of the ex-French countries ... were created from scratch within a very short space of time ... . Or they were new in the sense that indigenous personnel were injected in very great haste into an existing military organisation, especially its officer corps, in order to replace the expatriates of the colonising power, as happened in almost all the ex-British countries." Robin Luckham, *The Nigerian military: A sociological analysis of authority and revolt 1960-67*, London: Cambridge University Press, 1971, p 90.
- 25 See, especially, Morris Janowitz, *Sociology and the military establishment*, New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1959. The model focuses on the social organization of the armed forces: structural format and techniques of control, hierarchy and authority, recruitment and assimilation of military roles, skill patterns and career development, sources of cohesion and cleavage, and professionalism.
- 26 Samuel Huntington, *Political order in changing societies*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1968, p 194.
- 27 According to Eric Nordlinger, "The external or 'environmental' variables include the actions of civilian executives, the performance and legitimacy of civilian governments, the politicization of workers and peasants, the severity of communal conflicts, the extent of socio-economic modernization, and the rate of economic growth." *Soldiers in politics: Military coups and governments*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1977, p xi.
- 28 Samuel Finer, *The man on horseback: The role of the military in politics*, London: Pall Mall, 1962, chapters 7, 8 and 9.
- 29 Robin Luckham, "A comparative typology ...", *op cit*, p 18.
- 30 Ruth First, *The barrel of a gun*, London: The Penguin Press, 1970, p 436.
- 31 Among some of the best-known volumes and articles on the topic are those by W F Gutteridge, *Military regimes in Africa*, London: Methuen, 1975; R W Jackman, "Politicians in uniform: Military governments and social change in the Third World", *American Political Science Review*, vol 70, no 4, December 1976, pp 1078-97; C E Welch, "Long term consequences of military rule: Breakdown and extrication", *Journal of Strategic Studies*, vol 1, no 2, September 1978, pp 139-53; Simon Baynham, "Soldier and state in Ghana", *Armed Forces and Society*, vol 5, no 1, Fall 1978, pp 155-68; and Samuel Decalo, *Coups and army rule in Africa*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1976 and 1990.
- 32 *Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol 14, no 1, March 1976, p 3.
- 33 Eboe Hutchful, "Military rule and the politics of demilitarization in Ghana: 1966-69", unpublished PhD dissertation, Toronto University, 1973, p 29.
- 34 Peter Lloyd, *Africa in social change*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972, p 337.
- 35 Another observer's treatment of military rule is premised on a behavioural approach, in which he argues that the military in office are very similar to their civilian counterparts, opportunistically exploiting power for their own sectional purposes. See Samuel Decalo, "Military rule in Africa: Etiology and morphology", in Simon Baynham (ed), *Military power and politics in black Africa*, *op cit*, chapter 2.
- 36 Robert Pinkney, *Ghana under military rule: 1966-1969*, London: Methuen, 1972, p ix.
- 37 Robert Price, "A theoretical approach to military rule in new states: Reference-group theory and the Ghanaian case", *World Politics*, vol 23, no 3, April 1971, p 407.
- 38 *Ibid*, p 427.
- 39 Samuel Finer, *op cit*, p 191.
- 40 See, for instance, the whole-issue survey by G Ionescu (ed), "From authoritarian to representative government in Brazil and Argentina", *Government and Opposition*, vol 19, no 2, June 1984.
- 41 *Ghanaian Times*, (Accra), 25 September 1979.
- 42 For a more comprehensive discussion of demilitarization in Ghana, see Simon Baynham, "Divide et impera: Civilian control of the military in Ghana's second and third republics", *Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol 23, no 4, December 1985, pp 623-42.
- 43 "The politics of the post-military state in Africa", in C Clapham and G Philip (eds), *The political dilemmas of military regimes*, London: Croom Helm, 1985, pp 64, 76-77. The central thesis of the chapter "is that prior intervention breaks down the previous boundaries between the 'civil' and 'military', tilts the parallelogram of social forces towards the military side, and makes subsequent interventions more and more difficult to resist" (p 87).

# The budgetary limits to borrowing for development in South Africa

*Dr Manfred Reichardt, a financial consultant, draws on lessons from Botswana, Nigeria and Zambia to advise prudence in setting budgetary limits to state borrowing.*

Governments of developing countries, in seeking to improve the standards of living of their populations, need development capital. These governments' own funds are seldom sufficient to cover the total expenditure, and, in most cases, are barely sufficient to cover recurrent expenditure. Most independent African countries north of the Limpopo managed to cover recurrent expenditure and reached partial financial independence about ten to twenty years after gaining independence.

For capital expenditure, the own funds of practically all developing African countries are supplemented to some degree by financial grants from foreign donors. Any additional needs have to be financed by borrowing on the financial markets by way of loans, issuing bonds and drawing on other credit facilities. The borrowing government of a developing country is therefore faced with the policy decision: how much may safely be borrowed to achieve the highest affordable development effect, without its being confronted by an inordinately high debt burden that will tie the government's hands in fulfilling its normal functions? In other words, development policy must be firmly linked to debt policy and both must be planned and co-ordinated.

In the ideal case, a development project financed by loan funds should be undertaken only if the financial returns generated by the project will be suffi-

cient to finance the resulting debt service, by which is meant all debt redemption payments and interest payments. By definition, this excludes prestige projects that may have only political value.

In the following study, I shall consider only the governments of the four independent national-states (Bophuthatswana, Ciskei, Transkei and Venda) and the six self-governing territories (Gazankulu, Kangwane, KwaNdebele, KwaZulu, Lebowa and Qwaqwa) in Southern Africa. These all belong to the Common Monetary Area (CMA) of the rand and are participants in the Southern African Customs Union. This practically eliminates the foreign exchange risk for them, because, with the exception of few minor loans in two of the states, all borrowing takes place in rand within the CMA. Consequently, the balance-of-payments constraint on these ten participants of the CMA becomes a purely theoretical issue.

Are there any rules or indicators that will allow the decision makers in a government to find an optimal balance between the desired and affordable development efforts to be financed by loans? Or should there be attempts to determine an upper limit of loan financing which is acceptable – that is, resulting in affordable debt service – without cut-backs in expenditure for other vital government functions?

An important indicator is the extent of annual debt service, which is to be

dealt with in more detail in this study. The internationally used yardsticks refer practically only to foreign debt and relate it to the export performance of a country. Neither, however, can be applied to the independent states and the self-governing territories in Southern Africa, as no usable export statistics are available or are likely to be produced in the near future. In addition there is hardly any debt originating from outside the CMA.

The main ratio that may be applied advantageously by the borrower in the Southern African context is the total government debt service in a particular year as a percentage of total government revenue and grants.

Target ratios should be calculated by potential borrowers (and lenders) for at least five consecutive years into the future and be adjusted annually to meet changing circumstances. They have to be related to a time series of budget surpluses and deficits. The level of government deposits, if any, should also be taken into account.

If the amount of total debt service during one year (interest and redemption) does not exceed 10 per cent of total revenue and grants (without loans) in the same year, the risk of not being able to repay is limited, and there is room for some further borrowing. The government's revenue fund remains large enough to cover the expenditure for all other functions the government has to fulfil. At the 10 per cent level



sufficient room to manoeuvre remains if unforeseen events occur.

If the debt service ratio moves up to between 10 and 20 per cent of total revenue and grants, a danger area has been reached, as the Zambian example indicates.

In 1975, the Zambian government had reached a debt service ratio equal to 17 per cent of total revenue. This would have been sustainable if the budget had been in balance. However, the actual budget deficits were in the region of 10 to 20 per cent of GDP during the following decade, adding an additional annual burden to the already existing debt service. It has been accepted internationally as a prudent rule that a developing country may incur budget deficits before borrowing up to the equivalent of 5 per cent of its GDP during the course of the financial year. Such low levels of deficits are considered sustainable for a limited number of years, because the resulting increase in government debt is modest, assuring that the overall debt remains low and the debt service affordable. In the Zambian case, the debt service increased during the years following 1975 to an equivalent of between 25 and 50 per cent of total revenue, preventing the government from properly fulfilling its other functions. Subsidies, recurrent departmental charges and capital expenditure could not be expanded in line with inflation, resulting in a breakdown of parts of the government apparatus and in a negative economic growth rate ever since.

If 20 per cent (one-fifth) or more of the revenue is required to service the debt, further borrowing, including subsidized borrowing, will severely limit the freedom of choice for a government when fulfilling its other functions. Therefore, 20 per cent should be considered an absolute ceiling.

The examples as shown in Tables 1 and 2 illustrate what a 20 per cent upper limit means for the government of a developing state.

The economic and, in particular, fiscal performance of the whole African continent has been rather unsatisfactory during the past two decades, especially if compared to that of Asian countries and to industrial nations. However, eleven sub-Saharan countries – Botswana, Burkina Faso, Djibouti, Gabon, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda and Swaziland – achieved, on

**Table 1: BOTSWANA**  
Central government current and capital expenditure (in million of Pula or in % of total)

	1982/83		1989/90	
	Mill. P	%	Mill. P	%
General administration	56	13	245	12
Economic services	149	36	693	33
Health	18	4	78	4
Education	66	16	398	20
Police	15	4	62	3
Others*	95	24	558	26
Interest	11	3	41	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>410</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2 075</b>	<b>100%</b>
Current expenditure	272	66	1 037	50
Capital expenditure	138	34	1 038	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>410</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2 075</b>	<b>100%</b>

Sources: International Monetary Fund, Washington, DC.

\* Defence, Housing, Community Services and Grants to local authorities

average, a real growth rate of GDP of about 3 per cent and maintained, on average, budget deficits before borrowing of less than 5 per cent of GDP during the period 1981-1987. Therefore, it can be assumed that their government expenditure structure and their fiscal policy were more conducive to development than those of other African countries and in most cases their development policy and debt policy were adequately co-ordinated.

Out of this group of comparatively better performing African countries, Botswana and Nigeria have been chosen to illustrate the influence of a co-ordinated (Botswana) and an uncoordinated (Nigeria) debt and investment policy.

Table 1 clearly indicates that in Botswana, with interest payments equal to 3 per cent of total expenditure in 1982/83, the government was able to structure its budget according to its development needs with the highest emphasis on expenditure for economic services, followed by education. General administrative expenditure was kept at a low 13 per cent level, indicating that the government apparatus had not been inflated artificially, and it can be inferred that the administration was run fairly efficiently. In less well-administered states in Southern Africa, spending for administration requires about 25 to 30

per cent or more of total expenditure.

The economic classification of expenditure (lower part of Table 1) reveals the same sound structure, because 34 per cent of total expenditure was spent on capital investments. This compares to 20 per cent or less in most other Southern African states. Such a sound structure of budget expenditure and a generally prudent budget policy allowed the government to reduce interest payments to 2 per cent in 1989/90; the proportion of general administrative costs decreased and more emphasis could be placed on education. This freedom to follow its own sound economic fiscal policies unhampered by heavy interest payments is also reflected in the proportions of current to capital expenditure during 1989/90, when capital expenditure amounted to half of total budget expenditure.

The consequences of a missing link between investment and debt policy are demonstrated in the case of Nigeria (Table 2).

In 1981, the government had basically a sound expenditure structure with interest payments absorbing only 4 per cent of total expenditure. The main emphasis was rightly put on economic services. However, capital investments were not planned according to affordability. (See the extraordinary high amount of 70 per cent for capital expenditure during

**Table 2: NIGERIA**  
**Federal government current and capital expenditure (in million of Niara or in % of total)**

	1982/83		1989/90	
	Mill. N	%	Mill. N	%
General administration	1 467	10	3 933	17
Economic services	7 759	52	5 367	24
Health	303	2	585	2
Education	1 173	8	684	3
Police	628	4	913	4
Others*	3 083	20	4 391	20
Interest	564	4	6 915	30
<b>Total</b>	<b>14 977</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>22 788</b>	<b>100%</b>
Current expenditure	4 438	30	13 706	60
Capital expenditure	10 539	70	9 082	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>14 977</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>22 788</b>	<b>100%</b>

Sources: International Monetary Fund, Washington, DC.

\* Defence, Housing, Community Services and Justice.

1981.) Consequently, the interest payments for the debt service increased from year to year and reached 30 per cent of total expenditure in 1988 (Column 4, Table 2). This had a very negative impact on spending for other government functions: economic services had to be halved, spending on education was reduced from 8 to 3 per cent and health spending remained stagnant at an unsatisfactorily low level. Governments in Africa generally spent about 5 per cent on health. Accompanying the inadequate linkage of investment/debt policy was an increase in expenditure on general administration from 10 to 17 per cent. There was apparently no improvement in efficiency, only an increase in the numbers of government staff. The situation was further aggravated by the redemption payments for debt. Redemptions would have amounted to 72 per cent of total government spending in 1988. Under no circumstances was this affordable. Therefore, the creditors had to reschedule Nigeria's government debt.

If no corrective measures are taken to balance a budget and to reduce or prevent excessive debt service, the government concerned will no longer have any freedom of choice regarding its fiscal and economic policies, economic growth will be jeopardized and in the long run the standard of living of the population will drop from year to year.

It may be added that the 20 per cent upper limit for debt service, as generally defined above, may be further qualified, because in many cases a prudent government should stop borrowing even before the upper limit of 20 per cent is reached. The setting of the borrowing limit between 10 and 20 per cent in a particular country is mainly dependent on the following factors.

Is there an efficient administration that keeps a proper debt-service schedule of the actual debt payments falling due during the next five years and are there estimates of expected but not yet fixed commitments? Do certain government departments lack budgetary discipline and have unauthorized expenditure or payment arrears? Is there frequent interference from the political level in the budget process during the course of the fiscal year? How is the absorptive capacity of the country, which uses loan financing for development projects, that is, are sufficient expertise and skilled manpower available to successfully implement the projects? Are the projects directly productive or only indirectly after a long gestation period? How much additional current expenditure or how much revenue is being created that will influence the final budget outcome?

The maximum borrowing ratio as just described must be converted into

an amount of money to arrive at the maximum borrowing capacity of a government. It may best be explained by using a practical example. The government of a particular Southern African country is assumed to follow a sound fiscal policy, and the sovereign risk is low, therefore the permissible maximum borrowing ratio may be set at the full 20 per cent of the amount of revenue and grants. The existing debt of the government is R50 000 000, on which an assumed annual debt service of R11 600 000 is payable. Then, the government plans to borrow an additional R10 000 000 for development purposes. It is further assumed that the additional R10 000 000 is to be borrowed from a development agency on normal loan conditions (such as the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA), the main institution for development credit in South Africa). Then, the total debt service would amount to R14 920 000 (after expiry of the grace period). By comparing this amount of debt service with the total amount of revenue and grants during a particular year, the planners in government can judge whether the additional loan still falls within the permissible maximum borrowing ratio of 20 per cent. That means they will know whether room for additional borrowing exists or whether the new loan for an investment of R10 000 000 will become excessive for the country.

This is a static approach for one particular year. Under normal circumstances, the revenue of a government will increase from year to year, thus allowing a proportionally increasing debt service limit.

Reaching or exceeding the maximum borrowing ratio should serve as a warning to any government (or to any potential lender) that it must adjust its development and debt policy before further borrowing may take place.

In a situation like this, a government has to consider introducing a financial adjustment programme, by means of which the existing fiscal imbalances can be evened out and shortened, but at the same time, a meaningful economic growth rate should be maintained and development promoted.

This may appear to be a contradiction, but in fact complementarity between adjustment and growth can be achieved. The notion that adjustment or co-ordinated development and debt policy is

inimical to growth conceals the fact that without adjustment, growth today is at the expense of often significantly slower growth tomorrow – as evidenced by Nigeria, Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Zambia. Forced, exaggerated growth today causes financial and budgetary imbalances in the future. These imbalances can be countered through borrowing or adjustment. Reliance on borrowing only, rather than rectifying policy changes, is a course of action which can be pursued only temporarily, because it does not solve the problem. South Africa followed this course for a long time and has been caught in a vicious circle with interest payments being the highest expenditure item in the 1990/91 budget. Such strategy essentially transfers and adds the imbalances from one fiscal year

to the next, until the cumulative need for adjustment becomes clear.

In fact, borrowing and adjustment should not substitute for each other but rather complement each other. That means, an adequate policy mix should be applied to assure some economic growth, but at the same time limit the borrowing to amounts that remain in the long run within the borrowing capacity of the government.

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# The fundamentalist reaction and the future of Algeria

*Eduardo Serpa, an independent researcher, has studied historical and contemporary developments in Africa over the years. In this article he examines Islamic fundamentalism in Algeria in the light of the cancellation of what would have been the first free legislative elections to have been held in that country in thirty years.*

## Introduction

On 27 June 1991 free legislative elections were due to have been held for the first time in Algeria. The country had spent almost three decades of independence under one-party rule. If the poll had taken place, this step in the democratization process, which had started with the municipal elections of June 1990, would have constituted a political event of the utmost importance, with implications reaching far beyond the frontiers of the most populous country of the Maghreb.

As pointed out in *The Economist*, two notable facts determined why the poll had been so eagerly awaited. Firstly, after the successes scored by the Fundamentalists in the municipal elections, Algerians had been given the opportunity to decide whether their country should follow a path identical to that pursued by Iran. Secondly, the election scheduled for 27 June would have been the first really democratic legislative ballot held in the Arab world.<sup>1</sup>

Observers' expectations were dashed, however, by the consequences of a series of events that forced President Chadli Bendjedid to put the brakes on Algeria's march towards democracy. These events marked the beginning of a new and more acute phase in the confrontation between the Algerian government and the Fundamentalists. Subsequent developments helped to clarify a situation the outcome of which can still not be forecast. Nevertheless, it is reasonable to conjecture that, in the

short term, the regime of Chadli Bendjedid, strongly backed by the senior cadres of the military establishment, will be able to keep the situation under control. The long-term evolution of this crisis will be a more complex affair, determined by the unpredictability of human nature. It seems clear, however, that the outcome will be influenced by the Fundamentalists' ability to win over to their side the junior officers of the military. Also important will be the West's willingness to supply the Algerian government with what is required to improve living standards, although in itself this would seem insufficient to solve a conflict fed by diametrically opposed secular and theocratic views of life and the universe: those entertained by the *Front de Libération Nationale* (FLN) government on the one hand and the Fundamentalists on the other.

Violence erupted in March 1991, after the government put forward a draft electoral law to adjust constituency boundaries, ban electioneering in mosques and prevent men from voting on behalf of women. The Islamic opposition claimed that the new boundaries discriminated against areas constituting strongholds of the FIS (*Front Islamique du Salut*/Islamic Salvation Front) in favour of areas where the governing FLN and the anti-clerical Berber parties have a strong following.<sup>2</sup>

The election campaign started officially on 1 June in an atmosphere of disorder created by the Fundamentalists, particularly in the capital. An

indefinite general strike had been called a few days earlier. The FIS had nominated its candidates, but had also decided to ignore the electoral rules laid down by the government. Islamist "strikers" assembled on the squares and marched along the streets. Police units, heavily armed with tear-gas and water-cannon, caused many casualties before the army intervened – after three days of riots. The government denied claims that a number of people were killed by live ammunition. On 5 June Chadli declared a state of emergency for a four-month period and dismissed his government. The elections were postponed. The declaration of a state of siege implied the transfer of police powers to the army.<sup>3</sup>

It is difficult to explain, on the evidence available today, why the FIS opted for destabilization instead of waiting for the election results. Its decision seems particularly strange if one considers its candidates' excellent showing in the municipal elections of June 1990. Mireille Duteil maintains that the Algerian Islamists had concluded that the polls themselves, alone, would not transform their country into the religious stronghold they desired, and therefore decided to harass the government in order to bring about the resignation of Chadli, whose mandate is to expire in 1993.<sup>4</sup> *Le Monde* has also expressed its doubts about the ability of the FIS to score an electoral success, considering that the "moral order" imposed by the Islamists in the "green communes"

(municipalities in which they had won the 1990 elections) had disappointed many Algerians.<sup>5</sup> These explanations appear, at best, too simplistic.

The latest opinion polls, published on 9 May in the weekly *Algérie-Actualité*, indicated that the FIS was leading in the race, backed by 33,4 per cent of the electorate, while the FLN had the backing of 24 per cent, and the next strongest party, the *Front des Forces Socialistes* (FFS) led by Hocine Aït Ahmed, could expect no more than 8 per cent of the votes.<sup>6</sup> The violent choice made by the FIS thus remains hard to explain, even if one takes into consideration that the delimitation of the constituencies, organized in favour of government interests, might have boosted the number of seats won by the FLN. An FLN advantage in the number of seats, if not matched by a corresponding majority in terms of votes cast at the ballot box, would have provided the Islamists with an excellent argument to demonstrate the fallacious character of Algerian "democracy". This would have supplied a rationale for political violence, on the grounds that the movement receiving a larger share of the popular vote was entitled to rule.

The trend of the conflict after Chadli's imposition of a state of emergency would seem to indicate that the FLN will be able to remain in power for the time being. The Fundamentalists' own loss of cohesion has helped to make Chadli's task easier. By the end of June the FIS was feeling the effects of a split prompted by one of its senior officials, Sheikh Mohammed Imam, who appeared on Algerian television to accuse the Fundamentalist leader, Abassi Madani, of creating a "personality cult". He also attacked Madani's threat of a holy war or *jihad* against the government.<sup>7</sup>

This split enhanced Chadli's chances of success when he decided upon a show of force against the Fundamentalists. On 30 June the two principal leaders of the FIS, Abassi Madani and Ali Belhadj, were detained and charged with armed insurrection. The government was helped here by the fact that it was able to act harshly against the FIS without losing favour with the international community. There was evidence of this when the European Parliament accused the FIS of "manipulating a youth, in its majority unemployed and deprived of prospects, in order to

establish an authoritarian regime". It also praised the Algerian government for its efforts to hold free and democratic elections before the end of 1991.

The arrest of Madani and Belhadj was followed by that of some 2 500 of their movement's cadres, which undermined FIS structures to such an extent that its militants were scarcely able to react. Algerian veterans of the Afghan resistance who had returned to the country and members of the extremist *Takfir Wal Hijira* were among those most affected by the arrests.<sup>8</sup> In terms of the classical rules of revolutionary warfare, the Algerian government certainly applied the lessons learned during the war against France: dismantling the organization of a potentially insurgent movement while the threat could be dealt with at police and intelligence services level.

The fortnight that followed the arrests gave an indication that government strategy was producing the desired effect. Sheikh Mohammed Said, considered the number four in the FIS hierarchy, replaced the detained leaders. On 5 July, preaching at the central mosque in Algiers, he threatened to call a *jihad* if the authorities attempted to weaken the FIS; but the crowd dispersed quietly after prayers. A few days later he was arrested, an event followed by the emergence of several factions within the FIS. Moderate groups seemed to be gaining the upper hand in the struggle for control.<sup>9</sup>

Notwithstanding the above, an analysis of the essence and history of the Fundamentalist movement, taking in the sociological characteristics of the human environment in which it is rooted, leads us to the provisional conclusion that Chadli's long-term prospects are less rosy than his successes in July would suggest. The remainder of this article will attempt to show why this is so by placing the current unrest in Algeria in its philosophical and historical context.

### The roots of a conflict: Theocracy versus secularism

The conflict between the FIS and the FLN government, and its increasing violence, are direct consequences of politico-religious phenomena that cannot be understood without reference to the basic tenets of Islam itself, and to the possible, but not essential, conflict

between those principles and a process of modernization.

Traditionalist Muslims claim that, in Islam, religion and politics are inseparable, although many of them admit that the individual believer living in a non-Islamic state may be able to follow the prescriptions of his faith.<sup>10</sup> This close connection between religious and socio-political life is a direct consequence of the fact that the latter is ruled by the *shari'a*, a set of legal rules prescribed by the Koran. The full implementation of the *shari'a* requires the existence of an Islamic state, based on the pre-eminence of the judiciary over both the executive and the legislature, since the law, as a product of divine revelation, may not be developed or modified. It may merely be applied, in a process involving interpretation in particular cases, and also enforcement, but not legislating in the sense of innovative law-giving. In addition, the combination of the divine character of the *shari'a* with the pre-eminence of the judicial function of the state implies the dominance of the religious over the political. The idea that the legitimacy of the ruler is determined by his upholding of the *shari'a*, and of the moral order that guarantees the integrity of the community of believers, appears to be a natural corollary of the supremacy of the judiciary over the other functions of government. This form of reasoning also implies that the ruler's performance is subject to the supervision of the doctors of the law or *ulema* and also of every adult member of a community based on egalitarian principles.<sup>11</sup>

Islamic fundamentalism appeared as a response to the need to preserve the basic foundations of the faith and their expression in the realm of social life, either threatened – or perceived as such – either by developments taking place within the Muslim world itself or, more recently, by the impact of Western influence in the shape of secularization.

It is relevant at this point to stress that fundamentalism as such constitutes a recurrent rather than a new phenomenon in the history of the Muslim world. The roots of the present fundamentalist cycle should be sought in a preoccupation with the influence of the dominant West, perceived by Muslim thinkers since the eighteenth century as a danger to the integrity of their culture and faith. It should be added that fundamentalism

includes a considerable number of approaches. Some of these may even be considered as progressive, in view of their attempt to work out the relevance of the Koranic message for their generation and find solutions suited to deal effectively with the backwardness of their societies without violating the principles of a faith which, being considered as revealed by God, is not susceptible of alteration.<sup>12</sup>

These attempts were not free of danger. The introducers of Western technology were, in many instances, moved by the idea that only the acquisition of those instruments that had made possible the power of the West could prevent the subjugation of the Muslim world by undesired forms of European encroachment. It must be noted that the modernizers did not realize, in general, that their actions would generate social upheaval. Their predicament was, to some extent, similar to that of those *ulema* who failed to understand that the absorption of Western technology would almost surely bring with it some penetration by Western thought.<sup>13</sup>

It should be emphasized that the Islamic world's ability to undergo a necessary process of technological modernization without jeopardizing its identity had been undermined by the effects of centuries of cultural isolation. This meant that travelled students and diplomats had often been confused by the rival philosophical systems they found elsewhere. Many of them absorbed the values of the Enlightenment and came to believe in the soundness of the empirical methods followed by Western science.<sup>14</sup>

This situation was further complicated in that many such travelled Muslims became convinced that the new ideas encountered elsewhere contradicted the principles upon which Islamic civilization had been based. This conflict, of the utmost importance in the development of the contemporary Muslim world, was to some extent, as we have seen, a result of intellectual isolation. Such a situation prevented these students, diplomats and other travellers discovering that conservative Western thinkers had devised satisfactory answers capable of defending Faith against the onslaught of Reason, a lesson that would have been valuable in the dilemma facing the Islamic world.<sup>15</sup>

This historic failure to combine modernization with socio-religious tradition

appears to be the basic reason for the popularity, among educated minorities in Muslim countries, of the secularized forms of modernization that shaped government policies in many Arab countries in the 1950s.

This process started in the guise of liberal constitutional regimes which generally degenerated into instruments of corruption and oppression. Their failure opened the gates to a continuation of the modernization process, now inspired by radical ideologies, that produced the socialist programmes of the 1960s – in essence, modified versions of Marxism-Leninism. Such departures were possible because in the Islamic world many socialists rejected the notion of class conflict, and, while attacking “reactionary” religious institutions, proclaimed the validity of religion. In spite of this compromise with local tradition, radical socialism never became popular among the Arab masses.<sup>16</sup>

The effects of possible religious difficulties were rendered more acute by the situation generated by the radical regimes. These regimes created large bureaucracies and proved unable to generate economic improvement. They also fell into the control of small power-élites which often justified their position on the grounds of “the necessary dictatorship of the vanguard of the revolution”. By the end of the 1960s, these new regimes were being rejected both by genuine radicals, who wanted mass participation in the political process, and by the conservatives who wanted political solutions more compatible with the Koranic tradition.<sup>17</sup>

In the early 1970s it became clear that radical socialism had been as great a failure as liberalism. Some radical statesmen had been toppled, while others had changed the principles underlying their systems, though without notable success. More conservative modernizing regimes, such as the Pahlavi monarchy in Iran and the Ayyub Khan dictatorship in Pakistan, were, apparently at least, more successful.<sup>18</sup> It should be pointed out that even these rather conservative regimes, which adopted a good number of Western-inspired solutions, could not satisfy the growing number of Muslims who desired modernization without Westernization and wished to live in a social environment both modern and truly Islamic.<sup>19</sup> Such dissatisfaction reflected a need that had been expressed since the final decades of the nineteenth

century. The proponents of the Nahda movement – Djamal el Din al Afghani (1838-97), Mohamed Abdou (1849-95) and Ben Badis (1889-1940) – had asserted that deviation from Islamic principles was the cause of the backwardness of Muslim societies. But, unlike their predecessors, they had maintained that social progress was not possible without recourse to modern technology. As Salama Musa told Egyptian students in 1930:

For the past quarter of century, only one truth has come out, that is: the difference that separates the civilized Europeans from us is industry and only industry.<sup>20</sup>

The desire for this synthesis of progress and tradition, allied to a rejection of secular socialism, created the conditions necessary for the success of a new cycle of fundamentalism. The potential of this fundamentalism is enhanced by two facts: that it does not mean a return to a backward “dark age”, and that it is basically a rejection of secularization. This explains why Samir says that “fundamentalism is merely a pseudo-conservative movement”.<sup>21</sup> And this characteristic explains fundamentalism's growing appeal to an “intelligentsia” disappointed with radical socialist experiments.

The combination of the circumstances outlined above favours the expansion of a new cycle of fundamentalism which has a lot in common with the eighteenth-century revival that gave rise to neo-Sufism and the mood of socio-moral reconstruction accompanying it. Voll considers that although the neo-Sufist structures created two centuries ago were not clearly perpetuated, the spirit of that movement remained as part of the Muslim “subconscious heritage” and provided a foundation for contemporary developments.<sup>22</sup> The genesis of this process might have been eased by what Jacques Berque considers one of the sociological characteristics of the Arab world: the existence of a population that, in spite of being formally uneducated, may be profoundly cultivated. They are thus deeply attached to a subconscious heritage that may serve as foundation for genuine forms of revival.<sup>23</sup>

### The basic tenets of contemporary fundamentalism

The Indian journalist Abu al-A'la al-Mawdudi (1904-79) and the Egyptian academic Sayyid Qutb (1906-66) were



principally responsible for setting out the tenets of fundamentalism as a comprehensive, systematic and exclusive doctrine. Whereas the former's thought developed as a reaction to the secular and nationalist ideology shaping the anti-colonial movement in British India, the latter's ideas were a response to the implementation of Nasser's even more secularized revolutionary programme.

Contemporary Islamic fundamentalism may be classified as a politico-cultural movement emphasizing that Islam has

... a comprehensive and transcendental world view [that] excludes the validity of all other systems and values, and dictates an apparent restitution of a normative set of beliefs untainted by historical change.<sup>24</sup>

The concept of God's sovereignty, is the main foundation of the doctrines of both Qutb and al-Mawdudi, both of whom viewed ideology as "the engine of other developments in society", an idea implying the reinstatement of Islam as a political system and the vilification of modern forms taken by the state.<sup>25</sup> This approach is the natural corollary of the principle of the unity of God, which

... altogether negates the concept of the legal and political sovereignty of human beings, individual and collectively ... . God alone is the Sovereign and His Commandments are the Law of Islam.<sup>26</sup>

The fact that contemporary societies ignored this principle generated a crisis related to a bankruptcy of ethical standards that, by creating a social vacuum, led to the acceptance of socialism as a compensatory solution. Nor did Qutb and al-Mawdudi predict a rosier future for other totalitarian philosophies, particularly for Marxism, whose economic failures had undermined its ability to survive.<sup>27</sup>

These principles brought Islamic fundamentalism into open conflict with the political and economic ideologies prevailing in contemporary Muslim countries.

Fundamentalism fiercely opposes nationalism, because the paramouncy granted by this ideology to the nation-state, with its secular connotations, clashes with "the categorical principles of an immutable divine order".<sup>28</sup> Both secularism and democracy are considered incompatible with the sovereignty of the Koranic principles revealed in perfect and final form to Mohammed as

both "charge human agencies with the task of legislation". Thus, Islamists should not concern themselves with the details of administrative regulations, which are no more than manifestations of a juristic system based on non-Islamic premises. It is the latter, as a whole, that must be called into question, because as long as the government confines religion to the spiritual sphere, thereby denying its validity as a socio-economic and political system, all its policies should be considered violations of the divine order.<sup>29</sup> Of economic doctrines, al-Mawdudi favoured a capitalist system, with free enterprise and competitive ventures as necessary mechanisms of an Islamic economic system, although he firmly opposed the excesses often characteristic of capitalist practice. These principles led al-Mawdudi to believe that the state is not entitled to interfere with wealth acquired by "legal means", meaning those methods that did not violate Koranic rules. Al-Mawdudi rejected socialism in its entirety, as being contrary both to human nature and to Islamic teachings.<sup>30</sup>

Islamic fundamentalism, as conceived by Qutb, was mainly a form of action intended to bring about a radical transformation of the situation he saw about him. The goals to be attained should be the preservation and development of the existing material culture, produced by "the creative genius of Europe", and the development of "a fresh stock of high ideals, in addition to an authentic, positive, and realistic way of life", based on values unique to Islam.<sup>31</sup>

Qutb believed that the realization of his ultimate goals required the existence of appropriate tools and forms of action. The main tool to be used should be a corps of believers (*'usba mu'mina*), playing the role of a "vanguard" (*tali'a*) prepared to fight for the actualization of both the substance and policy of Islam.<sup>32</sup> In his opinion, the existence of the antagonistic forces represented by the ungodly trends identified in the fundamentalist analysis of the contemporary world and by a militant vanguard of believers, implied that the struggle to restore Islam would be a violent one, a "Jihad in the Path of God". This struggle would be a protracted one, requiring relentless battles against the symbols of ignorance. Qutb saw *jihad* as an obligation incumbent upon believers whenever Islamic rules were ignored.<sup>33</sup>

## A tradition of political involvement

A combination of historical and contemporary circumstances has determined that the "Arab West", or Maghreb in general and Algeria in particular, have provided optimal conditions for the expansion of Muslim fundamentalism. The conflict that shook the Islamic world as a consequence of the modernization process arising from an intensification of contact with the West, assumed a particular character in the Maghreb. There, "modernizing adaptationism", instead of "being a matter of what techniques might be used and how an indigenous modernizing reformism might be defined ... became an issue of defending a distinctive identity against the threat of assimilation into Western culture". As a consequence, Islam played a major political role in the nineteenth-century Maghreb, constituting the motor of the struggle against foreign penetration.<sup>34</sup>

Algeria's particular circumstances enhanced the political role played by religion: the country lacked specific characteristics at the time of the French conquest and Islam constituted the only element of common identity. This role was reinforced by France's assimilationist policy in her North African possessions, since an abandonment of cultural identity was the only path open to those members of the Muslim élite who wished to progress above very junior positions.<sup>35</sup> Because of the profound connection between religion and social and cultural life in the Muslim world, such a reaction could only increase the antagonism between Islam and French colonialism.

The importance of the part played by Islam in the attempt to create an Algerian identity able to counter the threat posed by French policies to the traditional structures of Algerian society did not diminish in the twentieth century. The history of Messali's *Etoile Nord Africaine* may cast some light upon this. Here an initial programme influenced by Marxism was soon superseded by Islamic and Arabic nationalist themes. The clash between assimilationist and Islamic positions became clear in 1936, when the leader of the Association of Reformist *Ulema*, Abdelhamid Ben Badis, replied to Ferhat Abbas' claim that an Algerian nation did not exist and that the future of

Algeria lay with France, by saying: "This Muslim population is not France; it cannot be France, it does not want to be France."<sup>36</sup>

It must be added that the character of the political role played by religious forces in Algeria had changed greatly by the time Abdelhamid Ben Badis spoke. The militant Islam of the nineteenth century, which had constituted the main force behind several uprisings against French rule, had been replaced by a politically moderate establishment prepared to accept French rule while protesting against discrimination and demanding the preservation of the distinctive culture of Muslim Algeria.<sup>37</sup>

### Independence and conflict

The reform movement (*islah*), which reached Algeria in 1903, led to the establishment of the Association of Reformist *Ulema*. It also consolidated the foundations of a Muslim national identity, transcending tribal, local and regional differences. Nevertheless, the character of the political establishment in Algeria, after independence, generated a religious conflict far more serious than the *ulema*'s protest against specific aspects of French rule. The fact that the Association did not rally to the FLN until 1956 bears witness to the superficial character of the clash between the religious and colonial establishments. After independence, it was the essence of the Algerian nation-state itself that was rejected, on religious grounds, by a large sector of the population.<sup>38</sup>

This new conflict developed quite naturally as a consequence of the incompatibility between the principles of the state created by the FLN and the reformist Islam doctrine upheld by the majority of Algerians, particularly in rural areas. The Algerian revolution was viewed by the adherents of traditional culture as primarily a struggle for the defence of the faith, a *jihād*. The peasantry were fighting for Islam against those values imposed by the conquerors.<sup>39</sup> The fact that the FLN stated, in its declaration of 1 November 1954, that the goal of the struggle against France was "the restoration of a sovereign, democratic and social, Algerian state within the framework of Islamic principles", justified the backing offered to the insurgents by the conservative sector of the Muslim population. A natural feeling of frustration developed

when these supporters discovered, upon independence, that the Democratic and Popular Algerian Republic was not an Islamic state.<sup>40</sup>

According to Tlemceni, the colonial apparatus was handed over to "intermediary classes" in 1962, which transformed themselves into a new class as they gained control over civil society by acquiring political, administrative, economic and military power. The foundations for a serious conflict were laid at this stage, since the new ruling forces, deciding to implement a policy of modernization that displeased large sectors of the population, were unable to provide the kind of cultural cement necessary to bind together a fragmented society.<sup>41</sup>

This conflict generated the three successive political crises of the first decade of Algerian independence. Zartman believes that although those crises saw the use of a large vocabulary referring to Islam, it is difficult to identify a distinctive Muslim mind as their main motor. He is also of the opinion that the power struggle of 1962 was not related to religious forces or ideas, for neither Ben Bella nor Ben Khedda desired to establish specifically Islamic institutions.<sup>42</sup>

The role played by religion in the 1965 coup was more clear. The FLN Congress, held in April 1964, included a strong and successful move to insert reaffirmations of Islamic values in the Algiers Charter which replaced the Tripoli programme. Ben Bella stood in the middle between the traditional *al-Qiyam* (The Values) group and the left-wing secular opposition of Ait-Ahmed. Somewhere to the right of the political spectrum, a large segment of political opinion and members of the ANP reproached the President for depending upon advisers who were not Muslim and/or Algerian and/or *mujahidin*. Towards the middle of 1965, the country became increasingly divided between "Socialists" and "Arab-Islamists". External observers ceased to refer to this split when the coup they had foreseen took place. It seems that they had come to believe that Ben Bella's autocratic rule, by alienating the organized political forces in the nation, had been the main cause of the coup. The political crisis towards the end of 1967 seems to have been generated by a clash between *mujahidin* and technocrats which forced Boumedienne to

play the role of arbiter before siding with the latter. Zartman says that although these three political crises are filled with Islamic images, together with references to Algerian values, revolutionary symbols and socialist language, the Islamic images are the least prominent.<sup>43</sup>

The outcome of the 1967 crisis, a triumph of the "modern" faction of the political establishment over its traditionalist counterpart, may have played an important role in the revival of Islamist agitation in Algeria in the mid-1970s. This seems plausible if one considers that the defeat of the conservative wing of the regime may have paved the way for the "unexpected and controversial" evolution undergone by the Boumedienne regime after 1971.<sup>44</sup>

The earlier national revolution was followed, from 1971, by an extensive range of radical socialist reforms. Some of these stimulated the revival of an Islamic opposition:

- There was an assault on Muslim private property. While the initial expansion of public property that followed independence took place at the expense of foreign capital alone, the "agrarian revolution", which started in November 1971, involved the nationalization of the estates of Muslim landowners; they were replaced by collective farms. In 1974 there was a take-over of the wholesale distribution of agricultural produce by the State at the expense of private traders. These measures alienated an important part of Algerian public opinion. The vested interests affected by these measures expressed their grievances in Islamic terms based on the defence of private property prescribed by the Koranic scriptures.
- The left-turn made by the government brought a coincident rapprochement between Boumedienne and the banned Communist Party (*Parti de l'Avant-Garde Socialiste*), which rallied to the regime in 1971. Islamic propaganda could now accuse the regime of connections with alien ideologies, atheism and so forth.
- The government attempted a political remobilization of the younger generation, one not confined to its student component. This initiative helped to reinforce the revolutionary image of the government as it

involved the propagation of an almost millenarian vision and claims of transition to "socialism".<sup>45</sup>

The action of those genuine Islamists who attacked the government on ideological grounds was greatly eased by the fact that Boumedienne's "*Révolution socialiste*" alienated many sectors of Algerian society. Boumedienne, in his attempt to undermine the influence of those structures he considered barriers to nation-building, clashed principally with the rural and the bourgeois sectors. Two facts lay behind this clash:

- Tribal and kinship structures were being subverted by an attempt to integrate rural society into a new nation-state.
- The financial interests of the new middle class and of its representatives in the bureaucracy were being unfavourably influenced by the offensive against private capital.<sup>46</sup>

Boumedienne's programme of "nationalist social engineering" was executed in so arbitrary a manner that it favoured the demand for his showing respect for *shura*, the Islamic principle that obliges the ruler to consult the people. This atmosphere of dissatisfaction appears to be the best explanation for the promulgation, in June 1976, of a new National Charter, which reaffirmed the position of Islam as the state religion. Roberts is of the opinion that this constitutional document did not represent a major concession, because of its particular conception of Islam.<sup>47</sup>

The decline of the Muslim world is not explained by purely moral causes ... . In fact, in order to regenerate itself, the Muslim world has only one way out: to go beyond reformism and commit itself to the path of social revolution.<sup>48</sup>

Roberts believes that the expression "go beyond reformism" meant an attack upon Islamic reformism, with the intention of reducing it to the role of "the cult of the will of the government". Boumedienne was mounting "a protracted revolution within the revolution", in order to convert the Algerian people "from a social and cultural patchwork into a nation, the transformation of the society in such a way as to make it correspond to the state".<sup>49</sup>

The reaffirmation of Islam as the country's official religion could play a role in this strategy since a common religious faith was the only cultural cement that could unite the mosaic of

ethnic groups, social classes and other interest groups whose existence explains Ferhat Abbas' idea of the non-existence of an Algerian nation.

The instrument necessary to achieve this goal of national unity existed in the form of the Association of Reformist Ulema, but the conditions under which that institution had rallied to the FLN in 1956 had destroyed its autonomy. The FLN, by making the Islam of the reformers its own, had subordinated it to its own purposes: the construction of the Algerian nation-state.<sup>50</sup>

The rapid development of radical Islam dates from the critical phase of Boumedienne's reforms. And its meaning cannot be grasped outside the "context of the crisis in the Algerian state and in its nationalist project", precipitated by Boumedienne's death and by the ensuing collapse of his "*Révolution socialiste*".<sup>51</sup>

The crisis in the Algerian educational system that accompanied Boumedienne's "revolution within the revolution" also contributed to the generation of an atmosphere of general agitation that favoured the development of the fundamentalist movement. There was clear dissatisfaction with a system that, in spite of claims to the contrary, remained a class-based system. By the early 1980s, the universities had become the motor of the ideological struggles that struck Algeria, the student movement widening to include the high schools. This situation generated two conflicting trends: the Frenchified-Berber-secular movement and the Arabized-religious-conservative movement.<sup>52</sup>

### The fundamentalist movement and its ideas

The trends followed by religious ideas in twentieth-century Algeria were propitious for the development of a fundamentalist movement looking for a return to the primitive purity of the Islamic faith. The main thrust of the fundamentalist reformers was successfully directed against the traditional forms of Algerian Islam, the Sufi orders (*turuk*) and, above all, maraboutism. This fundamentalism asserted

- a militant Islam capable of evoking the adherence of all Muslim Algerians at the expense of the former tribally-based Islam of the *marabtin*. It thereby established the foundations for a Muslim national iden-

tity transcending tribal, local and regional distinctions;

- a strictly scripturalist Islam and, with it, the hegemony of urban and literate society over the illiterate rural population.<sup>53</sup>

Here are the explanations of the essential role played by Islam in the shaping of Algerian nationalism and also of its ability to undermine secularized forms of modernization in the country. The clash between Boumedienne's revolution and large sectors of the population was no more than a corollary of these premises.

Although the conservative changes that followed Boumedienne's death reasserted those principles guiding the State before 1971 and removed some of the grievances expressed by the fundamentalists, the movement did not lose momentum. There were two principal reasons for this:

- As Chadli Bendjedid's regime lacked a firm programme of its own, it was forced to "listen" to society. Within the logic of this situation, radical Islam could grow. Various currents appeared and the President decided to back the *arabisants* and the Islamists in a strategy aimed at balancing the influences emanating from the Left and also from the Berberists and the progressive current linked with women's emancipation.<sup>54</sup>
- Chadli's reforms were never intended to transform Algeria into a real Islamic state ruled by the principles of the *shari'a*.

By 1980 it had become clear that the Islamists had highly-placed friends, in spite of their increasing reliance upon violence, which had become the corollary of their objectives:

- the reconquest of the religious sphere and its reconstitution as autonomous *vis-à-vis* the State;
- the carrying out of the injunction, notionally binding upon every believer, "to command that which is proper and forbid that which is reprehensible";
- the recruitment of students. This produced conflicts in the universities, since their main rivals, notably the Left and the Berberists, were strongly represented there.

This tendency to make use of violence is a consequence of the absolutist character of the movement itself, considered

as the nucleus of the true *umma*, engaged in an unrelenting struggle against anti-Islamic tendencies in a society considered as corrupted by Western values and relapsing into the state of *jahiliyya*.<sup>55</sup>

It should be made explicit that until the late 1980s the Algerian Islamists did not constitute an organized movement. Islamists referred to themselves as *Ahl el Da'wa* or "The People of the Call", because of their desire for a religious reform embracing "all profane aspects capable of reinforcing the cohesion of the group". This mission implied recourse to *jihad* if required by circumstances. Such logic leads to the conquest of political power; but this objective is not expressed in an explicit manner – the first duty of the movement being the censorship of morals (*hisba*). Those who do not observe good morals are considered as "unbelievers to be combated by arms".<sup>56</sup>

Even the formation of the FIS (*Front islamique du salut*/Islamic Salvation Front), at the beginning of 1989, on the eve of the constitutional referendum of 23 February of that year, did not solve the unity problem completely. The FIS itself included a moderate wing, headed by Abassi Madani, and a radical wing, led by the young preacher Ali Belhadj. Sheik Ahmed Sahnoun, one of the main figures of the Islamic movement, remained outside the Front.<sup>57</sup>

According to Abassi Madani, the FIS was formed to deal with a situation of political, economic, social and cultural crisis, defined by him in the following terms:

Salvation has a simultaneously material and spiritual dimension. Algeria is no more than a part of the Islamic *Oumma*, and, therefore, of the mankind. Mankind is going through a spiritual crisis which followed the failure of the contemporary ideologies, of both liberalism and Marxism. ... the results of the failure are in front of our eyes. Technological development makes man a giant while, spiritually, he remains a pygmy... Science does not supply an adequate answer to mankind's interrogations. Science cannot be simultaneously what it is and what it is not.<sup>58</sup>

The solution to this crisis Abassi Madani expects to come from an effort to bring together, in one body, sympathizers coming from all social classes in order to realize the "unity of the Algerian people". Though Madani considers that the implementation of the *shari'a* represent the central objective

of the FIS, he himself admits that its implementation will have to take place in phases.<sup>59</sup>

In regional relations, the FIS wants a genuinely Arab solution. It refuses to merge the West and the Maghreb, and sees the unity of Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco as the political goal to be attained in North Africa.<sup>60</sup>

The FIS also adopts quite clear positions concerning a number of sides to contemporary socio-political life.

In spite of Algeria's staggering population growth of 3,06 per cent annually, which is not only causing a flight from the land, but also contributing to the shortage of water,<sup>61</sup> Madani condemns birth control in absolute terms, on the grounds that such a practice is incompatible with "the human being and its essential values". He also considers that birth control is an escape used by politicians who have proved unable to provide education and training for generation upon generation.<sup>62</sup> Madani is in favour of a social security system able to guarantee a vital minimum to everybody. He adds that such objectives have to be realized simultaneously with a drastic reduction in the taxation burden, as development cannot take place with "detriment of law" as that would be "injustice and oppression".<sup>63</sup>

Both Madani and Belhadj reject the Western model of parliamentary democracy as the best and most appropriate system to be followed in the new Maghreb envisaged by the FIS. Madani defends the *choura* or consultation system as his personal option on the grounds that it presents advantages not offered by democracy.<sup>64</sup> Belhadj is of the opinion that democratic government leads to corruption. For him, there are no middle-of-the-road solutions: an Islamic state must be ruled by a caliph, a rightful successor to the Prophet, ruling all Muslim lands with the advice and assistance of Islamic scholars.<sup>65</sup>

Looking broadly, Belhadj considers the field open to democratic decision – limited always by prescriptions of a religious character. As he said in a sermon delivered on 15 June 1990, the concept of democratic choice could not apply but to those matters not already determined by the law of God.<sup>66</sup>

## Leaders and followers

Abassi Madani himself admits without embarrassment that the FIS is an élitist

movement, although its leaders are trying to remain in contact with the grass-roots, a contact without which the movement would risk "[losing] entirely its creative genius". He sees no alternative to this policy as, "without an élite, the leadership becomes impotent"; and "an élite isolated [from] the grass-roots becomes blind: unable to feel the people, risking to be taken by the storm". Madani's approach to élitism is a qualified one, rejecting Machiavelli's philosophy, since the latter allows to the élite to be what it should not be. He proposes, in its place, a balanced solution represented by the era of the caliphs, with its combination of "a high degree of élitism and with an even greater modesty".<sup>67</sup>

Madani's fifteen-member council, elected by representatives from all Algeria's regions and constituting the central executive body of the FIS, includes engineers, university lecturers and preachers.<sup>68</sup>

Madani seems himself to illustrate the case of a leadership's including highly prepared people: he is a well-read man, an author of pedagogic treatises who, besides holding doctorates in sociology and the science of education from the Universities of Algiers and London, claims to be well-acquainted with the social and economic sciences. His ideological inclinations seem to tend more nearly to the open anti-socialism of the Algerian Sheik Soltani than to the doctrines of the Egyptian Hassan el Banna or those of al-Mawdudi.<sup>69</sup>

The fact that the legislative elections scheduled to take place in June 1991 were postponed, allied to the difficulty of assessing the reliability of opinion polls conducted in Algeria, makes the June 1990 municipal and regional elections the best indicators of the level of popularity enjoyed by the FIS and its social and geographical distribution. This approach seems valid, in spite of any fluctuations that may have occurred over more than a year in a country going through a phase of great agitation.

The transformation of the Algerian fundamentalist movement into an organized political force and its participation in the June 1990 elections were direct consequences of the democratization process launched by the government after the riots of October 1988, during which the army killed some hundred protesters.

The establishment of a multiparty



mixed bathing are some of the victims of that policy. In the city of Constantine the sale of alcohol has been banned and bars closed down. Oran banned *rai*, Algeria's most popular music.<sup>81</sup>

On the other hand, the FIS has proved able to make progress in the task of building parallel hierarchies to compete with existing government structures – in a field that offers excellent opportunities for building up an electoral clientele. Success in this direction will be of vital importance if the FIS decides to topple the government by revolutionary instead of legal means. The scope of current activities at the headquarters of the Front suggests that the FIS is busy constructing a substantial parallel system. Hamza Kaïdi mentions a stream of people visiting the Islamists' central office in order to obtain legal advice, find mediation in conflicts with their neighbours or partners, or ask questions related to marriage or divorce problems. It is as if the FIS is repeating the exercise conducted by the FLN during the Algerian War, attempting to take the place of an either hated or absent administration.<sup>82</sup>

### Other influences

The Islamist movement is not an isolated actor. Its capabilities are not, therefore, the only fact that will determine its success. The behaviour of the FLN government, the most important of these exterior influences, is for the FIS both a useful instrument and a serious barrier.

The government's inability to deal with fundamental problems is of great help to the Islamists; it helps to create that atmosphere of general dissatisfaction without which a revolutionary movement cannot make headway. First, there is certainly a socio-economic problem that is playing a vital role in the making of a revolutionary atmosphere. But this cannot be dissociated from the spiritual element in the Algerian problem, as the government seems to believe. It appears that, here, the secular sector of the opposition holds views similar to those of the government – but with the difference that the opposition well understands that the socio-economic side to the present situation of conflict cannot be solved in the short run.

It is this that provides the best explanation for the failure of the lay

opposition parties, thinking as they do in Western rather than in Koranic terms. Their approach was clearly expressed in June 1991 by Saïd Saadi, Secretary-General of the RCD (*Rassemblement pour la Culture et la Démocratie/Union for Culture and Democracy*). His party seems to represent, together with the FFS (*Front des Forces Socialistes/Socialist Forces Front*), of Hocine Hait, the main component of the secular opposition to the FLN. The opinion poll published in May 1991 in *Algérie-Actualité*, attributed 8 and 6,4 per cent of popular support to the FFS and the RCD respectively.<sup>83</sup> Saïd Saadi, although considering that repression cannot solve the Islamist problem, sees violent confrontation as inevitable. He bases his view on the fact that what would allow socially and economically marginalized people to regain hope and find a crutch other than religion – the slightest sensible breath of economic recovery – does not appear probable in the immediate future.<sup>84</sup>

The country's economic collapse continues then, the result of many years of socialist mismanagement, of a demographic explosion, and of falling revenues from oil and gas.<sup>85</sup> A 24 per cent official unemployment figure, chronic shortages, a huge black market, a 30 per cent inflation rate and a severe housing shortage are clear indicators of a race to total disaster. This situation seems ready to worsen, since, in each of the two years lying ahead, Algeria must pay US\$7 billion (an amount roughly equivalent to two-thirds of its export earnings) in order to service external debt.<sup>86</sup> The effects of this shortage of foreign currency are particularly serious in a country that imports two-thirds of its food.<sup>87</sup>

A situation of generalized corruption complements the effects of the economic crisis. A former prime minister disclosed recently that FLN party officials diverted \$26 billion to their own uses over the past two decades in bribes and commissions related to foreign contracts, an amount slightly higher than Algeria's total foreign debt.<sup>88</sup>

In a situation in which, in the short run, the government has no option but to rely on repressive policies, the attitude of the army plays a fundamental role. Available indicators point to the military's being the main barrier to FIS' attempts to destabilize the country.

In March 1991, after the instauration

of the multiparty system, the Army decided to withdraw from the political stage. Such a move needs to be qualified, however. In September 1990, the new Minister of Defence, General Khaled Nezzar, stated:

The Army is ready to put an end to abuses which may present a danger to national unity. We shall intervene without hesitation to restore order.<sup>89</sup>

Mireille Duteil is of the opinion that the disorder caused by the Islamists finds little favour with the military. The officer corps, trained in the USSR, France, the USA and Italy has a modernist outlook. Some officers regret the legalization of the FIS and, even more, that a situation of anarchy was allowed to develop at all.<sup>90</sup>

It does not seem that the Gulf War influenced the fortunes of the FIS in one direction or the other. The Front's continuing alliance with pro-American Saudi Arabia disappointed the man in the street, favourable in general to Saddam Hussein.<sup>91</sup> The conflict in the Gulf thus did not contribute to any intensification of FIS' recruitment, as a pro-Iraqi stance would have done. On the other hand, the conflict could not generate an FIS loss of support in favour of the FLN, since the Algerian government actively participated in the American-led alliance against Baghdad.

### Algerian fundamentalism and the outside world

Although it is still too early to forecast what the outcome of the struggle between the FLN and the Islamists will be, it is not irrelevant to mention certain external implications of an FIS triumph, and, were the FIS to carry the day, what foreign reaction might be.

External reactions to the results of the June 1990 elections may throw some light on these matters. Iranian radio described the election results as proof of the role of Islam as a decisive fact in the political life of the whole of North Africa. In Tunisia, the leader of the unrecognized Islamic Fundamentalist Party, Rachid Ghannouchi, considered June 12 as a "divine day". All over the Arab world, the success of the FIS was viewed as a victory of Islam over democracy.<sup>92</sup>

The governments of neighbouring countries did not wait long before expressing their concern. In Tunisia, as Algeria voted, the authorities banned



for three months the newspaper *En Nahda*, mouthpiece of the Islamist movement. President Ben Ali remained unwilling to grant political party status to Ghannouchi's organization, which constitutes the only force able to confront the ruling RCD (*Rassemblement Constitutionnel Démocratique/Constitutional Democratic Union*). The governments of Morocco and Libya expressed their concern at this instance of fundamentalist expansion.<sup>93</sup>

Neither did Europe remain insensitive to the growth of the Islamist movement in the Maghreb. France and most other EC countries, fearing that agitation in that region might fuel mass immigration, tightened their restrictions on the entrance of Maghrebis. The same policy was adopted by Canada.<sup>94</sup>

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# AFRICA MONITOR



Africa monitor  
April to June 1991

Marita Snyman

## NORTH AFRICA

### Algeria

The fundamentalist Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) staged violent **demonstrations** during the first three weeks of June, demanding the president's resignation and changes in electoral laws. This forced the postponement of the parliamentary elections scheduled for 26 June. Official sources said that 19 people had been killed in the violence – Western observers put the figure at more than 40. Pres Bendjedid Chadli subsequently declared a state of siege, dismissed the government of Mouloud Hamrouche, and appointed a transitional government under new prime minister Sid Ahmed Ghazali on 17 June in the hope of reviving the ruling National Liberation Front (FLN), which expected a strong challenge from the FIS in the legislative and presidential elections Ghazali promised for later in 1991. On 28 June Pres Bendjedid resigned as chairman of the FLN (SWB 5/4, 6/6, 7/6, 8/6, 11/6, 19/6, 1/7; TS 5/4; AED 8/4; AC 19/4, 14/6; DT 5/6; DN 5/6; C 6/6, 7/6; B 6/6, 7/6, 19/6; S 6/6; E 8/6, 15/6; AA 14/6; WR 21/6).

### Chad

On 24 April Pres Déby visited Niger for talks with his counterpart, Pres Saibou (SWB 29/4).

Libya gave Chad US\$3 mn in **aid** and promised to send urgently needed food to eastern and northern Chad at the beginning of April (C 3/4).

The government announced in May that a **national conference** would be held in May 1992 to draft a new constitution. Former president Goukouni Oueddei called for the conference to be held in December 1991, forecasting political unrest if it were to be delayed (WA 2/6; SWB 14/6).

(*Habré's court order – see Senegal.*)

### Egypt

Pres Mubarak held talks with Pres Gaddafi of Libya in Tripoli from 9 to 11 April to discuss **Arab unity**. He also toured the controversial Rabta factory, which the United States believed to be a chemical weapons factory. In mid-May, Mubarak visited Italy, Luxemburg, France,

Turkey and Syria, and then Libya again. On 18 June, Mubarak went to Kuwait and Bahrain (C 11/4; S 11/4; SWB 11/4, 18/5, 21/5, 20/6).

On 20 May Mubarak appointed a new foreign minister, Amr Moussa, formerly Egypt's representative at the United Nations. Moussa replaced Esmat Abdel-Maguid, who was elected secretary-general of the Arab League (DT 22/5).

Relations with **Israel** deteriorated after Egyptian officials blamed Israel for slowing down the Middle East peace process. The allegations were severely criticized by the Israeli prime minister, Yitzhak Shamir on 10 June. Israel's only formal peace pact with an Arab country is the 1979 peace treaty with Egypt. After a visit by Israeli Labour Party parliamentarians on 14 June, the Egyptian foreign minister, Amr Moussa, denied reports that Egypt was withdrawing its representative in Israel (C 12/6; DT 13/6; SWB 14/6, 15/6).

On 25 May the **Paris Club** group of creditor nations rewarded Egypt's anti-Iraqi stance in the Gulf War by writing off half the country's US\$20.2 bn public external debt. This agreement was subject to Egypt's compliance with a structural adjustment programme recommended by the IMF. The World Bank also supported Egypt by extending three loans valued at US\$525 mn to be used for the social fund and for implementing a project to produce natural gas (ST 26/5; C 27/5; AED 3/6, 17/6; DN 5/6; WBN 27/6).

(*Coup report – see Sudan; Talks with Museveni – see Uganda.*)

### Libya

On 3 June the Libyan delegation **withdrew** from the OAU summit meeting in Abuja in protest at Nigeria's involvement in the removal of Libyan prisoners of war from Chad after Habré's downfall (see previous *Africa Insight*). They also protested about Nigeria's role in Liberia's civil war (SWB 5/6; DT 5/6).

Italian prime minister Giulio Andreotti visited Libya on 5-6 June to strengthen ties between the two countries (SWB 7/6).

(*Aid to Chad – see Chad; Talks with Mubarak – see Egypt; Visit by Compaoré – see Burkina Faso.*)

### Morocco

In terms of a United Nations (UN) Security Council peace plan adopted on 17 May, a timetable for the **referendum** in Western Sahara was set up. The whole process should last no more than 36 weeks, divided into two stages. During the first stage of 16 weeks UN experts would identify eligible voters. This would be followed by a **cease-fire** and the deployment of nearly 2 500 UN military personnel and civilian workers who would confine Polisario fighters in compounds, together with their weapons and military equipment. They would also monitor the reduction of Moroccan troops in the territory from 200 000 to 65 000. The arrangements for voting would start then, lasting no more than three weeks. The UN secretary-general, Dr Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, who would like a peaceful settlement to the conflict before he retires, had already proposed 6 September as a date for the formal cease-fire (DN 12/4; DT 24/4; TS 2/5; WA 5/5, 16/6; JA 7/5, 4/6, 11/6; C 27/5; SWB 27/5; AA 31/5; AC 14/6; E 22/6; AE 7/91).

### Sudan

According to an Egyptian newspaper, a **coup** was foiled on 13 April. Twenty officers were said to have been executed subsequently. The Sudanese government denied the reports (S 22/4; SWB 23/4).

A **national conference** took place from 29 April to 2 May. In a speech at the opening session Lt-Gen al-Bashir announced the release of all political detainees in the country and an amnesty to all Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA) members. Those released included ex-prime minister Sadiq al Mahdi and the leader of the banned Communist Party, Muhammed Ali Nugud (AED 22/4; SWB 30/4; AA 3/5; ION 11/5).

On 16 May the SPLA offered to take part in **peace talks** with the ruling junta, suggesting that these be held in a neutral country. Two days later the government agreed in principle. On 22 May the leader of the SPLA, John Garang, met with Nigeria's Gen Babangida in central Nigeria, after which Garang agreed to a request by the Sudanese government that Babangida should mediate in the Sudanese

conflict. During a speech in Khartoum on 11 June, al-Bashir said all SPLF-demands had been met, such as a federal system and participation in government (ION 25/5, 29/6; SWB 29/5, 15/6, 17/6).

## Tunisia

On 22 May the interior minister, Abdallah Kallel, announced the discovery of a **fundamentalist plot** to seize power. He also alleged that the Islamic movement, En Nahda, had a five-stage plan for its agents to take control of ministries and other key points before itself seizing power. The timing of the announcement was suspect, however, coming soon after students had been killed in clashes with the police. The Muslim student activists had been involved in demonstrations from early May. Nearly 300 Muslim fundamentalists, including some 100 military personnel, were arrested in the course of the month (DN 8/5; SWB 20/5, 23/5, 24/5; TS 21/5; C 23/5; S 23/5; E 1/6).

## WEST AFRICA

### Benin

The newly elected leader, Nicephore Soglo, underwent medical treatment in France for typhoid and sciatica immediately after his election and returned to Benin in time to be inaugurated as president on 4 April. Reports that he was looking tired and in pain were followed by a television and radio message by Soglo to reassure the Beninois about his state of health. However, on 13 April he flew to Paris again for treatment. While in hospital, he met various French officials, including Pres Mitterrand. Soglo handed over the day-to-day running of the country to his wife, Rosine Vieira Soglo, and her immediate family. He finally returned on 8 June (SWB 6/4, 10/4, 1/5, 12/6; AED 15/4; C 15/4; WA 21/4, 28/4; AB 5/91; AA 31/5)

### Burkina Faso

Capt Blaise Compaoré held talks with Col Gaddafi in Libya from 9 to 11 May (SWB 13/5). About 49 per cent of the electorate went to the polls on 2 June to vote in a **referendum** on the draft constitution that, if adopted, would pave the way to multiparty democracy. Ninety-three per cent of those who voted approved of the new pluralist constitution and on 11 June the supreme court followed suit. The following day, 13 of the 22 parties taking part in round-table talks with Compaoré walked out, demanding wider **participation** in the debate on the country's political future. Later that month, Compaoré ruled out any chance of a national conference (SWB 6/6, 7/6, 13/6, 15/6, 17/6; DN 14/6; C 14/6).

### Côte d'Ivoire

In May students and teachers began a public campaign to protest about poor conditions and a lack of resources in the education system. Sporadic **strikes** broke out, despite stern gov-

ernment warnings to protesters. The dispute became a crisis on the night of 17 May, when more than a dozen students were injured and several women students were reportedly raped as troops swept through student residence halls to round up suspected ringleaders. Student and opposition groups claimed that four students were killed, but the government denied that there were any deaths. The bureau chief of Agence France-Press was **expelled** for reporting the incident. The campus incidents sparked off the first street demonstrations since the elections in October 1990. As a result of the raid and the ensuing troubles, opposition leaders called for the resignation of prime minister Ouattara's seven-month-old government. On 16 June Pres Houphouët-Boigny announced the creation of an investigative commission to look into the incident (SWB 15/5, 25/5, 27/5, 30/5, 12/6, 17/6, 19/6; C 28/5; WA 9/6, 16/6; S 24/6; ANews 24/6).

(Talks with Toure - see Mali.)

### The Gambia

On 20 May Sir Dawda Jawara made a stopover in Mali during his return from the People's Republic of China for bilateral talks with prime minister Sacko (SWB 23/5).

Sixty soldiers marched to Banjul from a nearby military camp on 14 June to demand payment of salary arrears and for better living conditions. The soldiers were former members of the 148-man military contingent sent by Gambia to Liberia in August 1990 as part of the Ecomog peacekeeping force. After being reassured, the soldiers returned to barracks (SWB 19/6; WA 30/6).

### Ghana

On 10 May Flt-Lt Jerry Rawlings officially bowed to internal and external pressure and pledged a return to **multiparty politics** after ten years of what he called non-party rule. He was responding specifically to the report prepared by the National Commission for Democracy (NCD) (see previous Africa monitor) published during the first week of April. The findings of the report were also presented to the **consultative assembly** set up on 11 May to prepare a new constitution for submission at the end of December. Opposition groups, however, dismissed the new assembly as unrepresentative. Anti-government demonstrations began in several towns, with people calling for Rawlings' resignation, the immediate legalization of political parties and a new constitution. One of their demands, a general amnesty for all political exiles, was conceded on 18 June (SWB 9/4, 13/5, 21/5, 23/5, 28/5, 21/6; AC 19/4; WA 21/4, 5/5, 12/5, 26/5; AE 5/91; AA 17/5, 31/5; C 28/5; TS 30/5; NA 6/91; AC 10/6; S 19/6, 21/6).

### Guinea

The National Confederation of Guinean Workers (the sole recognized trade union) launched a **general strike** on 6-7 May to protest against what was considered an insufficient 100 per cent salary increase. Clashes were reported between

demonstrators and police in the capital. The teachers had also been on strike since 2 May, some returning to work on 8 May and the remainder the following day. Further clashes with the police took place on 19 May during a meeting at a stadium to mark the return of opposition leader Alpha Condé. The police broke up the meeting using tear-gas. The meeting, organized by the Rally of the Guinean People (RPG) was the first attempted demonstration by the opposition in the country since the military coup in 1984 (SWB 7/5, 8/5, 10/5, 13/5, 21/5, 12/6; WA 19/5, 2/6, 9/6).

### Guinea-Bissau

On 4 May parliament scrapped all one-party legislation and on 10 May approved a bill on new parties that would enable the legalization of new political groups. On 24 June, however, a new opposition party, the Democratic Social Front (FDS), accused the ruling PAIGC of blocking the democratization process by **repressing** opposition groups and **intimidating** those PAIGC members seeking to join the opposition (SWB 6/5, 13/5, 29/6; C 6/5; TS 6/5; S 6/5; WA 19/5).

### Liberia

Despite Charles Taylor's group, the National Patriotic Front (NPFL) walking out on 27 March, the Liberian **national conference** continued to meet in Monrovia. On 19 April it re-elected Amos Sawyer as interim president until January 1992, and agreed that a general election would be held on 15 October 1991. On 22 April Taylor said the NPFL would not accept any decisions by Sawyer.

Successive allegations by **Sierra Leone** that Taylor's forces had raided Sierra Leonean villages, killing several civilians, led by mid-April to Sierra Leonean forces operating inside Liberian territory held by the NPFL. Fighting ensued between the two forces, with both claiming military successes. On 6 May the field commander of the Ecomog monitoring group, Maj-Gen Rufus Kupolati, appealed to Taylor to work towards peace. Ecomog then sent troops to prevent NPFL incursions into Sierra Leone. In revenge against Nigeria's key role in Ecomog, NPFL soldiers began **executing** Nigerians trapped in areas under their control.

On 8 May over 2 500 Liberian refugees arrived in Monrovia by ship from Freetown, in the first large-scale **repatriation** since the fighting began. By this time, Monrovia's population had swollen to an estimated 800 000, about one-third of the country's 2.3 mn people.

On 3 May it was reported that the interim government was ready to resign, apparently as a preliminary to offering the NPFL a power-sharing arrangement. New peace talks, scheduled for 23 May in Abidjan and brokered by US congressman Marvyn Dymally, with both Sawyer and Taylor promising to attend, were called off at the last minute. It appeared that Taylor had announced beforehand that he was going to attend as president of Liberia (ANews 1/4, 24/6; SWB 6/4, 16/4, 18/4, 22/4, 24/4, 30/4, 6/5, 1/6; WA 14/4, 21/4; AED 15/4, 6/5; AA 19/4; AC 19/4; AB 5/91, 6/91; AE 5/91; NA 6/91; ACon 10/6).

## Mali

Head of state Lt-Col Amadou Toure visited Côte d'Ivoire on 6 May for talks with Pres Houphouët-Boigny, while the prime minister, Mr Soumana Sacko returned on 5 May after a four-day visit to France. Toure also visited Libya, Algeria and Burkina Faso in May (S 6/5; SWB 8/5, 9/5, 10/5, 13/5, 18/5).

The government created a **new province** in the Kidal area, where there had been clashes between Tuareg rebels and troops in recent months. In central Mali, a group of youths looted shops and supermarkets belonging to Tuaregs and Moors. In northern Mali an armed attack on a town was reported in which one civilian and two raiders were killed. Tuareg rebels were suspected of conducting the raid. Toure asked the northern Tuaregs to lay down arms and respect the 6 January 1991 Tamanrasset agreement. In the meantime, Amnesty International called on the Malian government to establish an open and independent judicial enquiry into the alleged **killings** of at least 36 civilians in northern Mali in May. Amnesty reported the extrajudicial executions of Tuareg traders and community leaders in retaliation for such attacks as those listed above (WA 2/6, 9/6, 16/6, 30/6).

Former president Moussa Traore, who was arrested on 26 March, appeared in **court** on 6 June on the charge of being accomplice to murder, assault, corruption, illegal self-enrichment and influence peddling (SWB 12/6; WA 16/6).

(Talks with Sir Dawda – see *Gambia*.)

## Mauritania

On 15 April Pres Taya announced that a **referendum** would be held on 12 July to adopt a new multiparty constitution, after which an election would be held. This followed his receipt on 13 April of a letter from 50 noted intellectuals urging him to initiate democratic reforms and set up a commission to investigate the deaths of hundreds of people in police custody. The Oslo-based opposition *Forces de Libération Africaines de Mauritanie* (Flam) criticized the reform measures as insufficient, saying Taya made no reference to the convening of a national conference, the return of deportees and exiles or a general amnesty for political prisoners. The country experienced its first **strike** on 19 June, called by the Mauritanian Workers' Union (UTM). The government declared the strike illegal and dismissed the general-secretary of the UTM. Trade unionists who came out in protest at the move were involved with clashes with the police, with several wounded on both sides (C 15/4; SWB 16/4, 18/4, 19/6, 2/7; WA 28/4, 5/5; ACon 29/4).

## Niger

On 24 April the opposition parties rejected Pres Saibou's proposal to form a transitional government before the national conference, arguing that any such government should be appointed by the **national conference**. The conference itself, initially planned for 27 May, was postponed to 15 July because the preparatory committee had not finished its work in

time (SWB 26/4, 27/5, 12/6; WA 30/6).

(Visit by Déby – see *Chad*.)

## Nigeria

**Religious unrest** on 19 April in the town of Katsina and on 22 July in Bauchi claimed the lives of hundreds of people, emphasizing the ever-present tension between sects and religions that, along with corruption and poverty, are basic causes of the country's instability. The events in Katsina and Bauchi seemed unconnected. In Katsina it was a deliberate, politically-motivated onslaught by Shia Muslim radicals against the security forces, and in Bauchi the even bloodier conflict was between Christians and Muslims. The mayor of Bauchi, a Christian, declared that in future Christians should be allowed to slaughter pigs and dogs in the local abattoir, although this implied that all meat from that abattoir would in future be unclean for Muslims. In the riots that followed, hundreds of Christians and Muslims were killed and almost all churches and priests' houses were burnt down. Other targets included brothels and hotels that served alcohol. Then the army moved in, killing at least 120 more Muslims, bringing the total close to 500 deaths, although the official figure was "less than 100". The events raised doubts about Pres Babangida's ability to implement a democracy over the next 18 months, especially with the Muslims in the north seething with anger about the army's **heavy-handed** actions against them. A commission of enquiry was set up on 24 April to look into the causes of the riots and a trial began at the end of May of 142 people arrested in the Katsina riots (S 22/4; SWB 22/4, 25/4, 27/4, 29/4, 21/5; AA 3/5; E 4/5; ACon 6/5, 20/5; WA 12/5, 26/5, 2/6; AC 17/5; JA 28/5; AE 6/91).

On 12 April Pres Babangida said Nigeria would press for the lifting of **sanctions** against South Africa at the OAU meeting in June if the remaining apartheid laws were scrapped by the end of May. On 18 April, the Nigerian foreign ministry attacked an EC decision to lift most of its sanctions against South Africa as premature and insensitive to African sensibilities on the apartheid issue. Then on 11 May, Nigerian foreign minister, Ike Nwochukwu, called on Frontline States to begin phasing out sanctions, saying: "We have to accept the facts as they stand now but must not be seen to be the laughing stock. Nigeria is against lifting the sanctions at once." The OAU summit was subsequently held in Abuja from 3 to 5 June where Babangida was elected chairman to succeed Pres Museveni. Babangida again called on Pres de Klerk to remove the last apartheid legislation in South Africa. Nwochukwu said on 11 June that the time was not yet ripe to invite De Klerk for a visit, after an announcement by South African foreign minister Pik Botha that De Klerk might visit Nigeria later in 1991. Later in June, after more reform measures in South Africa, Babangida responded by saying a visit would be discussed (C 13/4, 19/4, 11/6; B 13/4, 11/6; SWB 22/4, 5/6, 6/6, 13/6; BD 13/5).

(Meeting with Garang – see *Sudan*.)

## Senegal

Pres Diouf decided to strike a deal with the Senegalese Democratic Party (PDS) leader, **Abdoulaye Wade**, who joined the cabinet with three of his party stalwarts on 8 April as minister of state. The leader of the Marxist *Parti d'Indépendance et Travail* (PIT), Amath Dansokho, was also appointed in the cabinet. Wade's explanation of his surprise move was that it was time to turn negative opposition into constructive nation-building from within. Political commentators believed that the events demonstrated Diouf's brand of survival gymnastics in the face of the worsening economic situation: "If he had not succeeded in getting Wade and the others to join government, perhaps the army would have been obliged to take over." (SWB 10/4; AED 15/4; AA 19/4; WA 21/4, 12/5; AE 7/91).

On 21 March 92 Senegalese soldiers were killed in a **plane crash** in Saudi Arabia on their return from a pilgrimage to Mecca, which had been organized by the Saudi authorities in reward for Senegal's contribution to the multinational force in the Gulf (WA 7/4, 14/4; SWB 8/4; S 22/4).

The government and the **Casamance** separatists signed a cease-fire agreement on 31 May in Bissau. The agreement provided for the complete withdrawal of military forces in combat zones, the cessation of hostilities, and the free circulation of people and goods throughout the Casamance region. The agreement came five days after Diouf declared a total amnesty for Casamance prisoners, leading to the release of more than 300 people. A new civilian governor, Mr Ndiaye, was also appointed for Casamance, replacing Gen Dieng (SWB 29/5, 30/5, 4/6, 17/6; DN 29/5; ACon 10/6; WA 16/6).

A Senegalese court ordered Chad's ousted president, Mr Hissene **Habre**, to return the Chadian military aircraft on which he fled to Senegal in 1990 (C 24/5).

## Sierra Leone

Pres Momoh agreed in early April to a recommendation by a constitutional committee that the country adopt a **multiparty system**. "It has been my hope all along that we would move to a multiparty constitution", he said. In a white paper, released on 23 May, the government set out a rapid programme for introducing multiparty politics by the end of June. In the meantime, local by-elections scheduled for April were postponed indefinitely (SWB 1/4, 14/6; AA 5/4; WA 7/4, 14/4, 21/4, 5/5, 16/6; AED 15/4; ACon 15/4, 20/4, 10/6).

(Cross-border operations – see *Liberia*.)

## Togo

Pres Eyadéma had already been forced into promising reforms (see previous Africa monitor) when a new wave of protest broke out. It began on 5 April with student **demonstrations** in support of teachers' demand for higher salaries, which quickly turned into a full-scale battle with riot police. Reports of a brutal army backlash in which 26 people were beaten to

death provoked further angry demonstrations. Eyadéma's days appeared to be numbered with large sections of the capital effectively under mob rule. He tried to save the situation by announcing an accelerated timetable for a new constitution and multiparty elections, saying they could be expected within a year.

On 18 April the *Front des Associations pour le Renouveau* (FAR), formed during March to co-ordinate opposition against Eyadéma, was dissolved, saying it had to make way for more opposition parties. At the time, Togo had five opposition parties. Later that month, another co-ordinating opposition body was formed, however. Called the Democratic Opposition Front (FOD) and made up of eleven parties, it held a meeting on 20 May where a joint strategy was discussed. On 1 June the FOD called a strike to begin on 6 June and last until Eyadéma's resignation. After talks with the opposition on the 7th, the president agreed to a **national conference** starting on 24 June (it eventually got under way on 8 July) while the opposition suspended the strike (SWB 9/4, 10/4, 13/4, 16/4, 23/5, 4/6, 14/6; S 11/4, 12/4; C 11/4, 7/6; SN 13/4; TS 16/4, 18/4; AA 19/4; WR 19/4, 21/6; TWR 24/4; E 27/4; WA 28/4, 5/5, 12/5, 21/6; AB 5/91; AE 5/91, JA 14/5; NA 6/91; ACon 24/6).

## CENTRAL AFRICA

### Cameroon

Pres Biya's continued refusal to allow a national conference to take place in Cameroon, was met with growing dissatisfaction. Although he conceded the principle of multipartyism and the country had more than twenty parties by July, the increasingly confident opposition demanded a national conference to discuss Cameroon's future before elections. By allowing an unlimited number of political parties, Biya probably thought that with the many tribal groups they would tear one another to pieces, but in April and May they were all concentrating their fire on the ousting of his government which all seemed to blame for the **worsening economic situation** in the country. Meanwhile infuriating details of corruption, tribalism and capital flight published by an increasingly vocal and aggressive private press aggravated the government's situation. Trying to break the deadlock, on 24 April Biya appointed Sadou Hayatou as prime minister and charged him with trying out alternative forms of dialogue. He also announced an amnesty for Cameroonians in exile. The move was rejected by the opposition which launched a campaign of **civil disobedience** that paralysed most of the country for two weeks and caused more deaths. Biya's reaction was to call in the military. He put seven of the country's ten provinces under military rule, granting the military leaders full autonomous rights to deal with the demonstrations. The national co-ordinating committee of the opposition split after some members suggested radical measures, described by the government as an act of war, with at least four opposition parties agreeing with that viewpoint (S 4/4; SWB 4/4, 10/4, 13/4, 24/4, 29/6; WA 7/4, 28/4, 26/5, 9/6; C 15/4; DN 15/4; AB 5/91; AC 3/5; ACon 13/5; FOA 7/91).

### Central African Republic

On 22 April Pres Kolingba, following so many other African leaders, yielded to public demands and announced the introduction of **multi-party politics** and the legalization of opposition parties. He also promised to discuss the holding of a national conference with the opposition. The announcement was followed by strikes by civil servants because of delays in the payment of their wages, some having not received salaries for three months. They were joined by students and schoolchildren. The strike continued until the end of June, with private sector employees joining the strike on 3 June (S 24/4; SWB 24/4, 25/4, 6/5, 4/6; B 24/4; AED 6/5, 17/6; WA 12/5, 19/5).

### Congo

The **national conference** that began on 25 February carried on into April and Pres Sassou-Nguesso saw his power evaporate by the day. The conference's decisions were published in the official gazette without reference to the government and the conference even called on exiled Congolese to help track down the millions of dollars salted away in **foreign banks** by government officials. On 26 March Sassou-Nguesso spoke out for the first time since the conference began, admitting the mistakes of the past and asking the Congolese people to adhere to decisions made by the conference. A constitutional **referendum** would be held in November and presidential **elections** in May 1992. Tribalist preferences hampered the election of a prime minister, as every party or clan defended its own candidate. Eventually, after the fourth round of voting, Andre Milongo, a former World Bank official who did not belong to any party, was elected. He named the members of his transitional government on 15 June, allocating the portfolios of defence and mines and energy to himself. The conference ended on 10 June (AA 19/4; SWB 29/4, 23/5, 29/5, 10/6, 18/6; WA 19/5, 30/6; ST 26/5).

### Equatorial Guinea

Six opposition parties in exile (based in Gabon) announced on 11 April that they had set up a co-ordinating body to pressure Pres Mbasogo into allowing multiparty politics (SWB 15/4, 27/5, 27/5).

### Gabon

Six out of the seven opposition parties **boycotted** the national assembly in protest against the limitations of Gabon's new democracy. They demanded the formation of a new government conforming to the constitution published on 31 March and also the freeing of the media. On 5 June the opposition organized a **general strike** to demand the implementation of the new constitution. Pres Bongo announced the resignation of the cabinet on 7 June and urged opposition parties to join the new government, which they refused to do, still demanding the implementation of the new constitution. Bongo consequently formed his own government, and appointed his daughter, Pascaline, in the foreign

affairs portfolio (AC 17/5; WA 26/5; SWB 7/6, 10/6, 11/6, 19/6, 24/6; AED 17/6).

### Zaire

After announcing on 24 April that he would legalize political parties, Pres Mobutu began to finance more than half of the more than 100 opposition parties, which led to claims that he was trying to dilute the strength of his political rivals. The press described the situation as "**multi-Mobutism**" or a choice between the many faces of the president. The collapse of transport and communications in Zaire was so complete that the opposition were experiencing problems organizing themselves. Opposition leaders hoped to stage protests at Mobutu's failure to schedule elections as he had promised 14 months earlier.

With aid cut off by the World Bank, Belgium and the United States, the majority of Zaire's 36 mn people spent so much time just surviving that they had little time for anti-government revolt. This was also the reason why get-rich-quick schemes, promoted on state radio and television, received so much public attention. **Riots** broke out when the schemes failed and many diplomats predicted that the violence could eventually bring down the regime. The unrest was limited to Kinshasa, however. In the meantime, the national conference scheduled for 29 April to discuss a new constitution was postponed to 10 July (AC 5/4, 28/6; SWB 11/4, 15/4; WA 28/4; BD 3/7).

The Zaire Human Rights League said on 30 April that 42 people were killed and 28 seriously wounded when security forces opened fire on demonstrators in the town of **Mbuji-Mayi** on 15 April to prevent a Union for Democracy and Social Progress (UDPS) meeting. The government put the death-toll at 9, but agreed to establish a commission of enquiry. The report on the incident, read in parliament on the 29th, found that the army had intervened to halt looting. Some MPs rejected the report and requested that an independent **commission of enquiry** be set up (SWB 2/5; WA 5/5, 19/5; DN 29/5).

## EAST AFRICA

### Comoros

A constitutional round-table conference was opened by Pres Djohar on 17 May. Only representatives of the seven government coalitions and the *Front Démocratique* (FD) were present. On 8 June the delegates from Moheli island **withdrew** in protest against the refusal of other participants at the talks to accept the principle of equal sharing among the representatives of the three islands of the roles of president, vice-president and speaker (ION 25/5, 15/6).

### Djibouti

Pres Aptidon visited the United States from 23 April for a week. Pres Bush thanked him for his support to the coalition forces against Iraq and described Djibouti as "a model of stability and moderation". Djiboutian minister of foreign affairs, Moumin Farah, expressed

his **disappointment** that the USA had not offered any financial support, especially in the light of the "paltry" war aid received from France and some Arab countries. He also said that he considered it impossible for the time being to introduce pluralism in Djibouti and that the next election (scheduled for 1992) would be held in accordance with current regulations (SWB 26/4; ION 27/4, 4/5).

The leader of the Movement for Unity and Democracy, Mohamed Moussa Kahin, was arrested on 9 April because he planned to organize a **demonstration**. Although his movement was illegal, he tried to open an office some time ago. He then embarked on a hunger strike and was admitted to a hospital after 20 days. He was also not formally charged (SWB 15/4, 25/5; ION 20/4, 27/4, 25/5).

## Ethiopia

During the first week of April a group of academics, led by Prof Mesfin Wolde Mariam, composed and circulated a **peace plan** calling for the resignation of the government and for a transitional government to be formed. The latter should then be charged with negotiating a cease-fire with the rebels, drawing up a pluralist constitution and organizing free elections. The plan was submitted to Pres Mengistu Haile Mariam. At a time when the forces of the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) were reportedly within a hundred miles of Addis Ababa and observers believed Mengistu's regime to be almost something of the past, he reacted by dissolving the government and appointing foreign minister **Tesfaye Dinka** as premier. Lt-Gen Tesfaye Gebre Kidan, previously commander in Eritrea, was made vice-president. Dinka formed a government on 9 May, appointing no military personnel, but falling short of proposals made by the parliament (*shengo*) to appoint members from opposition groups.

Negotiations, organized in London by the United States, between the government and the main rebel groups were planned for 20 May but postponed until the 28th. However, on 21 May Mengistu suddenly **resigned** his position and fled the country to take refuge on his farm in Zimbabwe. Lt-Gen Kidan took his place and offered a cease-fire which the EPRDF rejected, saying they want the government removed.

The talks in London went ahead on 28 May and took an unexpected turn when the US envoy, Herman Cohen, recommended that the EPRDF forces **enter** the capital to restore order. Dinka and the government delegation withdrew from the talks in **protest**. The Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) announced that it would play no part in an interim government, but would form its own provisional government in Eritrea until a **referendum** could be held on its future status. Meanwhile demonstrations rocked Addis Ababa for several days after the EPRDF take-over, with people protesting the American involvement. The talks in London ended with a promise of elections within a year. The EPRDF leader, **Meles Zenawi**, returned to Ethiopia on 1 June to take charge of the new interim government and announced the issues he would be

addressing in the immediate future: the restoration of law and order and to provide food aid to millions of starving Ethiopians.

On 4 June an ammunition dump in the capital blew up, killing close to a hundred people. The interim government blamed it on sabotage by soldiers of Mengistu's defeated government. Nevertheless, plans for an all-party conference in July went ahead (ION 13/4, 20/4, 4/5, 18/5, 25/5; SWB 15/4, 23/4, 22/5, 27/5, 30/5, 5/6; AC 19/4, 3/5, 31/5; S 23/4, 22/5, 23/5, 29/5, 5/6; JA 23/4; TWR 24/4, 22/5; WR 26/4; AE 5/91, 6/91; AED 20/5; B 22/5, 29/5; BD 22/5, 28/5, 3/6; TS 22/5; C 22/5, 23/5, 28/5, 31/5; WM 24/5, 30/5; E 25/5, 8/6; ACon 10/6).

Another human drama was the airlift of nearly 15 000 Ethiopian Jews (Falashas) on 24 and 25 May to Israel. Code-named **Operation Solomon**, the secret plans were finalized during the first week of May when fears of rebel take-over of Addis Ababa were increasing by the day. Almost all the aircraft of the Israeli national carrier El Al were used, with seats stripped out and replaced with foam rubber mattresses. One plane carried 1 084 people (S 1/5; ION 11/5; AA 17/5; C 25/5, 27/5; SS 26/5; ST 26/5; SWB 27/5; VWB 30/5; E 1/6).

## Kenya

The leader of the National Democratic Party (NDP) and staunch campaigner for a multi-party system, **Oginga Odinga**, filed a petition with the high court in May after his application to register the NDP was summarily rejected by the registrar general. Chances of his petition succeeding would be very slim, as long as Section 2 of the Constitution, maintaining the single ruling party, was in force. Odinga was involved in another court case in which he sued the current vice-president, Prof George Saitoti, and assistant minister, John Keen, for libel. The two had claimed that during the 1970s, Odinga had attempted to smuggle in Soviet arms with the object of toppling Kenyatta's government (AE 6/91; NA 6/91).

*(Troops in Rwanda – see Rwanda; Arms for Barré supporters – see Somalia; Visit by Chissano – see Mozambique; Visit by De Klerk – see South Africa.)*

## Madagascar

On 19 April while on a visit to South Africa, the Madagascar foreign minister, Jean Bem-ananjara, and his South African counterpart, Pik Botha, signed an **agreement** on the exchange of representatives between the two countries (C 20/4; B 20/4; S 22/4; ION 27/4).

On 31 May a draft bill for the review of the constitution was filed in parliament for discussion in the current session. However, on 10 June the opposition alliance, Opposition Platform, organized **demonstrations** throughout Madagascar to demand a new constitution. Thousands of people took part in the peaceful demonstration which continued for a week. Following Pres Ratsiraka's refusal of a national conference, the opposition held a strategy meeting on 17 June and decided to call for a general strike. Demonstrations also continued while the opposition announced on

20 June the formation of a provisional government. On 25 June Ratsiraka spoke to the leader of the Opposition Platform, Francisque Ravony, and apparently agreed to step down, though only after elections have been held (ION 8/6, 29/6; SWB 10/6, 13/6, 15/6; S 11/6, 14/6; VWB 21/6; DN 21/6).

## Mauritius

Prime minister Aneerood Jugnauth paid a visit to the United States during the first week of June. He met Pres Bush on 5 June after which he left for France to meet Pres Mitterrand and prime minister Edith Cresson (ION 8/6, 15/6).

*(Visit by Mugabe – see Zimbabwe.)*

## Réunion

The government announced plans by several **Japanese** multinationals to invest about US\$70 mn in Réunion, which would generate about one thousand jobs. The project was aimed at providing Japanese executives luxury trips to the island (ION 6/4).

## Rwanda

The **cease-fire** agreement between the Rwandan government and the Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF) which took effect on 30 March, was reportedly violated by both sides during the first few weeks in April. A seventy-man multinational team from Rwanda, Zaire, Burundi, Uganda, Tanzania and the RPF was in place on 15 April to monitor the cease-fire. The two sides disagreed on important aspects of the agreement, with the RPF saying they should be integrated into the Rwandan government and army, while the Rwandan government said that was out of the question as the RPF forces were illiterate, did not speak French or English and already belonged to the Ugandan army. The government also renewed allegations that Uganda was aiding the rebels by allowing them to use Ugandan territory for their bases. The RPF said on 6 May that there were 600 Kenyan troops fighting alongside the Rwandan government soldiers. The Kenyan government denied the claim (SWB 4/4, 8/4, 12/4, 11/5, 14/5, 7/6, 14/6; C 15/4, 7/5; AE 5/91; WA 16/6).

Pres Habyarimana set 2 June as the deadline for the registration of opposition parties, hoping that by introducing **multipartism**, he would rob the rebels of any support they might have had inside Rwanda (SWB 6/4, 12/4, 23/4, 1/6, 12/6; AC 19/4; C 23/4; WR 26/4; NA 5/5).

On 22 April Habyarimana began a visit to France, where he had talks with Pres Mitterrand. He then left for Belgium, where he was met with demonstrations by Rwandans supporting the RPF. He did, however, receive a pledge of 600 mn Belgian francs of assistance channelled through the World Bank (SWB 24/4, 26/4, 30/4; DT 25/4).

## Seychelles

At the end of its Ninth Party Congress, the ruling Seychelles People's Progressive Front (SPPF) announced on 6 April that the country was to have a **referendum** under international supervision to determine whether to change



from the current one-party state to a multi-party system. No date was set for the referendum. An opposition movement, *Parti Seselewa*, published several documents criticizing government corruption and on 17 May Frank Kilindo, a young dockworker, was arrested for allegedly distributing the pamphlets (ION 13/4, 18/5, 25/5; AB 5/91).

## Somalia

On 2 and 3 April the ruling United Somali Congress (USC) alleged that the Kenyan government was supplying arms to former-President Barré's supporters. The Kenyan government denied the reports, saying Kenya had merely allowed relief agencies to organize airlifts from its territory. On 4 April the USC and groups operating in the south signed a temporary **cease-fire**. Despite a clash between USC forces, members of the Somali Patriotic Movement (SPM) and of the Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF), they announced on 8 April that the cease-fire was still intact.

The president of the Somali National Movement (SNM), Abdel-Rahman Ahmed Ali, on 18 May confirmed reports of the secession of the north-eastern part of Somalia to form an independent state – the **Somaliland Republic**. He also announced that an interim administration would be formed and that **multiparty** elections would be held after two years. The USC rejected the secession as "destructive" and a contravention of accords between the two movements. On 4 June the SNM announced its new government, with 13 of the 17 members of the Issaq clan. Observers considered that the delay in announcing the government underlined the lack of agreement in SNM ranks over the secession issue.

**Talks** sponsored by Pred Aptidon of Djibouti between 5 and 15 June brought together the leaders of the USC, SSDF, SPM and the Somali Democratic Movement (SDM). SNM leaders refused the invitation. The different groups agreed on a cease-fire, the final assault against remaining supporters of Barré and sent envoys to the SNM to persuade the movement to join them in a transitional government (K 4-6/91; SWB 1/4, 5/4, 10/4, 17/4, 4/5, 20/5, 5/6; ION 6/4, 13/4, 25/5, 22/6; WR 12/4; TS 17/4; B-26/4; AE 5-6/91; NA 5-6/91; C 20/5; DN 21/5, 28/5, 24/6; AA 31/5; AC 14/6; JA 18/6).

## Tanzania

On 11 June at least 800 people attended a two-day seminar organized by the steering committee for the transition to **multiparty** democracy, under the chairmanship of Chief Abdallah Said Fundikira, a former minister. He said the presidential commission on multiparty politics, announced at the end of February in an attempt to pre-empt the opposition, was a waste of time and resources. Others called for a national conference on a new constitution and the suspension of the current one. The authorities banned the committee's first public meeting, which was initially scheduled for April (AB 5/91; AE 5/91; NA 5/91; SWB 8/5, 25/6; ION 15/5, 29/6; AC 31/5; AA 14/6).

*(Talks with Museveni – see Uganda; Visit by Nujoma – see Namibia.)*

## Uganda

During the night of 30 March soldiers of the National Resistance Army (NRA) swooped on three towns in northern Uganda, for a house-to-house search operation to flush out remnants of the United Democratic Christian Army (UDCA). The **crackdown** took many by surprise, coming at a time when the government was saying the north was peaceful. The incident followed the arrests of the minister of state for foreign affairs and for regional co-operation, Daniel Omara Atubo, and two MP's, Zachary Olum and Irene Apiu, on 15 April on suspicion of aiding the rebels in the north. All three hail from northern Uganda. In the weeks that followed 30 March, the government troops reportedly killed more than 300 rebels, and at least 1 600 people were arrested by 11 May. Reports of torture and **mistreatment** of prisoners surfaced when those charged with treason were brought before Kampala's chief magistrate later in May. On 17 June Roman Catholic bishops accused the government of also torturing civilians in the north, who were at the mercy of both the government troops and the rebels (B 18/4; SWB 18/4; ION 20/4, 27/4, 18/5; AE 5-6/91; NA 5/91; K 5/91; S 2/5; AC 3/5).

Pres Museveni arrived in Britain on 13 May for talks with prime minister John Major, overseas development minister, Lynda Chalker and Labour Party leader, Neil Kinnock. On his way to London, he stopped over in Cairo for talks with Pres Mubarak. On 15 May Museveni left for Germany. He also visited Tanzania on 13 June for talks with Pres Mwinyi (SWB 14/5, 16/5, 17/5, 15/6, 18/6).

*(Destabilization allegations – see Rwanda.)*

## SOUTHERN AFRICA

### Angola

Despite continued talks between the Angolan government and Unita rebels in Portugal, heavy fighting between the two sides continued during April, centring on the town of Luena. The sixth round of talks began on 3 April and on 5 April Pres Dos Santos said in Spain at the opening of his European tour that a peace agreement might be signed on 30 April. Unita leader Jonas Savimbi announced on 29 April in London that the two sides would initial the **peace agreement** the next day. Thus on 15 May a cease-fire came into force, ending the civil war which had raged since independence from Portugal in 1975. The fighting carried on until the 15th, and Unita and the MPLA accused each other of using chemical bombs to kill at least 500 civilians between 1 and 13 May.

In accordance with the agreement, a **multiparty** system also came into effect on 11 May. The formal signing of the peace agreement took place in Lisbon on 31 May, in the presence of US secretary of state James Baker, his Soviet counterpart, Aleksander Bessmertnykh, UN secretary-general Pérez de Cuéllar, and Pres Museveni, OAU chairman. Under the terms of the peace agreement, officials of the two parties began the first meetings of their joint political

and military commission, together with Soviet, US and Portuguese representatives, on 17 June. The commission's role was to supervise implementation of the peace accord and to organize elections for 1992. On 2 June Savimbi announced that he would step down as head of Unita if he lost the elections (K 4-6/91; C 2/4, 6/4, 10/4, 20/4, 2/5, 1/6; SWB 3/4, 5/4, 11/4, 17/4, 26/4, 3/6, 14/6; B 5/4, 24/4, 2/5, 15/5; BD 30/4, 2/5, 8/5, 3/6; NA 5/91; S 2/5, 3/6; E 4/5; AED 6/5; SS 2/6; WA 2/6).

## Lesotho

On 30 April a group of soldiers from the army's Special Service Unit deposed Maj-Gen Justin Metsing Lekhanya in a bloodless *coup*, ending his five years' rule. He was replaced as chairman of the ruling six-man Military Council by his former right-hand man, Col Elias Ramaema, who was sworn in at a ceremony in Maseru on 1 May. According to Lekhanya, Ramaema was not involved in the *coup* and it was rumoured that the general played some part in choosing Ramaema, who reaffirmed Lekhanya's commitment towards establishing a civilian democracy by 1992. Poor service conditions appeared to be the main reason behind the *coup*. On 10 May the Military Council repealed the order restricting political party activity, in preparation for the general election in 1992. On 7 June 18 senior army officers were arrested after a failed *coup* attempt against Ramaema's month-old government.

On 20 May a woman who stole a T-shirt was **beaten to death** by security guards, sparking off riots. Shops owned by Indians and Chinese were broken into and looted, while the violence reportedly claimed 34 lives. The curfew imposed by the government was lifted again on 19 June, and the more than 100 Indians and Chinese who had fled the country began returning (S 1/5, 7/5, 24/5; B 1/5, 23/5, 10/6; SWB 1/5, 2/5, 15/5, 24/5, 10/6; C 1/5, 11/5, 23/5; BD 2/5; LT 2/5, 29/6; WM 3/5, 24/5; E 4/5; SS 5/5, 9/6; AED 6/5; WA 19/5; JA 21/5).

## Malawi

*(Support to Renamo – see Mozambique.)*

## Mozambique

The sixth round of **talks** between the government and Renamo, set for 8 April, was postponed four times at Renamo's request, leading to Pres Chissano expressing scepticism about the seriousness of their intentions. The delays also added to speculation that Renamo was trying to strengthen its own power-base before talking with the government. Outstanding agenda items at the Rome talks were to be the integration of the two forces, a date for general elections, and the withdrawal of the 7 000 Zimbabwean troops still in Mozambique.

At the talks, which finally got under way on 6 May, Renamo made a concession in allowing **relief columns** through to Mozambican refugees in Malawi, but on 14 May Radio Maputo complained that Renamo was trying to block the negotiation process by trying to introduce new agenda items. Meanwhile there

were reports of continued Renamo atrocities in Mozambique, as the movement had stepped up its attacks to coincide with the Rome talks (AE 4/91; K 4-5/91; SWB 11/4, 26/4, 7/5, 13/5, 24/6; B 18/4, 7/5; ION 27/4; WA 19/5; ANews 20/5; AE 6/91, 7/91; WM 21/6; S 24/6).

On 22 June the government announced that it had uncovered plans for a *coup* attempt by soldiers, scheduled for 15 June. Several army officers and civilians were arrested. The soldiers were apparently dissatisfied with irregular pay and an inadequate food supply. The government also reported that the situation in the capital was calm and that the peace talks were not affected (C 22/6; SS 22/6, 23/6; S 24/6; SWB 24/6).

Chissano visited Kenya from 11 to 13 April where the two presidents signed an agreement for the establishment of a **joint permanent committee**. The Mozambican president stopped over in Uganda and Rwanda before returning to Maputo. On 18 April the Mozambican forces overran a Renamo base and captured documents showing covert Kenyan support for Renamo. On 4 June the Mozambican government also alleged Malawian support to Renamo (SWB 13/4, 15/4, 8/6, 17/6; WR 19/4; ION 20/4).

## Namibia

The second round of talks between Namibia and South Africa on the future status of **Walvis Bay**, held in Windhoek on 17 May, resulted in encouraging progress on the issue. The two sides agreed to consider a joint administration as an interim arrangement, pending an eventual settlement of the sovereignty issue. A joint technical committee would also be set up to demarcate Namibia's new southern boundary, following a concession by the South African side to Namibia's demand that the international border between the two countries be resited to the middle of the Orange River, rather than its north bank. There was, however, no consensus on status of the offshore Penguin Islands (S 3/4, 2/5; AED 8/4; C 8/5, 18/5; B 22/5; SWB 22/5, 13/6; AA 22/5; MSE 10/6; AC 14/6).

In April Pres Nujoma visited Tanzania and Zimbabwe (DN 23/4; SWB 24/4; C 29/4).

## South Africa

After an increase in **factional killings** and general violence in black townships, the African National Congress (ANC) issued an **ultimatum** on 5 April demanding specified government actions by 9 May to restore peace. The ANC described it as inconceivable that the authorities lacked the capacity to stop the fighting, in which 1 200 people had died since September 1990. Most of the killings resulted from ANC/Inkatha fighting, and relations between the two factions deteriorated further, with ANC deputy president Mandela calling off peace talks with Inkatha after the ultimatum.

Pres de Klerk announced on 18 April, before leaving on a European tour, that he was calling an all-party "**peace summit**" in May. The ANC rejected this as a propaganda ploy, but agreed to take part after intense diplomatic pressure. However, they eventually boycotted the summit. One of the ANC's demands was

the outlawing of traditional weapons, but the government only outlawed certain weapons, and not the spears and "battle-axes" of Inkatha. Another unmet demand was the dismissal of law and order minister Adriaan Vlok and defence minister Magnus Malan, whom the ANC had linked to the unsatisfactory role of the security forces in the township violence.

When the ANC's earlier deadline of 6 August 1990, regarding political prisoners, expired on 30 April, Mandela promised **mass action** to secure the release of remaining political detainees. On 27 June, the ANC and the government finally reached agreement on the release of the prisoners and the 100 prisoners who had been on hunger-strike since 1 May, abandoned their fast.

On 11 May some 300 white farmers associated with the Afrikaner Resistance Movement were fired on by police protecting black squatters near Ventersdorp. Four farmers were wounded.

On 14 May, **Winnie Mandela** was sentenced to a six-year prison term after being found guilty the previous day on charges of conspiracy to kidnap, and as accessory to assault. It was reported that her appeal could take as long as three years.

The House of Assembly (the whites' chamber in parliament) passed the repeal of the discriminatory **land measures act** on 5 June, making it possible for all South Africans to purchase freehold tenure in the 87 per cent of the country hitherto reserved for the white minority. The legislation offered no **compensation** for the estimated 3 500 000 blacks dispossessed of their land since 1950. On 17 June the House of Assembly repealed the Population Registration Act of 1950, the legal foundation of apartheid from which hundreds of other discriminatory laws derived.

De Klerk visited Kenya on 8 and 9 June, holding talks with Pres Moi. He stopped over in Swaziland on his return (K 4-6/91; S 3/4, 15/4, 30/4; ION 6/4; C 6/4; BD 12/4; FM 12/4, 21/6; AA 14/4; FF 5-6/91; SWB 19/6; WA 30/6).

(*Sanctions – see Nigeria; Diplomatic ties – see Madagascar.*)

## TBVC states

**Transkei** — The South African government guaranteed Transkei's R55 mn month-end salary payroll on 30 May in an effort to save the country from **financial collapse** and avert a violent reaction from the public servants whose salaries were on the line. Maj-Gen Holomisa reacted angrily to the fact that the deal was made public and blamed South African foreign minister Pik Botha personally. He also said the South African government deliberately provoked an economic crisis in Transkei to encourage a military coup or to force him to stop supporting the ANC (R 2/6; SS 2/6; ST 2/6; B 3/6; C 3/6; WM 7/6).

## Swaziland

During early April King Mswati told local priests and others from neighbouring states, that he had no intention of unbanning political parties in his country (C 3/4).

(*Visit by De Klerk – see South Africa.*)

## Zambia

On 7 April the main opposition party, the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) started its campaign for the **October elections** at a rally in Lusaka. Thousands of people reportedly braved rains to be addressed by leaders of the MMD, including its president, Frederick Chiluba (SWB 9/4).

The government ordered the University of Zambia close for "political reasons". Lecturers went on **strike** on 28 May, just a day after it opened after being closed for 5 weeks. They demanded government apologies for accusing them of subversive activities which had led to the previous closure (SWB 30/5).

## Zimbabwe

Pres Mugabe visited Egypt from 13 May for three days where he held discussions with Pres Mubarak. He then went to Mauritius, where he signed a co-operation agreement with his Mauritian counterpart (SWB 16/5, 22/5).

Riot police broke up a Zimbabwean Unity Movement (ZUM) meeting in Gweru on 18 May and arrested 113 supporters. They were released two days later, but ZUM leader Edgar Tekere announced that the movement planned a **civil claim** for wrongful arrest (C 20/5; DN 21/5; BD 22/5; SWB 23/5).

(*Visit by Nujoma – see Namibia.*)

## References

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

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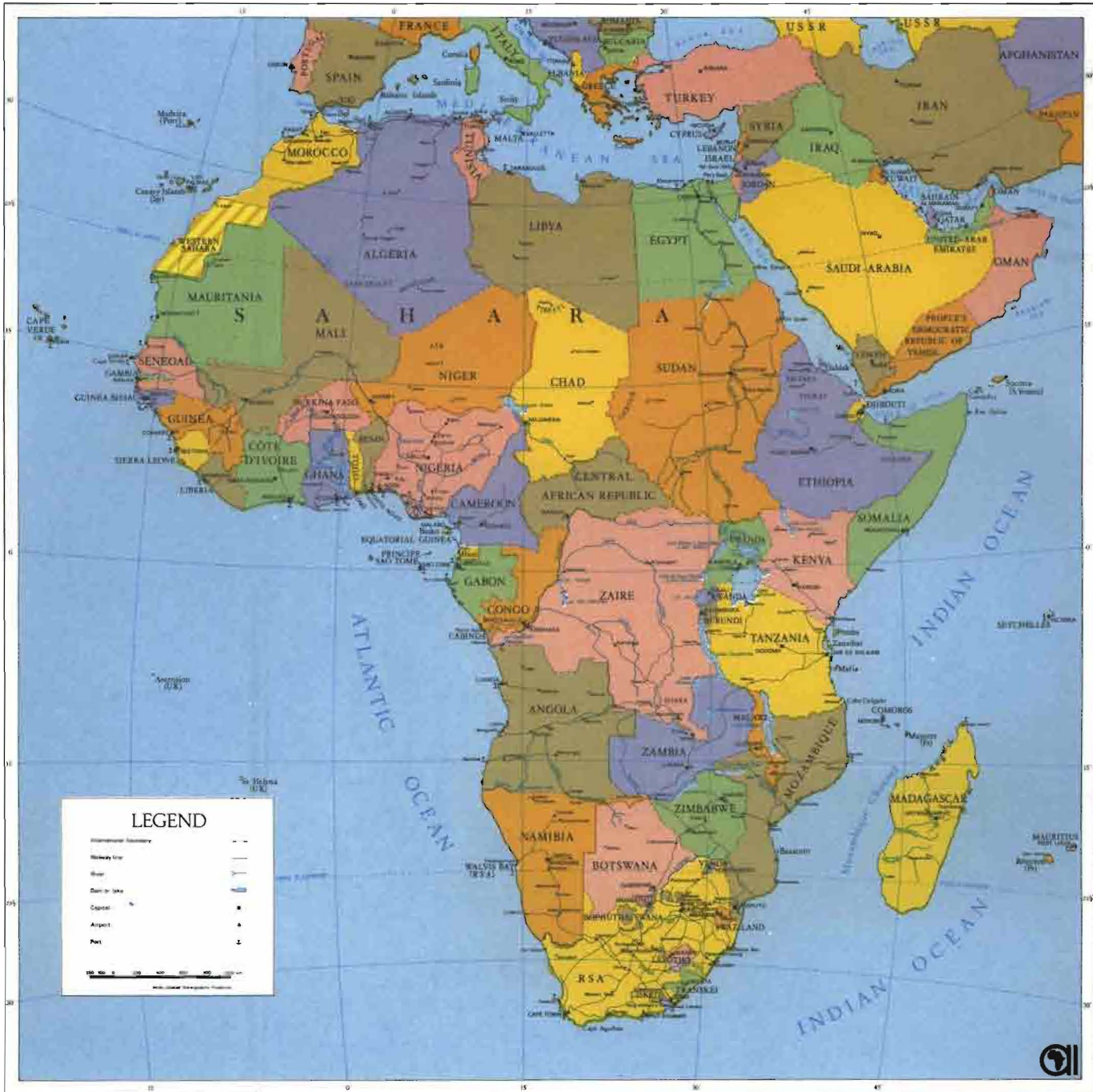
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