Cover by William Steyn

Post-apartheid South Africa and Africa

Dr Erich Leistner, Director of the Africa Institute, looks at the reasons why South Africa and Southern Africa should continue to occupy a place in the thoughts of the leaders of the industrialized nations.

Towards the end of October 1990, a prominent British political scientist, Dr Christopher Coker, delivered a paper at the Africa Institute's Conference on the subject, "Southern Africa towards the year 2000." In it he expressed the view that for the West, "Southern Africa's meaning largely derives from South Africa," and that once apartheid has been dismantled, "Southern Africa will cease to be meaningful."[1]

This seems to me to be overstating the case: notwithstanding the demise of apartheid, there is every likelihood that the world will be less and less able to ignore the consequences of worsening poverty and frustration in Africa, much of Asia and elsewhere. As a microcosm of the world at large, South Africa mirrors the so-called "North-South" situation: the vast discrepancies of wealth and privilege largely along racial and ethnic lines, and the tensions arising from these divisions. South Africa, with its institutionalized racial discrimination, offered itself as a symbol (and scapegoat) for these unresolved global issues. These issues will not vanish with the symbol.

Those predicting the imminent "marginalization" of South and Southern Africa appear to overlook that some countries' condemnation of apartheid was clearly influenced by concern about the potential impact that racial strife in South Africa might have on their own populations. US government spokesmen have explicitly confirmed this. For the USA, Britain, France, the Netherlands, Sweden,

Australia and New Zealand racial violence between the majorities of their citizens and people of colour is not unfamiliar. Confrontations between Germans and Turkish *Gastarbeiter* fall into a similar pattern.

These tensions and conflicts are symptoms of "North-South" problems. Amid the euphoria over the ending of the Cold War between the West and the Soviet bloc, the ominous income and welfare gap between the industrialized "North" and the predominantly poor "South" had faded temporarily from Western consciousness. Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and the concomitant manifestations of militant Islamic fundamentalism throughout the Arab world have since shattered the illusion of global harmony and peace. Earlier fears of a confrontation between the few rich countries of the "North" and the many poor of the "South" have been suddenly revived.

At present such fears are particularly acute in Germany, which, in recent years, apart from Turkish and other guest-workers, has had to accommodate hundreds of thousands of ethnic Germans from the Soviet Union and East European countries, as well as vast numbers of asylum-seekers from Eastern Europe, Africa and Asia, bringing the total of foreigners there to at least 4,63 million. Apart from causing serious administrative and psychological problems, this development is increasingly viewed in tandem with black Africa's apparently unstoppable slide into chaos. I recently learned from

senior German politicians of their fear that within, say, ten years, millions of hungry and destitute Africans might seek refuge in Western Europe, not to mention the prospect of a massive inflow of Soviet citizens should the USSR succumb to anarchy.

Not all European leaders anticipate such a gloomy future, but universal disillusionment and pessimism concerning developments in Africa prevail in Europe and in other industrial countries. African leaders, in turn, are apprehensive that much Western aid, virtually the only aid they can hope for, will increasingly be diverted to Eastern Europe. More and more the flow of funds to Africa, currently about $10 billion a year, will be subject to conditions regarding the use of funds, the recipients' economic policies and their observance of human rights and democratic practices.

The many assurances of European leaders, notably those of countries such as France, Britain and Germany, that Europe has a special responsibility towards Africa, should not be dismissed as mere rhetoric, however, even though that sense of responsibility surely is not a foremost national priority.

Over the past few years Western thinking on Southern Africa and South Africa's role in the region has reflected a growing awareness that the whole of Southern Africa is bound to follow the same economic and political path as the rest of the continent, unless a strong and expanding South African economy helps to stimulate and sustain the

region. Until recently, any South African involvement in the provision of materials, finance or manpower in regional projects financed by the European Community, the World Bank and various other agencies was assiduously blocked. Today, the World Bank is co-operating closely with South Africa's Southern African Development Bank in respect of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project, and is financing projects such as the rehabilitation and modernization by the South African Electricity Supply Commission of the Maputo power station.

The changing attitudes within the European Community were highlighted by the visit to South Africa in October/November 1990 of a high-level delegation from Acoda, the Brussels-based International Association for Cooperation and Development in Southern Africa, which included Mr Leo Tindemans, a former Belgian Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and currently Vice-President of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Countries/European Community (ACP/EC) Assembly.

At the opening of Acoda's first South African office in Johannesburg, the delegates confirmed their conviction, and that of many of their peers, that sanctions against South Africa hurt not only that country's black population but also the economies of neighbouring countries. They also expressed the firm belief that South Africa has a crucial role to play if these countries are to have any hope of progress and stability over time. Acoda is to promote European private and official investment in the region, using to the full South African managerial, technical and other expertise.

Yet another fact speaks against the marginalization hypothesis with respect to Southern Africa: the appreciable outside economic support received by the member countries of the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC) since its establishment in 1980. To some extent, of course, this assistance served to demonstrate support for the SADCC countries' "struggle against apartheid" — thus obviating their insistence upon more stringent anti-South African sanctions by the West. It was also meant to promote these countries' development and to lessen their economic dependence on South Africa. Yet, given the

fairly substantial traditional interests — mainly commercial but also political — in South Africa and other countries of the region, of Britain, Germany and Portugal (Italy is a newcomer), there is no obvious reason why these countries should write off Southern Africa the moment apartheid is well and truly buried. On the other hand, these countries would presumably soon wash their hands of the region if a tyrannical regime with ruinous economic policies were to be established in Pretoria.

In a nutshell, this means that South Africa can count on attracting a fair deal of West European economic and political support if it succeeds in negotiating a political order promising domestic stability for the foreseeable future, and pursuing economic policies guided by market forces and favouring private enterprise and investment. If these, admittedly difficult, conditions are fulfilled, South Africa and its neighbours again stand to attract a certain amount of Western investment.

Taken as a whole, as an investment prospect Southern Africa may be less attractive than countries such as Czechoslovakia, Hungary and the former East Germany. These three have a long tradition of industrialization and technological sophistication, together with skilled and disciplined workforces. While Southern Africa cannot match these advantages, its mineral, agricultural, forestry and marine resources, and its as yet largely untapped internal markets and its infrastructural requirements, do offer many opportunities for profitable operations — given appropriate government policies.

While developments inside South Africa are of critical significance for the region, careful consideration needs to be given to the institutional framework within which a post-apartheid South Africa is to interact with its neighbours, that is, assuming democratic and market-oriented South African policies.

The suggestion is frequently heard that South Africa should become a full member of the SADCC and/or the Preferential Trade Area in Eastern and Southern Africa (PTA). It is an open question, however, whether immediate and full membership should be contemplated. Given South Africa's economic pre-eminence — its GDP at present is about three times that of the SADCC

countries combined, excluding Tanzania — there would be a real risk that it would pursue its own national interest at the expense of the weaker countries, thereby creating ill will and undermining the objectives of regional co-operation.

That this is no idle speculation is suggested by the role of Zimbabwe within the SADCC, where it is by far the industrially most advanced member and where its attitude is sometimes resented. Even now there are signs of apprehension among SADCC members that the predominantly black government of a future South Africa might be less accommodating than the present white one — which is clearly more constrained to prove to the world that it is not the bully it is widely alleged to be. A country like Lesotho, which depends on migrant labour earnings in South Africa for approximately half its GNP, is particularly vulnerable to decisions taken in Pretoria. Some Basotho therefore even advocate becoming part of South Africa.

All these issues need careful thought. In particular, South Africa should not unthinkingly jump at proposals to join the SADCC and the PTA once this becomes possible — associate membership of the SADCC might well be an appropriate first step. The basic SADCC concept is sensible and deserves to be explored further: a joint search for solutions to shared problems; co-ordination of economic policies as far as possible and without seriously abrogating national sovereignty; no integration of production, trade and factor movements — except, perhaps, as a goal for the distant future.

In other words, the institutional framework for future economic co-operation in Southern Africa must not try to emulate the model developed in the EC for the specific conditions of Western Europe. It should rather seek to build on the concept of the SADCC and of the Southern African Regional Commission for the Utilization and Conservation of the Soil (Sarccus), which predates the SADCC by about two decades and has been a model of beneficial technical intraregional co-operation largely unaffected by political concerns. Altogether new institutions for regional co-operation may well be called for.

Bearing in mind that Africa's foremost partner in trade, investment and aid, the European Community, is moving

towards a unified market as from 1993, it is high time that a beginning be made in Southern Africa to form a regional development grouping which could in time include a growing number of other African states.

Endnote

1 Christopher Coker, "On this side of beyond: Experiencing Southern Africa in the year 2000", (roneoed), p 20. A revised version of this paper will appear in Africa Insight, vol 20, no 4, 1991.

The Comorian comitragedy: Final curtain on Abdallahism?

Dr Denis Venter, Chief Researcher at the Africa Institute, looks at the circumstances surrounding the death of the Comoros President Abdallah and at the prospects facing the island republic's new government.

The Comoros, named _"al-komr"_ or "the moon" because of the sometimes lunar-type landscape of the islands, lie in the ancient _"bahr-el-zanj"_ — the "sea of the blacks". The archipelago of four islands — Grande Comore, Anjouan, Mohéli, and Mayotte — slants north-west to south-east across the Mozambique Channel, like a series of stepping stones between the East African coastline and the northern shores of Madagascar. Expeditions from the Persian Gulf first visited Grande Comore in the tenth century, Polynesians voyaging to Madagascar touched the islands in the twelfth century, but blacks from Madagascar and Shiraz Arab migrants first settled the Comoros in AD 933. Portuguese navigators first sighted the archipelago around 1500 and soon afterwards the French and British strove to achieve political influence and dominance in the islands. Warring sultans caused inter-island strife and pirates used the bays and lagoons of Anjouan and Mohéli as lairs from which to prey on richly-laden East Indiamen in the 1600s. Commanding a vital gateway, the Comoros were frequented by seaborne powers venturing halfway round the world to garner the treasures of the Orient.[1]

After colonizing Mayotte in the 1840s to take advantage of its good anchorage, France extended its influence to the other three islands during the second half of the nineteenth century. Finally the archipelago was formally annexed in 1904, to become a rather sleepy corner of the French Empire. Indeed, the Comoros islands have seldom drawn much of the world's attention. Events have passed them by in the way modern-day supertankers pass each other in the night in the Mozambique Channel — unacknowledged and unrecognized. Comorians seem to live outside time — almost like the most famous inhabitant of their waters, the coelacanth.[2]

In no other Indian Ocean island group is there such a concentration of colourful Islamic civilization and Moorish architecture: minarets, mosques, old forts, ancient Arab towns, and dhow ports proclaim the islands' historic links with the Arabian Gulf. The Comorian people are a blend of Arab, African, Malay-Polynesian and Malagasy, and they profess the Islamic faith — the Comoros are one of Islam's southernmost strongholds and over 90 per cent of the population are Sunni Muslim. They speak Comorian — a dialect of kiSwahili, the Arabic-based lingua franca of East Africa — and, naturally, have also been strongly influenced by the French in matters of custom and language. Dominated by the 2 361 metre volcanic crater of Mount Karthala overlooking the capital Moroni, Grande Comore is the largest of the islands — the others being Anjouan and Mohéli — which constitute the Federal Islamic Republic of the Comoros.[3]

Although broadly similar in culture, language and politics, the inhabitants of Mayotte — the Mahorais — have been ruled by France since 1843, some sixty years longer than their Comorian counterparts. The principal political party, the Creole-led _Mouvement Populaire Mahorais_ (MPM), has lobbied hard for _département_ status such as that of Réunion and has so effectively mobilized public opinion that whenever France conducts a referendum on the island's future — as it is committed to doing — only a handful of Mahorais voters are likely to dissent from the party's francophile line. Over the years, a series of French leaders have traded the promise of _département_ status to the island's power-brokers in exchange for short-term electoral gains, but no government has been able to buy back or entirely shrug off its pledge of integration with France. Mayotte therefore continues to be a _collectivité territorial particuliére,_ represented in the National Assembly in Paris by a deputy and a senator who participate fully in French politics.[4]

The stormy islands: Recent history

After voting against independence in a referendum in 1958, the Comoros islands received a measure of self-rule in 1961. In 1974 a fresh referendum

was held in which a strong overall majority of voters (96 per cent) on the three islands of Grande Comore, Anjouan and Mohéli opted for autonomy, while a substantial majority (64 per cent) on the fourth island, Mayotte, cast their ballots in favour of remaining associated with France — Mayotte is mainly Christian, and is still governed as a French overseas territory. The ensuing row with Paris ended with Grande Comore, Anjouan and Mohéli unilaterally declaring their independence on 6 July 1975.[5]

Barely three weeks later, the newly proclaimed "moderate" president of the Comoros, Ahmed Abdallah Abderemane, was toppled in a French-inspired *coup d'état* and forced into exile in France. The coup-leaders employed a band of mercenaries led by Bob Denard, and installed a young populist leader, Ali Soilih, as president. Soilih soon turned out to be a radical socialist — in fact, a revolutionary zealot and rabid ideologue — who ruined an already impoverished economy with his precipitate imposition of socialist "reconstruction".[6] He embarked on a series of iconoclastic reforms: through brute force he tried to smash traditional social structures, attempted to wean the people away from Islamic practices and force-feed them socialism, and — as a symbolic act of radically breaking with the past — destroyed the government archives. His highly personalized, eccentric dictatorship and Maoist-style reign of terror lasted for three years, as *les jeunesses révolutionnaires* enforced his socialist programme with a zeal reminiscent of China's cultural revolution.[7] Its end came when the former colonial power had had enough of revolutionary chaos. Starved of French aid, the economy disintegrated and the regime collapsed. History turned full circle when Denard and his commando of thirty-odd men staged a mercenary invasion of the Comoros on 13 May 1978 and restored Ahmed Abdallah to power — probably the only successful mercenary coup carried out in the name of pro-Western democracy. Mercenaries from Madagascar had historically served Comorian warlords; now more mercenaries had arrived to take a hand in shaping Comorian destiny.[8]

After helping to install Soilih in 1975, Denard had left the islands for three years to embark on other African escapades. One of these was the bungled

coup attempt against President Mathieu Kérékou of Benin in 1977. Denard had already enjoyed a long career of soldiering in Africa and elsewhere: Indo-China, Algeria, Katanga, Biafra, Yemen, Libya, Kurdistan, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire and Angola. Then, in 1978, he was contracted to overthrow Soilih and reinstall Abdallah. In the following decade Denard gradually consolidated his power over the islands, assembling a hard-core group of fellow mercenaries around him in the *Garde Présidentielle*. They set themselves up in lucrative business ventures and became an influential force in local Comorian politics — Denard himself becoming the *éminence grise*, the proverbial power behind the throne.

But friction between the 300 to 500 local guards (the *Commando Noir*) and their white mercenary commanders flared into open mutiny in March 1985 and was one cause of a bungled coup bid in November 1987. Moreover, in 1984 the mercenaries were accused of channelling South African arms shipments through Moroni to the rebel *Resistência Nacional Moçambicana* (Renamo) forces in Mozambique; and in 1987 there were reports of arms finding their way to Iran by the same route.

Over the years, the continued presence of the mercenaries opened a deep rift between President Abdallah and the local populace, particularly after the attempted rebellions of 1985 and 1987, both of which were violently suppressed on Denard's orders.[9] Constant rumours of coup plots and an abiding and sometimes justifiable fear of a *Putsch* being hatched either somewhere in the islands or from abroad, reflected the fragile nature of the state's security. The presidential guard remained the principal security apparatus of the state and the president's growing dependence upon it as his first line of defence eventually led some observers to conclude that he had become a virtual hostage of his own security force. The core of the problem in the Comoros was that the country was being run very much as a village with a handful of tough men in charge.[10]

President Abdallah enjoyed a measure of popular support for the first few years after his restoration. Like the sultans of old, as president he held court under a mango tree in the courtyard of his residence, talking animatedly with village notables from all over the

islands. He was charismatic in a clownish sort of way, and had considerable charm and style — dressing in loud, colourfully embroidered Islamic long coats and turbans, as well as in Western attire. But he remained a merchant, using politics to advance his business interests. Among the first measures he took immediately after his return to power was one to re-acquire his monopoly of rice importation. He knew that many Comorians strongly objected to his highly personal mix of business and politics, and that he was hated for his immense wealth and for his autocratic style of government; but he could never stand any permanent opposition. And so he operated always on new balances, trying to create new structures conducive to stability. Yesterday's friends were today's enemies and vice versa.[11] He therefore built up an extensive apparatus of patronage and by dispensing favours tried to compensate for his prohibition of any kind of political freedom. It is almost impossible to assess how much popular support he really enjoyed, but it seems fair to say that strong family ties and a deeply personal power-base confined his support mainly to Anjouan island. Indeed, his clear favouritism towards Anjouan created a situation in which the island federation constantly threatened to disintegrate. And although Abdallah still derived some prestige from being the father of independence, his inability to resolve the mercenary question made him highly unpopular among young Comorians in particular, who saw the presence of the mercenaries as an insult to national sovereignty.[12]

South African and French strategic interests

The "Perfume Isles" — so named for their wealth of scented plants: ylang-ylang, jasmin, cassia, tuberose, rock alyssum — have for centuries been the target of someone's strategic design. From the early 1980s onwards, the political fortunes of the Comoros became closely tied to South Africa and France — both have extensive economic and military interests in the islands and the Indian Ocean region — as well as to the handful of white mercenaries who commanded the presidential guard.[13]

The Comoros islands offered a strategically important foothold for

South Africa and therefore came within the ambit of Pretoria's diplomatic and strategic initiatives. South African Airways has landing rights and refuelling facilities at Moroni, a potential staging post for flights to the Near East and Asia. And under Abdallah, South Africa's influence in the Comoros grew tremendously. Pretoria invested heavily in road construction, pilot projects in housing (using volcanic ash for the manufacturing of bricks), the building of schools, medical services (including clinics) and the running of a 1 300 acre experimental farm — the source of adaptable agricultural technology. South African aid to the Comoros since 1980 is estimated to total about US$50 million, and in the last few years the South African government — through the Credit Guarantee Corporation — has underwritten loans of some US$25 million for tourist development at Galawa and Itsandra.[14]

But all this technical and other assistance from South Africa, which maintains a trade mission in Moroni, was of an "unofficial nature" and very low-key, since for obvious reasons the Comorian regime did not wish to flaunt its relations with Pretoria. South Africa's developmental role therefore received little, if any, public attention inside the archipelago. However, it is equally understandable that the South Africans wanted some tangible benefits from their extensive aid to the Comoros, and felt strongly that relationships should be based on reciprocity and overlapping interests. But, ironically, in striving to appear the engine of development and trying to soften its odious international image, Pretoria found itself in the middle of a public relations nightmare, having to prop up an unsavoury and unpopular paramilitary regime.[15]

South Africa's interest in the strategically placed Comoros islands has given rise to much speculation. It was suggested that Pretoria's activity there was determined by the proximity of the archipelago to Frontline States such as Mozambique and Tanzania. As a listening post, the Comoros straddle an important international shipping lane — supertankers using the Cape route in supplying Persian Gulf oil to Europe and the United States all sail through the Mozambique Channel — and after South Africa built and manned a sophisticated radio monitoring facility

at Itsandra on Grande Comore island, it could track not only maritime movements in the strategic waterway but also African National Congress (ANC) operations in neighbouring Tanzania.[16] It was also alleged that Renamo training camps were set up in the Comoros, co-ordinated by Denard's mercenaries and controlled by South Africa; and that, under the personal supervision of Denard, Moroni long served as a staging post for South African arms traffic to Iran, particularly during the height of the Iran-Iraq conflict.[17] Although largely surreptitious until around 1986, South African investment in presidential security through financial and other assistance to the presidential guard also earned it an influential role in Comorian affairs. And, apart from the strategic and military value of having a presence in the Comoros, South Africa was able to exploit the potential of the islands as an entrepôt in sanctions-busting trade and, at the same time, develop a small but growing market for South African exports.[18]

France's presence in the Comoros, however, still dwarfs that of South Africa. France is the islands' main trading partner and biggest bilateral aid donor, providing around US$25 million a year in development aid. Paris seconds nearly 130 technocrats to run the civil service — the postal, water, electricity, and customs services are all headed by Frenchmen — and donates cash to meet the budget deficit, police officers to assist the _gendarmerie,_ and some 27 military experts to advise the fledgling defence force. A Franco-Comorian defence pact provides the final safety net. The independence of the islands is therefore a rather strange one, especially in view of reported plans for a French naval base in the Comoros and an air base on Mayotte. But United States-Soviet military disengagement is causing renewed demands for the demilitarization of the Indian Ocean, as France's role as the region's _gendarme_ is increasingly coming under threat.[19]

Seeking the life presidency: The demise of Abdallah

The 1978 constitution of the Comoros proclaims Islam the state religion; the state nevertheless remains secular in practice and has eschewed the fundamentalism of some of its Gulf sponsors.

A considerable degree of self-government was given to each of the three islands, but the constitution was amended in 1982 to give greater authority to the central government. The president was restricted to two six-year terms of office but, with his mandate due to expire in 1990, from 1988 onwards Abdallah embarked on a campaign to alter the constitution.

Despite federal ambitions, the islands are profoundly insular in outlook. The bulk of new investment and job creation has been on Abdallah's home island of Anjouan, and demonstrated an inability over the years to co-operate at cabinet level with the leaders of Grande Comore, who formed an unofficial opposition as a result. A pledge to introduce democratic procedures in the 1987 legislative elections was not honoured. In every presidential and legislative election, the government announced mandates of 98 per cent or more, but the Abdallah administration was widely accused of political repression, financial mismanagement and corruption — which included large-scale electoral fraud.[20]

Preserving his business fortune intact was not the least of the motives propelling President Abdallah into seeking a third term — a term that could only perpetuate rivalry between Paris and Pretoria, the random viciousness of Denard's presidential guard, the vexations of opposition groups at home and abroad and the possibility of violent overthrow. Through _Establissements Abdallah et Fils_ (EAF), Ahmed Abdallah controlled the largest of the Comoros' three private trading companies. Along with business rivals Amine Kalfane and Mohamed Ahmed, EAF dominated the marketing of the archipelago's chief exports of vanilla, cloves, copra and, to a lesser extent, ylang-ylang — products with a turnover of US$20 million in a favourable year. Most imported foodstuffs, building materials and consumer goods — a large proportion of the Comoros' total imports, estimated at US$52,5 million in 1988 — also passed through EAF's warehouses and supermarkets.[21]

Despite a spirited campaign by opposition leaders, emerging from enforced silence or exile for the first time in years, in a referendum held on 5 November 1989 Abdallah easily won approval by a 92,5 per cent vote for a key constitutional change, which

removed the rule limiting any individual to two six-year terms as president. This opened the way for him to run for a third six-year term of office. But his tight control of the political scene — exemplified by official toleration of opposition activity only in the few months before voting took place, and compounded by the fact that the campaign and polling were marred by widespread violence and electoral irregularities for which government supporters were chiefly responsible — must have undermined the referendum's validity as an indication of support for his regime. In opposition circles the poll was seen as a device to allow Abdallah to phase out the last vestiges of the original Comorian federal structure and move towards ever greater concentration and centralization of power at the top. As a result, the political atmosphere became extremely tense. Pressure on Abdallah now increased rapidly, despite his victory. That the referendum result was questionable made him even more vulnerable to French demands for the democratization of the political system; and, in addition, Paris continued to urge the replacement of Denard's mercenaries by a more orthodox French security force.[22]

Denard was highly unpopular with the French government not only because of his reputed close association with the Direction *Générale de la Sureté Extérieure* (the DGSE, France's overseas secret service — seen as a bastion of right-wingers, many in place since the days of Charles de Gaulle and Georges Pompidou), but also his rather embarrassing exploits over the years — not least of which was his attempt to overthrow the president of Benin. It is unlikely he could have remained in the Comoros without his Gaullist connections in the French secret service or his membership in the right-wing *Clan des Gabonais,* the club of mercenaries and legionnaires who based themselves in Gabon. When, in 1981, new French President François Mitterrand vowed to rid the Comoros of the mercenaries, however, other backers had to be found. South Africa, eager to spread its influence and gain a strategic foothold in the Indian Ocean, stepped in at about this time to fund the presidential guard, set up by Denard ostensibly to protect Ahmed Abdallah. But there was also another side to Denard: the desire to

monopolize the miniscule and beleaguered economy of the Comoros. He held major shares in the banking sector, import businesses, agricultural enterprises, and the tourist industry. It was this that eventually contributed to the souring of his relations with France and South Africa. More importantly, the presence of Denard in the Comoros had become an embarrassment to his tacit supporters abroad. Furthermore, Abdallah felt he was fast losing all power to the presidential guard, which brutally suppressed the widespread opposition to his regime.[23]

Abdallah knew that French goodwill, and thus aid money, would be crucial if he was to cover the 1990 budget deficit and clear the way for an IMF agreement and debt rescheduling. The changing mood in Pretoria was also pushing him towards a break with Denard. South African President F W de Klerk and the more liberal foreign policy team led by Foreign Minister Pik Botha were acting decisively to break the influence of the "securocrats" — the security establishment which had exercised such a determining hold on policy under former President P W Botha and provided the backbone of support and funding for Denard. Abdallah also had both longstanding allies and strong critics within Mitterrand's administration. Nevertheless, a broad consensus crystallized that the Comorian president's referendum victory would not be seriously questioned and that he would be pushed into further democratization of the domestic political scene and a break with Denard. The outcome of a military research study on the security forces in the islands merely strengthened France's resolve that the presidential guard should be absorbed into the regular *Forces Armées Comoriennes;* and South Africa agreed that Denard and his men should vacate the islands by the end of December 1989.[24]

It was the referendum early in November, which confirmed Abdallah in power, that apparently precipitated the president's final disaster. Although Denard generally kept a relatively low profile, all the evidence indicates that he wielded most of the real power in the islands. Abdallah, without much popular support, needed Denard and his mercenaries to keep him in power. In recent times, however, Abdallah seemed to have gained some popularity, and this may have been the inspiration for him to

finally confront Denard. Under pressure from opposition groups as well as from France, he had been toying with the idea of distancing himself from Denard and replacing the mercenaries with a private French security firm. Some sources claim that on the evening of 26 November Denard and a colleague, Commandant Marques (real name, Dominique Malacrino), became involved in a dispute with Abdallah over French demands that the mercenaries vacate the islands. The argument became heated, and Marques allegedly shot Abdallah and his aide-de-camp. A whole series of clearly transparent measures was then taken to cover up these unforeseen developments — actions that compounded the crisis.

Whatever the reality of Abdallah's death, it does not appear to have been part of an attempted coup.[25] Be that as it may: finally a successful power grab rocked this Indian Ocean island chain. Although Abdallah's assassination can be viewed as an isolated incident, the subsequent attempts at a cover-up escalated into a mercenary take-over of the islands via the presidential guard. In the next few days attacks were launched on the police headquarters and army barracks at Moroni, the regular army was disarmed, and the presidential guard took up strategic positions at government buildings and key installations.[26]

The aftermath: Denard dethroned

Both France and South Africa immediately condemned the assassination of Abdallah; but it took them more than a week to come out strongly against mercenary control of the islands. They viewed with deep concern the spectacle of modern-day pirates taking an independent state hostage and holding it to ransom.[27] In the first public admission that Pretoria had been financing the elite presidential guard at the direct request of Abdallah, on 4 December South African Foreign Minister Botha announced the suspension of all assistance to the guard and of other co-operation with the Comoros pending a resolution of the conflict. South Africa wanted "the immediate departure of all expatriate elements who obviously do not enjoy the support of the majority" of the Comorian people, and would assist in "all efforts aimed at allowing the people of the Comoros to decide their own

future in a peaceful and democratic manner". Similarly, the French foreign ministry expressed its concern that "an armed group is playing a role incompatible with the normal functioning of the state", and declared that it would not permit the Comorian people to be deprived of their legitimate rights.[28]

On 15 December Denard finally capitulated, after trying for nearly three weeks to withstand increasing international isolation and pressure and growing domestic turmoil as South Africa and France co-ordinated diplomatic and other moves to rid the Comoros of the mercenaries once and for all. Control over the islands now passed to a French military contingent flown in from neighbouring French-ruled Mayotte. Although the idea of French military intervention had been firmly resisted by Paris, there was never really much chance that the Mitterrand administration would tolerate the continued presence of mercenaries in the Comoros. This would have been a major reverse for a country which had always prided itself on its firm support for French allies in Africa. Comorian interim President Said Mohamed Djohar — who, as president of the Supreme Court, succeeded Abdallah when he was assassinated — was effectively calling on such support when he asked France to intervene and to provide military assistance to restore the country's security, in line with the Franco-Comorian defence treaty.[29]

After Denard's humiliating departure, Paris felt obliged to assume responsibility for security and sent 140 men from the _Régiment Parachutiste d'Infanterie de Marine_ and 90 marine commandos from the warship _Jaubert_. They were joined by some 50 officers and instructors from the _Détachement d'Assistance Militaire et d'Instruction_, who were to remain for two years to reorganize and train the Comorian armed forces. The reorganization of local security forces was undertaken to avoid the risk of creating another "army within an army", such as the presidential guard had come to be.

The Comorian government thanked South Africa for its efforts in helping to resolve the crisis following Abdallah's assassination and to finally release the islands from the mercenary stranglehold. Relations between the two countries have since been enhanced by Moroni's decision to upgrade the status

of Pretoria's representative to that of consul. (South Africa has had a diplomatic representative in the islands for several years, but until this he lacked any formal status, officially heading what was known as a "trade office".) Nevertheless, South Africa was comprehensively outmanoeuvred by the French during negotiations to remove Denard and his fellow mercenaries. The result was that while South Africa was left holding Denard and had to fly out most of his "wild geese", the French were left holding the Comoros.[30]

For his part, Denard may well have been justified in seeing himself as a casualty of South Africa's changed policies under the De Klerk government, which was no longer interested in propping up any outfit, regardless of reputation, in exchange for friendship in Africa. More directly, however, it was the incompetence, undisciplined nature and self-indulgent violence of the mercenaries which eventually led to Abdallah's death and the resultant crisis. Denard and his men failed to realize that their kind of security service was no longer appropriate in an Africa where old power struggles had been replaced by more fundamental battles for economic survival and financially viable government.[31]

It is not without irony that the apparent new climate of political tolerance and co-operation in the Comoros may be the one valuable legacy bequeathed to the islands by Denard's mercenary activities. While Comorians were deeply divided in their attitudes to Abdallah, there was almost universal revulsion at his brutal slaying. They will miss him with mixed feelings — they loathed his money-grabbing antics but delighted in his flamboyance. Perhaps more than anything, they will miss his very direct, almost primitive style of communication. But the brief rule by the mercenaries united the Comorian people in resentment, and the enforced departure of _les soldats perdus_ — lost soldiers who sought misdirected adventure — created a new sense of hope and expectation for the future.[32]

The Djohar administration: Return to multi-party democracy?

Denard's departure cleared the way for Djohar to re-establish effective constitutional government and to lay down

the ground rules for presidential elections. He had to accept the fact that Abdallah's death had brought a political era to an end and that he had no choice but to bring opposition groups in from the cold. Suddenly the political scene was wide open and Moroni bustling with feverish political activity, as the "saliva war" hotted up. Numerous political parties were formed or revived as opponents of the old regime returned from exile or emerged into the open.

Most political groups, hoping for time to re-establish themselves locally after the end of Abdallah's repressive regime, tried in vain to persuade Djohar to form a provisional, inter-party government of national unity to rule for up to two years before multi-candidate presidential elections. But Djohar was concerned that political life might degenerate into squabbling among many small groups, and fail to produce strong movements which could command and mobilize national support if they won elections. He was therefore anxious to hold presidential elections as soon as possible to provide for future political stability. A stable government with a proper mandate would also be in a better position to negotiate with foreign donors and chart a course to economic recovery. Stringent austerity measures would be needed to satisfy the demands of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for structural adjustment in the economy, and it would be much easier for a president recently endorsed by the electorate to carry these through.[33]

The two-round presidential elections, initially scheduled for 18 and 25 February 1990, were seen as marking an indisputable and essential turning-point in the politics of the archipelago. For the first time there would be really democratic elections, with eight candidates vying for the highest office in the country. Interim President Said Mohamed Djohar, seventy years old, the former head of the Supreme Court and backed by the governing _Union Comorienne pour le Progrés_ (UCP) as well as by Paris and Pretoria, struck a decisive blow in the run-up to the elections when he announced that, if elected, he would abolish the import-export monopoly which had been in the hands of the Ahmed Abdallah, Amine Kalfane, and Mohamed Ahmed families since 1978. The other contenders for the

presidency were 51-year-old Prince Said Ali Kemal, a former ambassador to France, grandson of the last sultan of Grande Comore, and founder of the Chuma party; 51-year-old Ali Mroudjae of the *Union pour une République Démocratique aux Comores* (URDC), a former prime minister and minister of foreign affairs, but of humble social origins; 48-year-old Abbas Djoussouf of the *Mouvement pour la Démocratie et le Progrés* (MDP), an ex-defence minister and a wealthy businessman; 54-year-old Mohamed Taki, leader of the *Union Nationale pour la Démocratie aux Comores* (UNDC), a former president of the Federal Assembly and living in self-imposed exile in Paris; Mohamed Ali Mbalia of the *Parti Socialiste des Comores (Pasoco);* Mohamed Hassanaly of the *Front Populaire* (FP); and Moustapha Said Cheikh of the *Front Démocratique* (FD). The latter is a well-known Marxist, but otherwise there were no apparent ideological differences between the candidates.[34]

The democratic process started inauspiciously. Political violence and attempts at electoral fraud led to the postponement of the February presidential elections, which were rescheduled for March.[35]

Under the Abdallah regime, opposition parties — whether operating clandestinely inside the Comoros or based overseas in Paris — almost always reflected narrow constituencies, frequently tied to the boundaries of old sultanates or simply crystallizing around former political favourites. In both cases, the main objective of these factions and their leaders was to jockey for the position of president whenever that office should fall vacant. Shifting allegiances reflect another tendency of dissident groups in the Comoros: the ease with which political platforms succumb to short-term coalitions.

The first round of the rescheduled presidential elections on 4 March proved an ideal testing ground for these assumptions. With eight candidates competing, and with 60 per cent of eligible voters casting their ballots, the following results were officially recorded:
Mohamed Taki — 24,35 per cent;
Said Mohamed Djohar — 23,07 per cent;
Said Ali Kemal — 13,71 per cent;
Abbas Djoussouf — 13,57 per cent;
Moustapha Said Cheikh — 9,12 per cent;
Ali Mroudjae — 9,03 per cent;
Mohamed Hassanaly — 4,56 per cent;

Mohamed Ali Mbalia — 2,56 per cent.

The choice for the second round on 11 March was narrowed down to that between Mohamed Taki and Said Mohamed Djohar. Abbas Djoussouf (MDP), Mohamed Hassanaly (FP) and Mohamed Ali Mbalia *(Pasoco)* pledged their support to Mohamed Taki (UNDC), while Said Ali Kemal *(Chuma),* Ali Mroudjae (URDC) and Mouzaoir Abdallah (also URDC, but not an election candidate) decided to back Said Mohamed Djohar (UCP).[36]

Djohar emerged victorious from the run-off election — gaining 55,06 per cent of the vote to Taki's 44,54 per cent.

The new president faced a number of problems. While the goodwill of foreign donors and neighbouring countries — glad to see the ending of the disastrous interlude of mercenary rule — seemed assured; there was no guarantee of domestic calm. The run-up to the election has seen the emergence of a plethora of parties, some representing purely local interests. It would take time for the system to achieve a stable balance of organized groups, built around ideology or policies rather than personalities. The new head of state would also have to reconcile the interests of the individual islands, particularly the fears of Anjouan that it would now be neglected following the demise of Ahmed Abdallah, and the pressure from inhabitants of Grande Comore for a greater share of development funds and political influence.

Such tensions may well resurface if fresh parliamentary elections are held soon. The president could well find that he does not have a federal assembly prepared to give him full support, or even an assembly dominated by a single party. However, there are signs that some politicians are prepared to coalesce around the presidential (and later also parliamentary) winner, and this could help to create a sense of unity, even if it is mainly motivated by hopes of a share in power.[37]

With the formation of a new government on 22 March, Djohar would have liked to mark a complete break with former President Abdallah's team. Not one minister in the last Abdallah cabinet survived the reshuffle, and none of the *official* advisers of the former head of state was taken up in the administration. Instead, some of Abdallah's former ministers, having split from his government in recent years, staged a

comeback — Djohar having shrewdly adopted the slogan "continuity and change" during the presidential election campaign. The government team, apparently just a transitional administration until a new constitution has been drawn up and a general election called, seemed to be the product of an awkward political mixture of the different factions which lent their support to Djohar in the second ballot of the March presidential elections.[38]

The present Comorian constitution and laws still effectively render the country a one-party state, but Djohar has tolerated a *de facto* multi-party system since he came to power in November 1989. Outlining his new government's programme after the March presidential elections, he promised to revise the constitution and restore *de jure* multi-party democracy before holding further elections. He also announced that there would be tighter control of public expenditure, an independent commission to investigate state finances and institute economic reforms, a reshaping of the education system, and a resumption of negotiations with the IMF and World Bank on a package of loans to underpin a structural adjustment programme.

Djohar's government seems determined, through dialogue and consultation, to achieve the democratization of political life — by establishing a multi-party system and promoting respect for basic human freedoms — and to effect the rehabilitation of economic and financial life — by eradicating corruption and preventing the embezzlement of public funds.[39]

Can structural adjustment save a deteriorating economy?

Today, the Comoros are in economic and financial chaos: indeed, the legacy of fifteen years of instability and neglect is an economic nightmare. The prospects for the future look even more bleak, given the country's few natural resources, limited infrastructure, a minimal industrial base, and the precarious hold on traditional export markets. Manufacturing development is limited and consists largely of export-oriented activities, such as vanilla-processing (vanilla being the main export crop), and handicrafts. The archipelago has an unexploited fishing potential,

mainly tuna, and the authorities have undertaken a two-year development scheme to build the necessary infrastructure for a fishing industry. Agriculture, however, is the major economic activity, contributing at least 40 per cent of the islands' small gross national product (GNP) while providing employment to some 80 per cent of the labour force as well as being the principal source of export earnings. But, generally, agriculture stagnates at the subsistence level.[40]

Because of low crop yields, domestic food production falls well short of annual population growth — which stands at a staggering 3,3 per cent per year — necessitating the importation of over half the Comoros' food requirements, notably rice. In the islands the "rice question" is of paramount importance. With 450 people per cultivable square kilometre, the archipelago is one of the most densely populated countries in the world. Although rice is grown on about one-third of the cultivable land, the Comoros currently imports more than twice as much as it produces, chiefly from Thailand and Pakistan. Rice imports peaked at 38 000 tonnes in 1987 — accounting for nearly 28 per cent of total imports by value. There has subsequently been an improvement but it is estimated that the deficit will rise to 80 000 tonnes by the end of the 1990s, an amount that cannot be met by either export growth (in other products) or an accelerated programme of cultivation. Nevertheless, the availability of rice at affordable prices is important politically in a country where per capita gross domestic product (GDP) is only US$240, while government salaries average US$160 a month.[41]

As cultivable land is limited, many of the better soils are devoted to export cash-crop production, mostly under expatriate estate management. As has been indicated, the Comorian economy is essentially agricultural, and the major export crops are vanilla, cloves, ylang-ylang, and copra. The price of cloves has collapsed to one-seventh of what it was in 1985, copra has been hit by substitutes on the market, and ylang-ylang suffers from erratic prices. Only vanilla has maintained some profitability, because of regional agreements between Comorian producers and their counterparts in Madagascar and Réunion which have helped to stabilize both production levels and prices. But

even the sales of vanilla — which brings in 70 per cent of foreign-exchange earnings — collapsed in the face of strong competition from Indonesia. Shipments fell to 63,3 tonnes in 1987, from 257,5 tonnes in 1986, reducing earnings to US$4,24 million. Exports of vanilla recovered to 220 tonnes in 1988, but the decline of the Comoros' market share is likely to continue as Indonesia — a newcomer to this specialist trade — refines its product quality.

Although exports of the Comoros main agricultural products (vanilla, cloves, and ylang-ylang) have risen from US$11,36 million in 1987 to US$20,76 million in 1988, imports have remained more or less the same for those years at some US$52 million. Despite the improvement in the export figures, the huge trade deficit will therefore upset an already burdensome debt-repayment schedule. Although the total seems paltry by mainland standards, servicing of the islands' debts of US$187,7 million accounted for 65 per cent of export revenue in 1987.[42]

Ahmed Abdallah was openly hostile to the World Bank's proposals for structural adjustment, perceiving that the radical fiscal reforms that lay at the centre of the programme would further erode his support, cramp his seigneurial style and ultimately dismantle the regime which had allowed his business interests and those of his protégés to flourish. His death has removed a major obstacle to the liberalization of the Comoros' quasi-feudal economy and the implementation of a tough structural adjustment programme. Yet even his last administration had no choice but to accept the need for adjustment measures to correct a deteriorating economic situation. The 1989 budget already signalled the government's intentions to cut public spending, partly by reducing the number of civil servants, and to increase tax revenues in a bid to attract multilateral funding.[43]

Additional measures proposed by the World Bank with a view to cutting government expenditure included the closure, privatization or reorganization of parastatals, more rigorous tax collection — with a warning that peasant farmers and share-croppers may become eligible for the first time — and increased duties on imported luxury goods. This points to the fact that the customs service will have to be

completely overhauled as one of the first steps in a structural adjustment programme. Corruption and fraud meant the government collected less than half the 1987 revenue target — sufficient to meet only one-third of recurrent expenditure. In 1989, again, revenue from customs tariffs fell short by some 60 per cent on estimates. Wastage and mismanagement, coupled with state corruption at all levels and a hijacking of the economy by the politicians, do not bode well for the country. In fact, it now seems as if kleptocracy — government by theft — has become systemic in the Comoros, as in so many parts of the African mainland.[44]

Besides increasing the prices of basic foodstuffs there is little room for the government to manoeuvre, other than through civil service reforms. In a total population of some 409 000, about 8 000 adolescents leave school every year, only to become unemployed. To compound matters, about 60 per cent of the population are less than 20 years old; and at the beginning of the 1989 school year it was estimated that some 49 per cent of children between the ages of 12 and 14 did not even attend school. With so few alternatives, people seeking work have swollen the ranks of the administration, so that today there is one civil servant for every 45 Comorians — making the government the largest single employer, with a total of some 8 000 staff members. Officials tend to be poorly educated and also badly motivated, partly because empty state coffers mean that they are paid only irregularly, and often not at all for long periods. Naturally, the IMF and the World Bank are asking for a reduction of some 1 700 posts in the short term, chiefly through premature retirement or streamlining. Although deplorable, given that government service offers the only employment opportunity to the middle class, this is put into perspective by noting that it also consumes close to 60 per cent of recurrent expenditure.[45]

Provisions dealing with the social aspects of the IMF structural adjustment programme for the Comoros are designed to cushion the population from the impact of any stringent measures, the most drastic effect being on the prices of basic foodstuffs such as rice, meat and sugar. Implicit in the World Bank's recommendations on the issue is the recognition that food self-

sufficiency — an important strand of the 1983-90 development strategy for the Comoros — is no longer a realistic target. A substantial increase in food prices is central to the easing of the heavy import bill, but the Bank is also asking (in addition to a reduction in the civil service, higher import taxes, more rigorous tax and customs-duty collection, and an enlargement of the tax base) for an end to the existing marketing arrangements for vanilla.

Providing 80 per cent of the islands' exports and 70 per cent of government revenue, vanilla is an area of special sensitivity. The World Bank is committed to export-led growth, first through the removal of constraints and, second, through the diversification into and promotion of new export crops such as cardamom, cinnamon, black pepper, fruit (especially mangoes and lychees), and exotic flowers for air shipment to markets in Europe and the Middle East. To meet the first criterion, exporters will enjoy a 35 per cent reduction in export taxes as well as the abolition of levies. But, given the negligible demand for cloves and coprah, and the fierce undercutting that has characterized the vanilla trade over the last few years, there are distinct limitations to export growth. Markets are contracting, whatever the price.[46]

In exchange for compliance with these measures, the IMF has offered a US$7,2 million transitional loan to cover the social costs of adjustment, while the World Bank has pledged US$6,6 million to agricultural support. Of greater value, however, is the prospect of a return to an orthodox relationship with traditional donors, most of whom had been angered by the Abdallah government's odd housekeeping methods and the excesses of the presidential guard. This could clear the way for rescheduling of the Comoros' external debt, of which the bulk is owed to Arab sources, an easing of the country's severe debt-servicing costs, and an influx of bilateral funds. Total foreign debt amounted to US$198 million in 1989, according to Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) figures — a heavy burden for a nation of 409 000 people with a GDP of some US$160 million a year. Total foreign investment amounted to around US$7 million in 1988 but was 80 per cent financed by external aid.[47]

France has hinted that its indispensable injections of budgetary aid would depend upon an IMF agreement. In 1988 the budget deficit stood at 7 percent of total GDP but a policy of voluntary restraint reduced it to 3,5 percent of GDP in 1989. However, neither figure takes account of *ad hoc* budgetary assistance from France, usually in the form of unpaid salaries. Paris has traditionally helped to bridge the budget deficit, with annual aid of around US$5,2 million, but in 1989 it refused to raise its budgetary assistance or advance the disbursement schedule until there had been substantial progress towards an adjustment programme. Thus budgetary subventions have played an important role in covering large fiscal deficits, while additional French aid funds have helped to offset a weak external account aggravated by the recent depressed markets for Comorian exports. In fact, the biggest dose of financial support comes from the French *Fonds d'Aide et de Coopération,* which extends some US$17 million annually. France, therefore, remains the primary economic partner of the Comoros.[48]

Conclusion

Ancient Polynesians, pirates, planters, slavers, Malagasy warlords, colonial imperialists and post-Congo mercenaries — all have been players in the relentless tale of brutality and high adventure that is Comorian history. The new leadership in the Djohar Administration will face an insecure future — if the Comoros' past is anything to go by. Indeed, the legacy of twelve years of autocratic rule by Abdallah and the mercenary stranglehold on Comoran society is a political vacuum and an economic nightmare.

The implementation of a structural adjustment programme, delayed by the turmoil following Abdallah's assassination and the ensuing presidential elections, will be a priority for the new Comorian government, although politically hazardous. The goal is to rein in the budget deficit over the next three years through a mixture of spending cuts, improved revenue collection, and better management of public enterprises. Although the Djohar Administration is close to achieving IMF and World Bank support for its adjustment measures, the social effects of the

programme — notably higher food prices and public sector retrenchment — are likely to depress living standards without an influx of supplementary financial support. Both institutions have already offered to provide loans to rescue the economy from debt arrears and to support agriculture. But the economy will continue to remain heavily dependent on foreign aid and vulnerable to fluctuating prices for its main export crops, vanilla, cloves, and ylang-ylang. In fact, the islands have little but the tourist industry to rely on. However, the tourist potential of the archipelago is rather limited, since its volcanic islands have few sand beaches. Even with new revenues from tourism, the Comoros will remain one of the poorest countries in the world.

South Africa's strategic foothold and commercial interests in the Comoros now appear at risk following a virtual take-over by France of the islands. Though South African commercial penetration of the archipelago's economy will probably continue, possibly on a smaller scale, the influence-garnering aid projects that cost South Africa millions of rand may be discontinued as the French re-assert themselves. French efforts at preventing South African domination of the tourist industry in the islands — the South African Sun International group recently pulled out because of political instability, social unrest and unfavourable economic conditions — is symbolic of a broader battle for influence: Paris is clearly concerned that while French business loses interest in the Comoros, the South Africans are only too willing to step in. As the state with most influence in the south-west Indian Ocean area, France has recently also moved to counter a growing economic threat from countries in Asia (notably Japan, Malaysia, and India) and the Middle East, as well as from Australia.

Recent events in the Comoros highlight the importance of Mayotte and how well the French can put it to use to protect their interests in the Indian Ocean. And a massive French development programme for the island makes the possibility of reintegration with the rest of the archipelago ever more remote. In addition to major investments in a deepwater port, public housing and infrastructure, and an international airport, far-reaching reforms in land and labour laws are

planned. These developments will raise the living standards of Mahorais even further above those of Comorians. But Mayotte's peculiar status poses a constant problem for France, which is regularly rebuked in international and regional forums for its role on the island — a motion on the order paper of the 44th Session of the United Nations General Assembly again called for an end to the occupation of Mayotte and other French island possessions in the south-west Indian Ocean. Mayotte also remains the most important foreign-policy issue for the Comoros and relations with France are therefore somewhat strained. The position taken in Moroni is that Mayotte belongs to the Comoros whether the island's inhabitants like it or not, since the original referendum held on all four islands yielded a clear overall majority in favour of independence from France. Moreover, it is felt in the Comorian capital that whatever the French invest in their tiny tropical territory is somehow being withheld from the republic as a whole.

French influence, especially over the Comorian security forces now being reshaped by French military advisers, will be much greater than under Abdallah. But Paris will have to be careful not to overplay its public influence on the new regime if it is to avoid being labelled "neo-colonialist". Relations with South Africa are likely to revert to a much more orthodox trading and diplomatic relationship. This will suit the new leadership in Pretoria, which co-operated closely with France in ousting Denard. Ties with the major, conservative Arab aid donors in the Gulf should also improve: relations strained by suspicions that the Comoros became a conduit for South African arms exports to Iran during the Gulf War. But, in the final analysis, the complex situation in present-day Comoros is the creation of both France and South Africa — and the two bear the primary responsibility for the sorry state of affairs in these tragic islands.

Notes and references

1 "The Comoros", *African Connexion*, vol 4, no 2, 1989, p 14; and *Saturday Star* (Johannesburg), 2 December 1989.

2 A Yahya, "Confounded Comoros: What is holding back the Comoros struggle against dependency?", *Africa Events*, vol 6, no 3, March 1990, p 15; *African Connexion, vol

4, no 2, 1989, p 14; *Sunday Times* (Johannesburg), 16 April 1989; and *Business Day* (Johannesburg), 28 November 1989.

3 *African Connexion*, vol 4, no 2, 1989, p 14; and Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), *Madagascar, Comoros, Country Profile, 1989-90*, London: EIU, 1990, pp 2, 32 and 36.

4 EIU, *op cit*, pp 35 and 36.

5 P Sidler, "Poverty and dependence on the Comoros", *Swiss Review of World Affairs*, vol 39, no 6, September 1989, p 28; and *Business Day*, 28 November 1989. After colonizing the Comoros in the early 1900s, the French ruled the islands from Dzaoudzi, the capital of Mayotte — already annexed in 1843. French settlers had married local women over the years and a tiny but vocal Creole community had come into existence. When in 1962 the president of the new self-governing authority, Said Mohamed Cheikh, moved the capital to Moroni on Grande Comore, there was an uproar of protest from the Mouvement Populaire Mahorais (MPM). So when Ahmed Abdallah declared the islands independent of France in 1975 to foil French designs on Mayotte and take the wind out of the sails of the more radical opposition parties, Mayotte seized the opportunity to whip up separatist sentiment and promptly stated that it would remain French. Paris thus found a convenient and secure niche to slip into: A Yahya, *op cit*, p 15.

6 *The Citizen* (Johannesburg), 8 February 1989; and *Saturday Star*, 2 December 1989

7 P Sidler, *op cit*, p 28; "Comoros: Paradise Lost for a mercenary", *Africa Report*, vol 34, no 6, November-December 1989, p 5; and A Hartley, "Comoros: Paradise Lost", *Africa Report*, vol 35, no 1, March-April 1990, p 38.

8 *The Citizen*, 8 February 1989; *Business Day*, 28 November 1989; and *Saturday Star*, 2 December 1989.

9 EIU, *op cit*, p 34; "Comoros: Denard dethroned", *Africa Events*, vol 6, no 1, January 1990, p 7; *Sunday Times*, 16 April 1989; and *Sunday Star* (Johannesburg), 17 December 1989. Bob Denard was born in Laspasse in southern France in 1929, the son of an official in the French equivalent of the Colonial Office that administered the then extensive French colonial empire. He attended the French Naval School of Mechanics before joining the French Army. After fighting in the war in Indo-China, he left the army to enlist in the Moroccan police force. When the Algerian independence conflict erupted, he rushed headlong into it, reportedly ending up in the shadowy world of the rebel French army units (the infamous OAS) fighting the De Gaulle government. From there it was but a short step into the world of the mercenary, selling his undoubted skills. Denard (sometimes using aliases such as Gilbert Bourgeaud, Colonel Jean Maurin

and, in the Comoros, Mustapha Mahdjou) has been described as "charismatic, clever, highly intelligent, manipulative, meglomanical — and totally ruthless": *The Times* (London), 1 December 1989; and *Saturday Star*, 9 December 1989.

10 EIU, *op cit*, p 33; *Le Monde* (Paris), 25 November 1989; and *Sunday Star*, 17 December 1989.

11 EIU, *op cit*, p 33; and *The Independent* (London), 29 November, 1989.

12 EIU, *op cit*, p 33; and *idem, Madagascar, Mauritius, Seychelles, Comoros: Country Report, no 1, 1990*, London: EIU, 1990 p 45.

13 *The Citizen*, 8 February 1989; *Saturday Star*, 2 December 1989; and *Sunday Star*, 17 December 1989.

14 "The Comoros connection", *Africa Report*, vol 34, no 1, January-February 1989, p 49; *Africa Report*, vol 34, no 6, November-December 1989, p 5; *The Citizen*, 8 February 1989; and *Saturday Star*, 2 December 1989. See also *Financial Times* (London), 13 January 1989; *International Herald Tribune* (London), 5 December 1989; and *Sunday Times*, 10 June 1990.

15 *Africa Report*, vol 34, no 1, January-February 1989, p 49; D Baum, "Comoros: South African showpiece?", *New African*, no 257, February 1989, p 18; P Sidler, *op cit*, p 28; *Sunday Times*, 16 April 1989; and *Saturday Star*, 2 December 1989.

16 P Sidler, *op cit*, p 28; EIU, *Madagascar, Comoros, ... op cit*, p 33; *Sunday Star*, 17 December 1989; and *Weekly Mail* (Johannesburg), 21 December 1989.

17 D Kendo, "Comores: L'Ordre Mercenaire", *Jeune Afrique*, nos 1511/1512, 18 and 25 December 1989), p 13.

18 EIU, Madagascar, Comoros, ... *op cit*, pp 33 and 36; *The Citizen*, 8 February 1989; and *Weekly Mail*, 21 December 1989.

19 EIU, *Madagascar, Comoros, ... op cit*, p 36; *Africa Events*, vol 6, no 1, January 1990, p 7; *The Citizen*, 8 February 1989; *Le Monde*, 25 November 1989; and *Business Day*, 7 December 1989.

20 EIU, *Madagascar, Comoros, ... op cit*, p 34; and *The Star*, 28 November 1989.

21 "The Comoros: A slight hiccup in structural adjustment", *Market South East*, vol 4, no 3, March 1990, pp 10 and 11.

22 EIU, *Madagascar, Mauritius, ... op cit*, pp 40 and 41.

23 *Ibid*, p 42; A Rajab, "Comoros: Case for OAU intervention", *Africa Analysis*, no 87, 8 December 1989, p 4; and A Hartley, *op cit*, pp 38-39.

24 EIU, *Madagascar, Mauritius, ... op cit*, pp 41-42; and A Hartley, op cit, p 39.

25 *Africa Report*, vol 34, no 6, November-December 1989, p 5; and *Le Monde*, 9 November 1989.

26 *Le Monde*, 9 November 1989; and *The Times*, 1 December 1989.

27 A Rajab, *op cit*, p 4; and A Hartley, *op cit*, p 40.

28 *International Herald Tribune*, 5 December 1989; and *The Independent*, 11 December 1989.

29 EIU, *Madagascar, Comoros, ... op cit*, pp 43 and 44; *The Times*, 5 and 14 December 1989; *The Star*, 14 and 15 December 1989; and *Sunday Star*, 17 December 1989. To pile on the pressure in the days before Denard's fall, an impressive naval task force was assembled in the area; four warships lay just over the horizon off Moroni, while more paratroopers and naval commandos, six Transall transport aircraft and five Puma helicopters stayed in reserve on Mayotte.

30 "Comoros: The stormy islands", *Africa Events*, vol 6, no 2, February 1990, p 14; "Comoros: Farewell to Bob Denard", *Indian Ocean Newsletter*, no 411, 23 December 1989, p 4; *The Times*, 5 December 1989; *Sunday Star*, 17 December 1989; *The Star*, 20 December 1989; and *Agence France Presse* (Paris), 20 December 1989.

31 EIU, *Madagascar, Mauritius, ... op cit*, p 44; and "Of bats and dogs", *The Economist*, vol 313, no 7633, 16-22 December 1989, p 55.

32 EIU, *Madagascar, Mauritius, ... op cit*, p 46; A Hartley, *op cit*, pp 38 and 40; and *The Independent*, 29 November, 1989.

33 EIU, *Madagascar, Mauritius, ... op cit*, pp 40, 44 and 45-46; and *Africa Events*, vol 6, no 2, February 1990, p 14.

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Political transition, development and the role of civil society

Mark Swilling, of the Centre for Policy Studies, University of the Witwatersrand, looks at the development debate emerging from behind the current political negotiations in South Africa, and argues for a non-statist, community-based development strategy.

Introduction

The political transition process that began on 2 February 1990 is proceeding on its predictably unplanned and uncertain way. Nelson Mandela is correct to argue that it is not yet irreversible. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that the old rules of the game no longer apply and the pieces on the political chessboard have moved into endgame positions. However, as it becomes ever easier to predict what the final moves are going to be as the major players resolve the fundamental constitutional questions of state power new questions have already begun to loom large. These revolve, in essence, around the nature of development.

It is arguable that even before real constitutional negotiations begin, the major players have already played their political and economic cards and revealed that there are no fundamental differences when it comes to citizenship and the nature of the nation-state, and property rights and the economic role of the state.

The critical and seemingly unsolvable problem that all the players involved in the transition are beginning to face with fear and trepidation is the problem of development. In essence this boils down to a single question: What must be done to match the resources available for development with the basic needs that must be met?

Although simple, this question cuts to the root of the apartheid legacy. It implies that we know what the needs are and we have the resources to address these needs, but we have a social structure, economic system, bureaucratic apparatus and political culture that will fundamentally obstruct the flow of resources into projects capable of addressing basic needs in a way that will have a structural impact during the transitional and post-apartheid era. The survival into the post-apartheid era of the current bureaucratic machinery, combined with the administrative incapacity of a future majority government — because of the past exclusion of the majority from the skills of governance — will mean that, despite ANC policy commitments to the contrary, the state will not be able to become an "instrument for development" in less than a decade and maybe even two decades.

The policy question that emerges from this argument is obvious. Given the limitations the state will face in dealing with these blockages, where must resources be deployed to empower those involved in development at the grassroots level to identify, obtain and manage resources in an effective and efficient manner?

Proceeding from this basic policy question, the rest of this article will attempt to provide a brief analysis of the nature of the transition, the basic positions of the major players and some future scenarios. It will also attempt an overview of the development debate; and a short assessment of the available domestic resources for (primarily urban) development; the future of civil society and its role in development; and a possible role for external donor agencies in development.

Transition: Beyond reform and revolution

The South African lexicon is always the best weather-vane of political change. This is why we should take very seriously what South Africans mean these days when they talk about "transition". It is a word used repeatedly in the Harare Declaration and by the National Party (NP). In township streets, comrades use it; television commentators use it. The words "reform" and "revolution" have disappeared from the language of political leadership. Instead, a new language of legitimacy is being created and used every day. This provides a sign of the times.

To be more precise, "non-revolutionary regime transitions" — to use Schmitter _et al_'s terms — refer to those processes of political change that have occurred in Southern Europe, Latin America, Eastern Europe (and are now beginning in South East Asia and Africa) whereby societies previously dominated by authoritarian regimes underwent a transition to democracy without going through a revolution. Until very recently, it was accepted

wisdom among South Africans that "people in power do not voluntarily give up their power". This is why a negotiated settlement was thought to be impossible, leaving only the alternatives of revolution from below for those wanting power and reform from above for those wishing to retain it (while simultaneously pretending to want to surrender it).

Clearly, South Africans were wrong and have now admitted this. Instead, we are going through a transition driven by one primary dynamic: the regime incumbents and the interests they represent are now genuinely committed to a process of fundamental change, and the regime opponents believe them. The critical issue now is no longer whether fundamental change will happen, but on whose terms. The incumbents reckon that their interests will be served in the final outcome because they think they can retain control of the pace and terms of change. The regime opponents acknowledge they were caught off guard, but have a better than good chance of gaining the initiative. Consequently, both the regime incumbents and their opponents have concluded that they have more to lose by resisting the transition dynamic than by trying to determine its nature, terms and direction.

The peripheral players who play a crucial role are those on the far left and far right who have rejected the terms of the transition altogether. Both, however, ensure that the centre players become increasingly committed to the transition, knowing that to back out would mean losing substantial ground to the anti-transition forces. For every person who joins the right wing, another ounce of pressure is place on the NP to settle. For every new recruit to the PAC, the ANC becomes increasingly dependent on a settlement.

The far right and far left are not the only important peripheral players. There are also the "transition missionaries". At the centre of one of South Africa's biggest growth industries, these are the people with huge resources who go around converting the masses to transition. In schools, factories, neighbourhood meetings, industrial bargaining meetings, local-level negotiations and in an endless and mind-boggling number of seminars, workshops, conferences and congresses, these people are preparing the hearts

and minds of South Africans for the "new South Africa". In essence they are creating the new non-racial middle class culture a future democratic state is going to require so desperately. To this extent they run the risk of reinforcing a more radical working class politics with a socialist political project. As the Latin Americans found out during the period after World War II, this would be the logical consequence of imposing a formal political democracy on one of the most unequal societies in the world.

It is worth taking a close look at how the NP government arrived where it is today. It began its fifth decade in power with a strategy fundamentally different from those pursued by the P W Botha administration; and yet it was a product of the contradictions of previous strategies. State strategy during the 1979-1990 period can be summarized as follows:

- 1979-1985: total strategy — some urban reforms, labour relations reforms, tricameralism and regionalization. But bantustans, influx control and disenfranchisement of the majority remained.
- 1985-1986: beyond total strategy towards transition — led by the verligte technocrats in the state, influx control was dropped, bantustans acknowledged as non-viable, failure of tricameralism acknowledged, citizenship restored and local government changed to include Africans at local level.
- 1986-1990: "WHAM" ("winning-hearts-and-minds") introduced with the declaration of the State of Emergency in mid-1986 — urban upgrading, new constitution needed, negotiations, and so on, but all without the ANC and with the extra-parliamentary movement in jail.

Although F W de Klerk's personality is an important factor in the shaping of the post-P W Botha NP, the local, regional and international context of his accession to power must be regarded as being far more significant. The combined effect of the following seven critical factors must be taken into account:

- Changes in the world balance of power: *perestroika,* global super-power co-operation, the collapse of Eastern Europe, Thatcher's interventionist role and the assertive pro-settlement stance in Africa all redefined South Africa's position in the world system in both objective

and subjective terms.

- Conflict resolution in south-western Africa: independence in Namibia, military defeat in southern Angola and moves towards "national reconciliation" in Angola and Mozambique redefined South Africa's regional role.
- Economic crisis: before his resignation as Governor of the Reserve Bank in 1989, Gerhard de Kock baldly stated that no economic solution would be found until there was a political resolution of the constitutional question. This was the cue for the rise of the "econocrats" into dominant positions in the corridors of power.
- Continuation of resistance and the failure of the State of Emergency: although the Emergency broke national co-ordination, the churches and unions were catapulted into the forefront of opposition, and resistance continued at the local level, especially with the rent boycotts. The turning point, however, was the detainees' hunger-strike in February 1989, when P W Botha was convalescing after his stroke and so was not present to overrule a liberal cabinet decision to release the detainees.
- Intra-state conflicts: the enormous power concentrated within the Office of the State President and the use P W Botha made of this power, combined with the dominance of the "securocrats", resulted in severe and bitter conflicts between the NP and the "securocrats", with the former rallying around De Klerk in a bid to re-establish its power. The result was the reassertion of the NP's will to govern as a party, in contrast with its role under Botha.
- Unreliability of the security forces: the Rockman Affair brought focus to bear upon a police force increasingly dependent on non-white personnel, who could not be relied upon always to obey orders to use force, and on the role of right wingers who tended to exceed instructions.
- The liberalization of business: slowly and grudgingly, South African business began to perceive its own interests through the ideological mists, as the consequences of delaying the inevitable moved from the "opportunities" list to the "threats" list in their SWOT analyses.

The NP's constitutional strategy since P W Botha's political demise can be divided into two periods. Between July 1989 and March 1990 its constitutional policy was based, in essence, on "group rights." During this period the NP envisaged the enfranchisement of South African citizens in a new united South African nation-state via their voluntary membership of a particular "group" or "non-group". This would have resulted in a multicameral legislature representative of all those citizens who chose to be represented as groups and a chamber for those who wanted to be contracted out of group classification. Decision-making would then have occurred according to the principle of "concurrent majorities" — the majority parties in each chamber would have to reach consensus. Whereas "group rights" were protected in the constitution in this way, it was envisaged that a Bill of Rights could then be enacted that would protect individual rights, backed up by an independent judiciary.

This constitutional scheme fell apart because no matter how far the NP twisted the English language, the bottom-line in this scenario was the retention of a "group" concept in the law. It was realized that an alternative system was required. The breakthrough came when the NP suddenly discovered that democracy is a package deal including an "electoral system" and that such systems can be manipulated to incorporate endless complexities to suit those who make the rules. And so the 1990 NP constitutional strategy comes without "group rights", multicameralism and "concurrent majorities". Instead, the buzz-words are "minorities", "protections", "proportional representation" and "federalism".

The NP has accepted that the "majority should rule". However, it also argues that "minorities" need to be "protected from the abuse of power" by the majority. What this amounts to is:

- a bicameral parliament with an upper house elected on a one-person-one-vote basis;
- a lower house elected on the basis of proportional representation;
- a constitutional proviso that laws must be passed by both chambers;
- a proviso that either a two-thirds majority in the lower house must pass the bill or else one third (or less) of that house is entitled to a veto;

- a political prediction based on the success of the DTA in Namibia that an NP-centred multiracial coalition of minorities would have more than one third of the representatives in the lower house or, alternatively, the ANC-centred coalition of majorities would not have two thirds;
- a weak executive and even weaker head of state;
- a justiciable Bill of Rights that would protect property rights, above all else;
- maximum devolution of power, coupled to decentralization and delegation where required.

This neat but complex constitutional strategy is non-racial and even formally democratic. In reality, it would leave existing power relations largely intact because it would prevent the majority from removing the linchpins of the existing structure of privilege and power: property rights; the civil service; the security forces; the market; the Reserve Bank; and the integrity of the currency, loan commitments and financial system.

In short, by accepting non-racialism and democracy in name, the NP's strategy aims to achieve the same as many establishment forces are trying to do in other spheres: urbanization (Urban Foundation policy), the workplace, small business, land, local government, job creation and housing. Without implying the existence of an establishment conspiracy, the aim of all these initiatives can best be described as "deracialized apartheid", that is to say radical deracialization on terms that leave the decisions about power and economic resources largely in the hands of the class that makes these decisions at the moment. This class, however, will be deracialized.

Will the ANC be forced into accepting this scenario? If it remains as weakly organized as it is at present, the answer is that it probably will accept it in some modified form. At the moment its constitutional principles as summarized by Albie Sachs do not fundamentally contradict the NP approach. These are:

- equal rights for all South African citizens irrespective of race, colour, gender or creed;
- a government accountable at all levels to the people through periodic and free elections based on the principles of universal suffrage on a

common voter's roll;
- a mixed economy;
- protection of fundamental rights and freedoms through a justiciable Bill of Rights;
- a separation of powers, including an independent and non-racial judiciary entrusted with the task of upholding the rule of law and the principles of the constitution.

In reality, the ANC's top leadership will not get its own way. This leadership will have to contend with an array of social forces within its ambit with a far more radical agenda. The unions and civic associations in particular will not remain quiescent in the face of what may be perceived as too great a compromise at national level.

To complete this section, it may be worth listing five possible scenarios to help comprehend what may happen over the next five to ten years.

Transformation: this is the ideal subscribed to by the ANC and its allies and boils down to a smooth linear process, which must start with the creation of an "interim government" to supervise the transition, including the convening of a constituent assembly to adopt the new constitution. Because it is purposefully conceived as a threat to the sovereignty of the existing state and the NP's determination to maintain control of the terms of transition, this model is widely supported at a grassroots level.

Grand coalition: this represents the option preferred by the left of the NP and right wing of the ANC. A compromise between the NP's multi-racial cabinet idea and the ANC's interim government, this would be a grand coalition of pro-"new South Africa" forces constituted into some sort of supraparliamentary council of state or constitutional chamber. This body would adopt a constitution and, following a referendum of those "presently represented in parliament", the existing parliament would adopt it and by so doing dissolve itself. The first general election would then take place and the new system be initiated. The existing executive — albeit with some black leaders in the cabinet — would remain the supervisor of the transition.

Regression: if De Klerk were to lose his nerve and sufficient NP MPs were to resign in marginal seats to pave the way for a general election of by-elections, the CP would have a chance of

mounting a regression strategy during the dying moments of the old order. If this were coupled to an armed strategy, it could prove more successful than the "new South Africa" optimists would like to imagine. If, however, the right wing split into hard core extremists committed to terrorism and a CP-led mainstream committed to coming to the negotiating table, then this option would fall away.

Revolution: a revolutionary strategy is by no means dead in the ranks of the union movement and among the youth organizations, civic associations and left-wing parties. Riding a wave of popular uprisings, which could be triggered by white "fascist" forces linked to black vigilante terrorism, the revolutionaries might be able to convince the leadership to forego negotiations in order to give the revolutionary forces a chance to strike for power. In this scenario, an interim government would only be useful to the extent that it would constrain the security forces prior to a revolutionary bid for power. In other words, "dual power" would be a stepping-stone to "seizure of power".

Permanent stalemate: if no major stakeholder or coalition of stakeholders managed to secure the combined coercive, organizational and political resources to seize the strategic initiative decisively within the next year, we could be looking at a prolonged stalemate. In this scenario, nothing would move, while under everyone's feet the economy declined, morale disintegrated, investment evaporated and the society polarized.

Although it is too early to predict with any degree of certainty which of these scenarios is the most likely, current indications are that the grand coalition is the most probable, even though it has severely negative consequences for development. It is to this aspect that we should now turn.

Politics, economic policy and the development debate

It is arguable that with the exception of some minor (albeit difficult) problems on the margins of the debate, the major stakeholders are in broad agreement when it comes to constitutional and economic policy principles.

On constitutional policy, they agree on:
- a single, united South Africa;

- one-person-one-vote in a unitary electoral system;
- proportional representation;
- bicameralism;
- a hybrid presidential system;
- a Bill of Rights;
- an independent judiciary;
- devolution/decentralization of some sort;
- settlement by negotiation;
- political pluralism;
- protection of cultural values and rights;
- nation-building;
- preservation of traditional liberal rights and liberties such as association, expression and habeas corpus.

On economic policy, they are agreed on:
- retention of the market mechanism;
- no unnecessary nationalization beyond the preservation of the existing public sector;
- redistribution of some kind;
- economic growth through production, not financial speculation;
- a role for foreign investment;
- a link between inward industrialization and the export sector;
- technological upgrading;
- job creation;
- a unionized labour force;
- a Keynesian approach to consumption;
- taxation as a major tool for redistribution;
- regulation through economic as opposed to political instruments;
- urban-centred growth that is balanced with rural development;
- the state as an instrument for development.

When it comes to development, the agreement between the major stakeholders begins to break down. This is partly related to interests, but also to the underdeveloped state of the development debate at the moment.

Where there is broad agreement, it is on the ideas that:
- development should be focused on basic needs;
- quality of life is critical for economic growth;
- the state has a role to play;
- the non-profit NGO sector has a role;
- the private sector has a role.

How these various components fit together, however, is much less clear. Given the link between inequality and development, the core of the problem

relates to the relationship between growth and redistribution and by what means this link should be facilitated. Four basic positions in the current debate can be identified: growth *for* redistribution; growth *with* redistribution; growth *through* redistribution; redistribution *is* growth.

The first position reflects a free market perspective, which presumes that resources for development can only be generated as a by-product of growth. It argues that the more wealth there is, the more will trickle down. The policy priority, therefore, should be growth.

The second approach is the Keynesian orientation of organizations such as the Urban Foundation, Independent Development Trust (IDT) and possibly even the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA). It emphasizes the need for linking redistributionist development policies channelled through the financial system to growth strategies. The argument is that growth is impossible without creating the socio-economic conditions within consumption that are necessary for growth within production.

The third position reflects the ANC view. In essence, this argues that redistributionist strategies within both production and consumption constitute an integral part of a growth model, and not simply a primer for growth. In other words, redistribution will break the restrictions and biases in the economic system that currently impoverish the majority and stunt growth.

The final position equates redistribution with growth because it is premised on the view that there is a large white-controlled cake that simply needs to be redivided for development to be achieved.

If we ignore the first and fourth positions for the moment, the key debate is between positions two and three. In essence, the former envisages:
- massive redirection of resources into rural and urban development;
- a role for the state limited to regulating the fiscal system in a favourable way and intervening to provide goods the private sector cannot;
- a dominant role for the private sector, in particular the financial institutions, and the large corporations;
- a role for communities, but only as bodies to be consulted;
- an important regulatory role for

local government;

- job creation and productivity increases at the expense of union power;
- resources exploitation;
- debt financing;
- dependence on international markets, technology and loan finance.

The growth through redistribution position has a different emphasis. It envisages:

- massive deployment of resources for development via the state and private sector;
- a leading role for the state via the fiscal, legal and development systems;
- an important but regulated role for the private sector;
- democratization of economic decision-making;
- a central role for the industrial relations system and trade unions in particular;
- a leading and central role for community-based development agencies in the non-profit NGO sector;
- key regulatory role for local government over the urban system in order to ensure community empowerment through participation;
- environmental preservation;
- local self-reliance;
- development of the domestic market;

The growth through redistribution position attaches a high degree of importance to the role of civil society in development for three main reasons: the limitations the constitutional settlement is going to place on the state's role in development; the existing structure of the state apparatus, which is going to prevent it from being used as an effective development tool until affirmative action programmes have taken their course; and the lessons from development experiences in the developing world.

If, however, this critical role for civil society in the growth through redistribution position is hampered by the incapacities and organizational deficiencies that currently exist in this sector, then those who favour the growth through redistribution position will find themselves adopting the growth with redistribution position by default. This is why an ANC-organized workshop on funding policy held in Harare in May 1990 identified the two immediate goals of "development work" as "providing infrastructure to overcome the

effects of apartheid, and actively promoting the empowerment of all our peoples."

In a paper delivered at the conference, the infrastructural priorities were identified as education, health, housing, water, electricity, communications, and transport. These were the priorities that were more or less confirmed in the ANC's recent draft economic discussion paper.

It is significant, however, that empowerment was identified as such a high priority. The ANC economic discussion paper argues that "the success of a national development strategy depends to a considerable extent on development of our human resources."

The Harare workshop and subsequent workshops that have culminated in draft policy positions on the economy, local government, health, education and land have not, however, gone much beyond rather superficial statements of principle. Instead, an empirical assessment of existing domestic resources is required, which includes an analysis of the blockages that prevent these resources from being deployed to meet basic needs.

Existing development resources and blockages

Because of the author's personal experience and expertise, the following discussion focuses exclusively on urban

development. This bias can be defended, however, on the grounds that South Africa's towns and cities will be where: the most significant concentrations of population without basic services will emerge; the most rapid increases in productivity should occur; the economy will be linked to the international economy; and efficiency and cost effectiveness with respect to the allocation of land, services and housing will critically affect the health of the overall economic system.

The following discussion omits completely any mention of the large slice of the national budget currently spent on education, transport, communications and health.

Very rough estimates of the total resources that could be generated annually for urban development can be broken down (see Table 1).

If we assume that 200 000 homes need to be built annually for the next ten years and an average per unit cost of the land, services and house structure as R25 000, then we will require R5 billion annually. From the above figures, we can conclude that even within the existing apartheid-structured fiscal and urban system, and excluding the money that will flow into the country from foreign aid agencies and donors, there are sufficient resources on an annual basis to meet our needs.

The figures given in Table 1 have been confirmed recently by both the

Table 1

Home loan finance — private:	Urban Foundation	R250m
	Banks and building societies	R1 000m
	SA Housing Trust (SAHT)	R100m
	Pension and provident funds	R200m
	Special funds	R50m
	Company contributions	R20m
		R1 620m
State funds for housing and development:	State budget	R660m
	IDT	R1 000m
		R1 660m
Finance for upgrading:	All Regional Services Councils	R1 500m
	DBSA	R500m
	SAHT	R400m
		R2 400m
	Total:	R5 680m

(Note: the above figures exclude the resources available in the Capital Development Funds and Consolidated Loans Funds of the white Local Authorities.)

state and financial institutions. On Tuesday 6 October 1990, Minister Kriel released a statement in which he claimed that "[t]he total amount to be generated for black urban development by both the public and private sectors in the current financial year is expected to amount to more than R6 billion."

In a confidential document prepared for the financial institutions by a University of the Witwatersrand professor, it was demonstrated that R5 billion could be generated annually for development over the next 12 years if the state's housing subsidy formula was modified to favour the poor, if Group Areas legislation was scrapped and if the regulations governing the use of prescribed assets could be amended to favour property development.

There are fundamental structural problems that will have to be overcome, however, if we are to deploy our resources in a way that achieves our objective of matching resources with needs. These include:

• the limited capacity of the construction industry because of its structure and profitability constraints;
• the constraining supply effects of the cartelized building materials industry;
• extraordinarily high interest rates (capital costs may constitute up to two-thirds of the cost of a house);
• the control of loan finance enjoyed by both private and parastatal financial institutions which can only filter limited resources into the communities through conventional lending instruments and mechanisms;
• the racially biased structure of financial services;
• land speculation;
• the skewed, racially structured, inefficient, bureaucratic and cumbersome state administrations that determine housing policy and allocate resources;
• inadequate land availability caused by the Group Areas and Land Acts;
• the undemocratic and racial structure of local government, which should, ideally, be the regulatory mechanism at the centre of the development matrix;
• a complex, costly and cumbersome legal system that limits tenurial flexibility, hampers rapid legal transfers and is incapable of facilitating community-controlled development;

• low wages and structural unemployment;
• the weak community structures, which on the whole are incapable of handling development projects;
• the absence of a large-scale community-controlled non-profit development sector.

Given the earlier prediction that the South African political transition is going to result in a historical compromise that will place substantial constitutional limitations on the state's role in the economy, and given that the existing bureaucracy will not be replaced overnight, it may be concluded that the types of bureaucratic and economic constraints and blockages referred to above will not be rapidly removed by the existing or future state.

From a development perspective the only major and fundamental change that the transition will bring about is the creation of a legitimate state. Whether the local tier of this state helps reinforce the existing coalition of interests that dominates the development process, or whether it becomes the rallying point for a new progressive development alliance will be heavily dependent on the capacities that will exist in civil society. If resources in the "new South Africa" are concentrated in the state and traditional for-profit private sector, then the chances of this progressive development alliance emerging will be very small indeed. If, however, a robust creative independent non-profit NGO development sector can be consolidated within civil society, then the chances are good that enough pressure will build up outside the state and private corporate sector to ensure that the system is constantly pressurized into making resources available to agencies accountable to the communities, and not to the political process or for-profit sector.

The development role of civil society

One of the most remarkable and surprising triumphs for democracy since 2 February 1990 has been the ANC's firm commitment to what is referred to as the "independence of civil society". This principle is written into the draft economic policy discussion paper and was accepted by an ANC-organized national consultative conference on local government and urban policy in

October. It also underlies the formation of the muscular Civics Association of the Southern Transvaal (CAST) and similar regional civic federations, which will eventually coalesce into a national civic federation to be, in Thozamile Botha's words, "independent from the state and autonomous from political parties."

Although many within the democratic movement would question this, there is little doubt in this author's mind that the foundations for a well organized, innovative, committed and decentralized civil society are already in place. The fundamental pillars of this civil society are: trade unions; civic associations; the churches; the emerging development NGOs; the organized progressive professionals; major funding and development agencies such as Kagiso Trust (KT) and possible the IDT; the service organizations; and educational organizations and institutions.

Social movements rooted in civil society exist when a socially significant network of associations, organizations and institutions exist at the base of the society that are: independent of the state and political parties; not dependent on the for-profit sector for resources and support; capable of organizing the poor and articulating their grievances; capable of negotiating with mandates on behalf of their constituencies with the state, parties, business, development agencies and donors; and in a position to deliver their members and supporters into a negotiated deal or programme.

The emergence of this conception of civil society within South African political culture has implications for both democracy and development. For democracy, it means an acceptance of pluralism, a non-monopolistic role for the state in the polity, and that democracy entails at most the institutionalization of uncertainty instead of the statist imposition of certainty.

For development, this notion implies that South Africa will probably join the international trend towards NGO-driven development programmes. This, in turn, has huge implications for how resources should be deployed in a post-apartheid national development strategy because, as suggested earlier, if this sector fails to deliver the goods for whatever reason, the ANC's growth through redistribution policy will fail.

Although development NGOs are

fast emerging in the developing world because they can deliver resources to the grassroots more efficiently and effectively than the state or for-profit sector (see _Urban Edge,_ vol 13, no 8, October 1989), and although this has become the rationale for their importance in South Africa, this is not the only material reason for their prominence on the current policy agenda. In reality, five factors have combined to create the space this high on the policy agenda for this conception of development.

As already argued, the constitutional transition is going to place constraints on how the state can be used as a development tool during the transition and during the early stages of the post-transition reconstruction period.

Resistance to apartheid over the last ten years has revolved around an organizational form that was typically anti-statist, decentralized, community- and/or worker-controlled, democratic, non-profit, well organized and exceptionally creative. This has socialized significant layers of the society into an action-oriented self-reliance behavioural mode which could be harnessed and developed in order to avoid what the Kagiso Trust conference in January 1990 called "welfarism" — a process which reduces the recipients of resources to dependence on those who provide the resources.

Just as apartheid spurned the organizational form referred to above, it simultaneously placed severe constraints on black business. Because this effectively prevented the emergence of a bourgeois-led anti-apartheid movement, the notion of for-profit development hardly ever appears in the policy debate. Although this could well change now that these restrictions no longer exist, much will depend on whether the non-profit development sector can become an effective competitor for the potential for-profit development alliance the Urban Foundation is currently in the process of conceiving.

Apartheid has placed severe constraints on the upward mobility of the intellectually gifted members of the black majority. Instead of facilitating their rise out of the underclasses as would happen in a non-racial class-divided society, the intellectual resources of these people have remained within the ranks of the poor. This explains the exceptionally high

intellectual quality of the leaders of the civic and trade union movement at this level.

Finally, nobody disputes the international failure of statist development strategies.

If these five factors are combined, it is not surprising that the notion of an independent civil society with a key role in development has emerged as an attractive policy option.

Recognizing both the potential roles NGOs can play in development, as well as their weaknesses, Kagiso Trust (KT) met in January 1990 to thoroughly evaluate its role. The primary decision taken was that Kagiso Trust should abandon its "welfare role" and become a development agency "that will be non-party political". This decision, backed up by the current orientation of the ANC Projects Department, has far-reaching implications for development and development policy. Bearing in mind that the KT is institutionally located at the nexus of the largest network of community-based/linked organizations and potential development NGOs, and given its political linkages into the heart of the anti-apartheid political establishment, this decision effectively means that a huge institutional and resource capacity is lining up behind the notion of an NGO development sector.

The KT identified three principle functions it sees itself fulfilling:

(i) to identify existing genuine and potentially successful NGO and community networks as the basis for supporting local level development initiatives.

(ii) to strengthen and expand the capacity of community structures, _such as civic organisations,_ in urban and rural areas, to develop a policy for participating in development planning at the local and regional level.

(iii) to increase the capacity of _civic organisations_ to manage income generating projects (author's emphasis).

To fulfil these functions, the KT would:

(i) become a facilitator that would locate internal and external resources when needed.

(ii) help build resources available for local initiatives, including the creation of an 'alternative' capital development fund.

(iii) provide management support.

(iv) evaluate and advise on the viability of projects and enterprises.

(v) coordinate training needs and training resources.

(vi) assist in project and programme design, etc.

The advantage of the new role KT has identified for itself is that it is a response to the call one hears across the length and breadth of the country at the moment among community-based organizations: the call to develop the human capital and organizational resources that will be required to make a non-statist, community based, non-profit development strategy work. It remains to be seen, however, whether KT will manage to restructure itself in a way that makes all this possible. Unfortunately, it suffers from the same organizational deficiencies and skill shortages that it would like to remedy in the broader society.

Unfortunately, there is no major interest in any sector — be it state, corporate, political or community — that has managed to build up a coalition of forces around a coherent human resource development plan. The reasons for this relate to the powerful corporate interests that control the bulk of the domestic resources, organizational incoherence within the democratic movement, the underdeveloped state of the development debate and the weaknesses of the unions and civic associations that should be leading the debate.

To highlight this argument, it may be worth focusing on the civics. Every major interest involved in development — be it the DBSA, UF, ANC or the civic movement itself — accepts that civics are a crucial link in the development chain. The civics are depicted as the only organizations at grassroots level that are in touch with local community dynamics and capable of negotiating the terms of development. Consequently, the civics are being pulled at break-neck speed into development projects of many different kinds. Nobody, however, is providing them with the back-up required to fulfil these tasks. For example, civics do not generally have: offices; basic communication facilities (phones, faxes and so on); full-time paid personnel; trained development workers; budgets and financial resources; skilled negotiators; media facilities; reliable and comprehensive information; or a policy-making capacity relating to development.

The result in many cases is the incorporation of civics into programmes they

do not understand or control. When they realize this, they have a choice between boycotting the programme or being co-opted as rubber stamps. In both cases they lose support and compromise their organizational power. The positive alternative would involve creative and critical engagement in development which would build organizational power and maximize the benefits of the development programme. This should be the aim of a community-based development strategy.

A role for international donors

The funding-policy recommendations that emerged from an "ANC-MDM" consultative conference on funding policy held in May 1990 in Harare are, to say the least, contradictory in a number of ways. They call for the strengthening of links with international funders, but simultaneously proposed that these agencies should be kept at arm's length. They propose an ANC-controlled national structure to co-ordinate funding, which seems to contradict the KT notion of a non-partisan development agency. The donors are blamed for dependency relationships, with no proposals on how to overcome what Trevor Manuel at the KT conference in January identified as the failure of internal organizations to develop their own self-sustaining capacities. Although the spirit of the proposals is anti-élitist, the effects would be to redirect funding into more established initiatives not under ANC leadership/control (universities, for example).

There is now little doubt that the Harare recommendations are not going to become generally accepted policy. Instead, a more appropriate policy is evolving. The donors' conference planned for early 1991 under the auspices of the ANC's Projects Department is going to be where a key policy position will be tabled. A consultative meeting to plan this conference will be held in early November 1990. The chances are good that a more pluralistic and non-partisan position may emerge from this process.

For the purposes of the argument, it will be assumed that future funding for development will come from four main sources:

- large-scale internal funding from the DBSA, IDT, the state and other private sector sources, each with annual budgets ranging from R200m to R1 billion;
- small-scale internal funding from sources such as KT, Wilgespruit, South African Council of Churches (SACC) and SACBC;
- large-scale international funding from sources such as the World Bank, ODA, USAID, European Commission, Scandinavian and Canadian agencies.
- small-scale funding from the private foundations based mainly in the USA, with annual budgets of between $250 000 to $10 million disbursed in grants ranging from $5 000 to $250 000.

The comments that follow relate to the last category.

Given the argument thus far, it should be unsurprising that the primary recommendation is that the small-scale international donors should concentrate exclusively on capacity building in two respects: human resource development and organizational development.

These small-scale international donors should not attempt to inject resources directly into physical development programmes. They should, instead, identify how their resources can be used to empower communities to develop the capacity needed to obtain resources for physical development from within the domestic economy itself. To give effect to this policy, the following broad principles are proposed, followed by suggestions for specific points of intervention.

The most appropriate guidelines for the future role of the small-scale international donors are as follows. They should prioritize human resource and organizational development projects. They should seek out and develop long-term committed relationships with indigenous South African NGOs. Annual budget cycles are inadequate; projects based on five-year plans must be developed to build up a stable cadre of development workers within the NGO sector. To avoid political opportunism, a programme approach must be encouraged and supported; this is part of KT's new direction and is replicated elsewhere in many service organizations and within the civic movement. Capacity building, not dependency building, should be the primary objective. This will require creative and honest long-term working relationships between donors and the NGOs they support. This could also entail the provision of financial support for consultancies which could help indigenous NGOs deal with funders. They should support indigenous funding agencies which will, in turn, be responsible for the project selection process. They should contribute to the development debate.

International agencies are an enigma for those who have to deal with them because they debate policy among themselves and build up huge storehouses of valuable experience and information without making all this accessible to those they relate to in the field. Understandably, these agencies do not want to be accused of interventionism. There are, however, ways around this. Placing short, accessible publications and articles in widely-read journals (*Work In Progress, SA Labour Bulletin, Indicator SA*, for example) would be extremely useful. It would also remove the poker-faced image of the international funder.

If the human resource and organizational development focus is accepted, then there are really three major areas for intervention: civil service personnel; a professional class of party functionaries located in government and the political party machines; and development workers.

Although the following comments apply to the last category, in reality national development will be affected by the quality and quantity of personnel in all three categories. Over the next ten years a corps of development workers must be created with its own values, career paths, esprit de corps, support networks, meeting times and places, professional associations and social roles. To facilitate a non-statist, community-based development strategy, these development workers will be required in the following sectors.

Mass-based structures

Civic associations: each civic must have an equipped office, well trained full-time staff, financial control systems and stabilized organizational procedures. Although civics have begun to raise money from members, this is compromised because of ignorance about membership systems, financial control and administrative incapacity. Ideally, civics should marry financial

resources derived from the community with resources from funders. An appropriate formula concerning what funders should support to help civics set themselves up will have to be found — should funders establish the office and leave running costs to the civic? Should funders only pay for communications? And so on.

Unions: unions want to get involved in development work. It is unclear, however, how they will do this. Unlike the civics, unions already have a functioning organizational infrastructure. Unions will, however, require development workers located both within and outside the unions. The appointment of housing officers and co-operative co-ordinators within some unions is an indication that this has already begun. Judging by how over-worked these people are and the use they make of service organizations, there is clearly a need for support in this area.

Churches: this author is completely ignorant of the development infrastructure that exists within the churches. However, there is clearly a role — which could be extended — for the church in development.

Other: a range of other organizations involved in development require human resources on a large scale. These include women's organizations, rural bodies, environmental groups, health and educational organizations.

Service organizations

Service organizations are frequently ignored because they are perceived as "middle men" in the development process. Because of apartheid, a large and impressive network of service organizations has emerged to deal with an extremely wide range of issues in the health, educational, development, media, administrative, literacy, economic, legal and environmental sectors. Usually structured as collectives and composed of highly motivated and skilled professionals, these organizations work for the mass-based organizations such as unions, civics or political structures. They have been exceptionally important in prising loose from the establishment some of the country's more creative and gifted professionals. They will need to be retained as an asset for civil society, instead of being lost to the state or the new deracialized liberal corporate sector. Both these tendencies are already

evident because of the better working conditions on offer in these sectors. More importantly, however, these organizations now have the experience and expertise that could be deployed during the coming transitional period to ensure that the capacities and resources they have controlled to date are transferred into the civics, unions and development NGOs. The skills they possess that can be transferred include the ability to administer, plan, deal with specialist information, communicate information, conduct research, co-ordinate legal and other expert assistance, inter-organizational networking, fund-raising, dealing with funders and negotiating. Obviously many mass-based organizations already have many of these skills (unions, for example).

Training organizations

Although a number of development training agencies have emerged over the last three years (such as the University of the Witwatersrand-based Community-Based Development Programme) and a number of people are going through these programmes, an overall approach framed by a coherent nationally accepted conception of development has not yet emerged. Obviously the first step will be to bring the existing community development training agencies together, possibly with their funders, to debate these issues and, it is hoped, formulate a policy. This author's guess is that this policy might well include a commitment to establishing a development school which could become the primary national training agency for the new corps of development workers. The advantage of this approach is that it would rationalize existing resources and provide an institutional point of reference for the nationally linked corps of development workers. If this national effort fails, however, there will clearly be an urgent need for massive resources to upgrade the existing rather small-scale training agencies. Ideally this upgrading process should be co-ordinated with the human resource and organizational upgrading of the mass-based structures.

Development NGOs

The establishment and consolidation of a non-profit NGO sector is going to be the most difficult task of all, because a

commitment to this sector depends on how the development debate resolves itself over the next year or two. Nevertheless, assuming that the current attraction to non-statist, community-based development survives, then we should be planning for four types of development NGOs.

Community-based development organizations, such as co-operatives and CDCs, which could be involved in both consumption and production. One immediate need, for example, is for non-profit housing development companies to co-ordinate physical construction on behalf of mass-based organizations.

Community ownership systems: the nationalization versus privatization debate has peaked and given way to a new pragmatism which is exploring ownership systems that are neither statist nor "private" in the traditional sense. The search is for community ownership systems that will reinforce community solidarity and the bargaining power of communities. A number of civics have already formulated proposals for how community land trusts, electricity co-operatives and housing co-operatives could be established. This "third way" needs all the support it can get.

Non-profit financial institutions: credit unions, national housing funds, development banks and a wide range of non-profit financial mechanisms and instruments need to be designed and established in order to diminish over time the hold on finance currently enjoyed by the for-profit financial institutions.

Indigenous funding NGOs: the "new KT" provides a model — on paper at this stage — for what could become the first of many indigenous development funders. Using a range of sources (including the state), these agencies could become an important conduit for linking local community structures to funds in a constructive developmentalist way.

Conclusion

The argument presented in this paper can be summarized as follows:
- the state's development capacity will be limited during both the transition and post-transition reconstruction period;
- there are enough resources within

the domestic economy to meet our basic needs;

- bureaucratic and economic blockages exist that will prevent the resources from finding their way into community development projects capable of meeting basic needs;
- given the above, a non-statist, community-based development strategy will be required which will need to be driven by independent development NGOs because it is these organizations that will have to ensure that resources find their way into development programmes that are designed and controlled by local communities;

- furthermore, the foundations within civil society for a robust NGO development sector exist;
- the need to direct resources into building up the human capital and organizational resources that an effective development strategy will require has been widely recognized;
- no effective co-ordinated strategy exists at the moment for how the necessary human and organizational resources should be developed;
- resources from external donor agencies will be required and these should be used primarily (if not exclusively) for human resource and organizational development programmes.

The first practical step to implement the above proposals could be a joint internal-international NGO meeting to formulate priorities and plan a strategy. This should follow the donors conference planned for 1991 because it is here that general policy parameters will be formulated.

Namibia's new language policy

Professor August D de V Cluver, of the Department of Linguistics at the University of South Africa, analyses the Namibian government's decision to adopt English as the country's sole official language.

Namibia became independent on 21 March 1990 and everyone expects that the new government will introduce various changes in the administration of the country. One of the reforms that will be introduced is a new official language, English. In its election manifesto Swapo stated that it would also accord "equal status and respect to all locally spoken languages." In this article some of the implications of this new language policy are analysed and particular attention will be given to the future of Afrikaans in Namibia.

In various circles in South Africa the possibility of a new language policy is being discussed[1] and there is general agreement that the change in language policy in Namibia could also take place in South Africa. An analysis of the language policy of Namibia is therefore an important step in formulating a language policy for South Africa.

After identifying the languages of Namibia, I will discuss some of the reasons why Namibians have decided to switch from Afrikaans to English as official language. Some of the problems that could occur when English is introduced as the official language and the medium of education will be discussed. The position of Afrikaans as a non-official language in Namibia will then be analysed. Since a language policy concerns the status and use of languages in a given country, I will begin with an overview of the languages and their status in Namibia.

The languages of Namibia

As is the case in nearly all African countries, Namibia is characterized by its multilingual structure. Depending on how the term *language* is defined we can identify 21 languages in Namibia. Eighteen of these are indigenous languages, but most of them consist of dialect clusters whose speakers can understand each other relatively well. The 21 languages can be divided into three language families:
— Bantu languages (such as Herero, Wambo, the Kavango and Caprivi languages and Tswana).
— Khoesaan languages (such as some of the Bushman languages and the Nama language).
— Indo-European languages (such as Afrikaans, English, German and Portuguese).[2]

The main population groups and their languages are listed below (not all 21 languages are listed):

The indigenous languages have a relatively low status and tend not to be used in all cross-cultural contact situations or in dealings with government officials. Only the larger, regional languages have writing systems and are taught in the schools.

Prior to independence there were two official languages, Afrikaans and English, while German enjoyed the status of a semi-official language (which meant that some official signs were also in German and one could speak to some government officials in German). Afrikaans was effectively the main official language in Namibia and was used by about 90 per cent of the population as a second or third language. It served as the lingua franca of Namibia (a lingua franca is used when different speech communities are in continuous contact and need a common language to communicate). As I will point out later, the spread of Afrikaans in Namibia is largely the result of its having been the principal medium of education in most Namibian schools and having no competition from English.

Afrikaans also spread into other domains such as agriculture, the civil service and the business sector. This resulted in Afrikaans becoming the language of work opportunities and economic advancement.[3] With limited

Group	Size	Main languages
Wambo	680 000	Kwanyama, Ndonga, Ovakoanyama
Kavango	125 000	Kwangali, Vagviriku (Gciriku), Hambukushu
Herero	98 000	Ovampandero, Ovatjimba-herero, Ovahimba
Damara	98 000	Damara
Whites	84 000	Afrikaans, German, English
Nama	65 000	Nama (similar to Damara)
Coloureds	56 000	Afrikaans and English
Caprivians	58 000	Lozi, Mafwe, Basubiya
Khoi (Bushman)	40 000	Kung, Heikum/Nama-san
Rehoboth Basters	34 000	Afrikaans
Tswana	15 000	Setswana
Smaller groups	12 000	unspecified

(Based on figures compiled by André du Pisani)

competition from German and English, Afrikaans became better established in Namibia than in South Africa. Its dominance grew to the point where it began influencing the indigenous languages, as is demonstrated by the large number of borrowings from Afrikaans in Herero.[4]

As indicated by H W G du Plessis,[5] Afrikaans was brought into Namibia even before the German occupation by so-called Oorlams groups and Basters who moved in from the Cape Province. This form of Afrikaans was a variety of the Orange River Afrikaans,[6] which differs in some respects from the Standard Afrikaans used by the South African administration of Namibia. Another reason for the spread of Afrikaans in Namibia is its status as a fully standardized language with a complete technical vocabulary and an extensive literature. It is a language of the African continent, with a literature that describes the African life and countryside. The codification of the indigenous languages (writing down a language in dictionaries and grammar books) under the South African administration of Namibia was never done with much official enthusiasm. Because it was linked to the promotion of ethnic consciousness and ethnic division, it was also regarded with scepticism by some black Namibians.

The Native Language Bureau was founded in 1962, but had insufficient personnel to codify the indigenous languages.[7] It was supposed to develop nine of the indigenous languages (Ndonga, Kwanyama, Gciriku, Mbukushu, Lozi, Herero, Nama/Damara and Tswana) so that they could be used for mother-tongue instruction in the schools. The promotion of indigenous languages formed part of the ethnic fragmentation proposed by the Odendaal Commission in 1963. However, because of a shortage of posts this bureau could never execute its task properly (something later exploited by Swapo and the United Nations Institute for Namibia).

As a result of this half-hearted approach, most of the nine languages that were identified for educational purposes cannot be taken further than Standard 5 (the seventh school year). The exceptions to this rule are Ndonga, Kwanyama, Nama, Herero and Lozi, which can all be taken as school subjects up to matriculation level (the final

secondary school year). Ndonga, Kwanyama, Nama and Herero can now also be taken as university subjects at the University of Namibia. The level at which these languages are offered in schools and at the university has obviously changed since the article by Harlech-Jones in which it is stated that Herero and Nama/Damara could not, at that stage, be taken as subjects in the secondary school.[8]

A further problem that has retarded the development of the indigenous languages is that, largely because of the association of mother-tongue education with separate development, many parents reject this form of education.[9] This forms part of a generally negative attitude of parents right throughout Africa towards mother-tongue education, because they do not think that indigenous languages offer their children social and economic mobility.[10]

As pointed out, the official language of an independent Namibia will be English. This decision was taken in principle in Lusaka in 1981 as outlined in the report of the United Nations Institute for Namibia: "It is envisaged that Afrikaans will remain a local language, but that its role as a lingua franca will be taken over by English".[11] This decision was based on one of the most comprehensive language planning projects undertaken to date. This language policy was used in the struggle against the South African occupation of Namibia. Support for the new official language and language of education became an indication of the growing support for Swapo.

Newly independent African countries often decide to use the language of the colonial power as their official language because there are various indigenous languages and none have enough prestige or sufficient numerical superiority to be selected as the official language. The administration of the country as well as the legal and education systems are all usually well established in the colonial language.[12] Countries such as Nigeria, Ghana, Uganda and Zimbabwe therefore selected English as their official language, while French is the official language of Senegal, Zaire and the Côte d'Ivoire. What makes the selection of English in Namibia unique is the fact that less than 5 per cent of the population speak it as a mother tongue and before independence it played an

insignificant role in the administration of the country.

The decision to use English as the official language has far-reaching implications and its implementation will call for considerable commitment from the Namibians. For many older Namibians it will be the third official language they will have had to acquire this century and many older Namibians could, as far as interaction with the central government is concerned, become linguistic foreigners in their own country. On the basis of similar experiences gained in Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria when Arabic replaced French as the language of education, we can predict that the standard of teaching in Namibia will drop sharply when the schools switch to English.[13]

In the light of the preceding argument one could justifiably ask why Namibians want to move away from a standard language that is an indigenous language and a mother tongue for a considerable number of people (about 100 000 out of a population of about 1,5 million) and which serves as lingua franca for the majority of the population. One would also like to consider the problems that will be caused by implementing this new language policy. The subdiscipline of Linguistics that deals with these questions, is known as *language planning:* "Language planning is concerned with the principled and efficient distribution of language resources at the national level."[14] This distribution is done according to the dictates of a language policy. The analysis of the implications derived from a language policy is therefore one of the main concerns of language planning.

A language policy should, ideally, enable every citizen to achieve his full human potential. In Western countries this statement is taken to mean that every citizen can study and work in his own language. However, in a multilingual country there are various reasons why members of minority communities should make some language adjustments. It is simply impossible to acknowledge 500 languages as official languages — as one would have to do in Nigeria — or to offer secondary education in so many languages. Language planning analyses this type of problem and makes recommendations to the central government or, where the government has already decided on a language plan, language planners analyse

the implications of that plan. In other words, the financial and manpower implications are identified as well as how they will affect the general population. More particularly, language planners analyse the implications of a language policy for education by determining the type of books that are needed (grammar books, dictionaries, spelling rules, translated literature and so on) and the type of training that language teachers need (for instance, English as a second language or English for special purposes).

When a world language such as English is selected as an official language there is little need to develop it, but the main problem that occurs is that of spreading the language efficiently throughout the country. English has been adapted to serve in many parts of the world and there are extensive and well-tested programmes for acquiring English as a second language. In this respect English is one of the cheapest foreign languages to select as an official language.

Reasons for selecting English

As has been pointed out, the justification for the selection of English as the official language for Namibia is given in the comprehensive report of the United Nations Institute for Namibia.[15] In Chapter 5 of the report the various reasons are listed.[16] These reasons may be divided into two groups:
— Arguments against the continued use of Afrikaans as the official language.
— Reasons why English should become the only official language.[17]
After identifying these reasons, some of them will be discussed in more detail.

Arguments against selecting Afrikaans as the official language:
— Afrikaans is "an imposed or colonial language".[18]
— "Outside Southern Africa, Afrikaans has no practical value, and therefore it serves as an instrument of isolation and insularity."[19]
— Afrikaans is "the language of the oppressor" while English "is now considered by many to be the language of liberation".[20]
— Afrikaans does not offer social mobility to the Namibian population

and offers only limited economic and political mobility.
— Afrikaans has a polarizing rather than a nation-building effect.

Arguments in support of English as the official language:
— English will help to bring the various Namibian communities together in one nation.[21]
— English will promote contact between Namibia and its neighbours.[22]
— English is the international language of science and technology as well as the international language of trade and will therefore give Namibians access to the data banks of the world and trade routes of the world.[23]
— English is seen by many Namibians as the language of liberation from South African colonialism.[24]
— English is seen as the language that will give social mobility to the population.

Discussion

Although the language planner can analyse this type of motivation, he is seldom in a position to change a government's language policy. The point of departure of this type of language planning is often a political decision that does not necessarily consider communication and education criteria.

Afrikaans

A language is often linked to a specific ideology: Arabic is linked to the Islamic religion and Russian is seen as the language of Marxist communism. If the associated ideology is dynamic and expands, the language tends to acquire more (second-language) speakers, but if the ideology acquires negative connotations, many speakers prefer not to be associated with that language. Afrikaans was used by language planners to unite a wide variety of speakers into one Afrikaner nation. The National Party exploited this link between Afrikaans and the Afrikaner nation and linked its own ideology to Afrikaans. This link between Afrikaans and the National Party was to the advantage of the language (and the Party) while the Party gained popularity. However, without any planning on the part of the Party or language planners, Afrikaans became the symbol of apartheid. As the

negative aspects of apartheid (as the central ideology of the Party) became more obvious, Afrikaans became a stigmatized language, and the language of the oppressor. The fact that many (white) Afrikaans-speaking Namibians resisted change and the abolition of apartheid in Namibia helped to confirm this image of the Afrikaner and his language.

One variety of Afrikaans is, as pointed out, an indigenous language to Namibia, and it cannot, therefore, be seen as an oppressive language since it is spoken as a mother-tongue by people who have suffered under apartheid. However, the standard variety used by the South African administration is an imported language for many Namibians.[25] The fact that this language variety was used to import Bantu Education and apartheid into Namibia could not have added to the popularity of this language.[26] Whereas many Namibians would have preferred to break down ethnic boundaries, Standard Afrikaans was used to enforce a separatist policy. Because of apartheid, Afrikaners could not be identified as role figures and identification with Afrikaans was difficult.

To my knowledge no attempt was made to encourage an indigenous literature in this language, and Namibian Afrikaans was also not identified as a separate dialect. Black school pupils could not enter white Afrikaans schools, and if they completed their school studies (in Afrikaans) they could not gain entrance to the white Afrikaans universities of South Africa. Standard Afrikaans therefore never became a truly Namibian language, and a large section of the Namibian population is not particularly loyal to Afrikaans as a second language. There can be little doubt that the decision to select English as the official language was, to some degree, motivated by a reaction against the oppressive rule of Afrikaans-speaking South Africans.

However, Afrikaans is also the language in which schools and hospitals were built and in which the country developed a sophisticated infrastructure. It is also the language of the Dorsland Trekkers, who left the old Transvaal Republic rather than remain under British rule. These observations make it difficult to state categorically that Afrikaans serves only as an oppressive language.

English

Although English is the most important language of colonialism and capitalism in the world, it was never associated with these concepts in Namibia. Fishman shows that English is also associated with concepts such as democracy, personal freedom, civil rights and religious tolerance.[27] Today, English is seen as a symbol of an ideologically neutral concept such as technological progress. This association makes English a highly acceptable official language in multilingual countries. Because of its neutrality, the selection of English as the official language is also seen as the creation of common ground on which members of different communities can meet each other.

The argument that a foreign language can be seen as a mechanism to create national consolidation has been promoted in various multilingual developing countries. This argument was, for instance, put forward to justify the selection of French for Côte d'Ivoire.[28] The opposite side of this argument is that many governments of multilingual countries are afraid that language and ethnic differences could lead to a splintering of the nation and to civil war — as was the case in Nigeria. Thus nation-building and the development of a common patriotism are seen as a high priority and any strategy that could help achieve these ideals is a good one. A uniform official language has, in principle, the potential to create a common nationalism[29] and it should give all citizens equal chances in life.

The reasoning behind this argument (which was formulated for the selection of a foreign official language in multilingual countries such as Nigeria or Uganda) can be found in the following statement by Scotton:

> Choosing English as the official language is 'unfair' in that it is foreign and must be acquired by every citizen outside his home. But the key point is that choosing English is uniformly unfair; no one ethnic group is favoured. Therefore, no one ethnic group can feel that it is a more integral part of the nation than another group because of official language policy.[30]

The hope that the selection of English will help to create a society in which all citizens will have equal opportunities seems a little idealistic. The urban population of any developing country is always in a better position to acquire English and to use English than is the rural population. Urbanized citizens therefore have an unfair advantage over other citizens and their children have easier access to good high schools and thus to the universities where fluent knowledge of English is essential. These students will be considered for the top posts in the country. Mansour makes the following observation on the role of French in Senegal: "French is the only means of access to knowledge for a privileged minority and a permanent barrier to knowledge for the majority."[31] It will, therefore, be an interesting challenge for the new Namibian government to prevent English from becoming a "gate" that prevents social mobility and reserves access to the top posts to the children of a small influential group.[32]

The Afrikaans speakers with a highly politicized language which played an important role in the creation of the Afrikaner nation, might find it difficult to understand how a foreign language can help create a nation. Afrikaner nationalism is based on the European assumption that there must be a strong link between the ethnic group and a particular language: "the linguistic community was seen as coextensive with the nation".[33] This view implies that the development of a standard national language would promote nationalism. This view also led to the acceptance of the idea that monolingualism, in the sense of knowing only the standard language of the nation, was the norm. We are thus led to believe that one indigenous language played an important role in the creation of the European nations and, conversely, that a foreign language could not serve this purpose.

Closer analysis shows that these observations reflect a romanticized view of the development of the European nations. The national language of today was originally often a minority language of a small powerful group that imposed their culture and language on the other communities. The clearest example of this is certainly the establishment of French as national language of France. What is today known as Standard French is based on the dialect of the Ile de France and was not known by more than 3 million speakers (out of a population of 26 million) when it was declared the official language of France after the French Revolution.[34] An official language need not, therefore, be the dominant language of a country, but in Europe it was usually a language that was closely related to most of the other languages spoken in the country. Nevertheless, European nationalism became associated with *one* standard language.

The association between language and nationalism was, furthermore, forged relatively late in the Middle Ages in Europe and one need not assume that this link should exist in a developing nation. Harlech-Jones points out that many Namibians do not see language as the most important marker of their identity.[35] The fact that a minority dialect (in terms of number of speakers) was selected in early Europe as an official language points to the possibility that a minority language such as English in Namibia could, in time, be accepted as the official language. In other African countries English did succeed in helping to develop a national consciousness, but often at the expense of indigenous languages. Speakers of these languages have, in some cases, reacted against what is seen as a form of cultural imperialism and are using the indigenous languages more consciously in new functional domains. In other words, nationalism in the developing countries is not based on the assumption that there exists a one-to-one correlation between a speech community and the nation state. To remain monolingual in a multilingual country is to isolate yourself without reason.[36] This leads to an increase in the status of these languages so that some of them (particularly in Nigeria) are now being used as official languages alongside English.

That English gives its speakers access to the world's information and trade is relevant only to a small section of the population and can hardly be seen as motivation for why the whole nation should acquire a foreign language. Haugen has denounced this motivation in strong terms.[37] A solution to this problem that will not create regional tensions, seems to be the one that Swapo has suggested: to promote some of the indigenous languages to regional official languages.

As pointed out, the most important reason for which the population of an African country chooses to switch to English is the belief that English is the language of social mobility and economic advancement. The tendency of

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minority groups to embrace a language that has the potential of economic advancement occurs fairly generally. Haacke, for instance, shows that the Oorlams-Nama switched to Afrikaans during the previous century because knowing this language had certain economic advantages for them.[38] In South Africa we can observe how various minority groups are now switching to English for the same reasons. In Namibia the economic status of English was clearly an important reason why Swapo's language policy was acceptable for the general population and why parents began agitating for the introduction of English as medium of instruction in the schools.

English as the language of education

An important aspect of any language policy is its implementation in the schools. Until relatively recently many Namibian children received their school education for the first four years in their mother tongue (or a closely related regional language). Thereafter they switched to Afrikaans as the medium of instruction and their mother tongue became one of the school subjects. However, the schools for the Bushmen use Afrikaans as medium of instruction from the first school year. This form of education has obvious negative results, partly due to the tremendous cultural shock that a Bushman child experiences when attending a Western school in a totally foreign language.

Liberation movements often attempt to identify symbols for themselves, and language is an obvious candidate to serve as symbol of nation-building.[39] Swapo identified Afrikaans early in its non-military struggle as a symbol of apartheid and of the oppression of the Namibian people. English, on the other hand, was identified as the language of liberation and a movement to introduce English as the language of education was started amongst the population. In Owambo a strong feeling against Afrikaans was mobilized and in 1981 English replaced Afrikaans as the language of education in Owamboland. This decision by the Owambo Department of Education was important for at least two reasons. First, just over half of the total population of Namibia live in Owamboland. Second,

this decision by the Owambo Department of Education was interpreted as a political victory over South Africa and was seen as symbolic of the growing support for Swapo among the Ovambo population. It was also interpreted as a political victory by other Namibian groups and influenced their education departments to similarly introduce English as the education language.

By suggesting that English should be the official language, Swapo introduced language into the liberation struggle and, more importantly, managed to introduce the liberation struggle at a level understandable to school children. This was essential "since it is in the schools that the governments of new nations must attempt to win the hearts and minds of the next generation ..."[40]

The decision by the Owambo Education Department acted as a catalyst for further language change in Namibia. The apartheid laws of South Africa created eleven education departments (one for each major ethnic group) in a country in which there are about 340 000 schoolchildren. Apart from these departments there was still a type of overhead department (National Education) which, under the apartheid legislation, controlled the schools in the central part of the country. Because of continued pressure from parents, the Department of National Education announced in 1987 that the schools under its jurisdiction would switch to English as the medium of instruction. Just prior to independence education was offered in English as the medium of instruction in 25 of the 96 schools under the control of the Department of National Education. So as not to make the switch too unmanageable, the medium of instruction was changed at a rate of one class per year. The rate at which the change to English as the medium of instruction is done is determined by the availability of teachers who know English and the availability of funds (for instance, to purchase school books).

The educational language policy of the Ovambo even influenced the University of Namibia. The medium of instruction at the university (which was open to all races) was Afrikaans. After student protests the Board of the University decided in May 1988 to switch to English as the language of instruction.

Swapo suggested that mother-tongue instruction should be used in the lower primary schools, while English should be one of the school subjects. In the higher primary schools pupils will switch to English as the language of instruction. There has been considerable discussion in the literature about the correct age at which minority language children should switch to instruction in a foreign language. This discussion is obviously also applicable to the age at which Namibian children switched to Afrikaans as the medium of instruction. There are clear indications that if the child were to switch at a later age (for example when he is in Standard 6 — in his eighth school year) his general school performance would be noticeably better. This finding is even valid for his competence in the foreign language which until then was taken only as one of the school subjects. After prolonged experiments, Bamgbose came to the conclusion that the mother tongue was the only realistic teaching medium in the primary school.[41] The only real advantages of education through the medium of one foreign language is a cheaper education administration and more uniform training of teachers, who can accept appointments in schools in any part of the country.[42]

One problem of the new language policy was that it was interpreted too enthusiastically, and various schools in Owambo and even in the Afrikaans speaking Rehoboth territory began teaching in English from the very first school year. It is difficult to understand why Afrikaans-speaking communities are not offering mother-tongue instruction (in Afrikaans) in the first school years. There is certainly strong resentment about the political and economic domination of the white Afrikaans-speaking community that is transferred to the language, but it also seems that some political opportunism might have played a role in this decision. This second possibility should not be used to hide the fact that this movement away from Afrikaans forms part of a more general movement among so-called non-white Afrikaans speakers in South Africa as well.

A further problem that could follow from the introduction of English as the official language is that it could create false expectations. For instance, too many English-trained pupils leaving

school could expect to be appointed in the civil service or in industry. In a country where there are a finite number of posts available, there could easily be an overproduction of English-speaking young people who will then be without work in the cities.[43]

Problems that might occur when switching to English

In most countries where education is offered through the medium of a foreign language the pass rate is low and the number of drop-outs is unusually high.[44] In the previous section one possible reason for this phenomenon was expounded: that the switch to the foreign language occurs too early in the child's education. This phenomenon also took place while Afrikaans was the language of education in Namibia. When English was recently introduced as the medium of education in many parts of Namibia, this situation was exacerbated because many teachers had severe problems with English and there was insufficient education material available in English. The poor results of the examinations at the end of 1989 confirm this statement. This observation emphasizes the necessity of advance planning in which the implications of a new medium of instruction are spelled out in detail.

A language cannot be acquired by learning it at school or at university. To become competent in a second language there should be opportunities to use that language outside the school and university. However, in Namibia the use of English is largely restricted to part of the business community where it is the language mainly of middle and top management. Even the Roman Catholic Church uses Afrikaans in many areas of the country.[45] Outside Windhoek the use of English is limited. English cannot be imported into these areas and opportunities to use the language will have to be created. This will take time and one can therefore expect that the switch to English will be a gradual process that will take at least two generations. Even in the civil service English might not spread as quickly as Harlech-Jones assumes.[46] The one factor that might aid in the spread of English is the large number of expatriates who have been returning to Namibia and who know English.

There are many indications pointing

to a possible economic growth period in Namibia during the next five years. This growth will mean that new posts will be created. Many of the young Namibians who should be able to fill these posts might be prevented from doing so because of their insufficient command of English. One of the biggest dangers of the interim period between now and the full implementation of the new language policy is that a generation or two of schoolchildren might not be competent in any language. This situation would be the result of teachers being insufficiently trained in English and lacking English teaching materials. Retraining teachers should therefore be a high priority of the new government. During the interim period imported English teachers may well be used. However, the English that they will offer might be very foreign to Namibian children and it might be wise therefore to use these teachers to retrain Namibian teachers.

In a relatively small economy such as that of Namibia, the chances are good that spreading the new official language could make inroads into the funds available for the development of the indigenous languages. This means that work on the elaboration of the indigenous languages, as in other countries with similar language problems, will progress very slowly.[47]

The future of Afrikaans in Namibia

The new language policy of Namibia implies a change in status as well as a change in the symbolic value of Afrikaans. It would appear that these changes have not been the "blow to Afrikaner pride" that Harlech-Jones predicted.[48] His statement is based on the incorrect assumption that there is a close unity between Namibian Afrikaans-speakers and supporters of the National Party in South Africa.[49] This view ignores two facts. First, most of the Afrikaans-speakers of Namibia are not white, yet this does not mean that they are less proud of their language than other Afrikaans-speaking groups. Second, many white Afrikaans-speaking Namibians belong to political parties that are not particularly friendly towards the South African government — one needs only to consider the strong criticism of the South African government voiced by

Dirk Mudge.

There are clear indications that many Afrikaans-speaking Namibians are in the first place Namibians and in the second place, Afrikaans-speakers. They have welcomed changes that will be to the benefit of Namibia as a whole. The problem that Harlech-Jones seems to be addressing is what the reaction of these changes in status of Afrikaans will be on Afrikaans-speakers in South Africa.

If Afrikaans is no longer the official language of the government of Namibia its symbolic value will certainly change. Whether it will be able to rid itself of its association with apartheid is not clear. Much will depend on the language attitudes of the indigenous Afrikaans-speakers. If they continue to use Afrikaans and if they insist that their children are taught in Afrikaans (which is, in principle, possible in terms of Swapo's constitution) the language will continue to exist. Ironically, Afrikaans might well be kept alive by those speakers who suffered under the apartheid laws.

Except for private schools where Afrikaans (or German) may be used as the language of education, Afrikaans will probably only be a school subject in some of the government schools, and will probably still be offered as one of the subjects at the University of Namibia. It will gradually disappear from the civil service, while official notices will appear only in English. Although the proposed constitution of Swapo allowed for the possibility that government officials could use minority languages, it is likely that, at least during the first few months after independence, many people would be hesitant to use Afrikaans in official situations.

It seems likely that the few white Afrikaans-speaking officials will gradually be replaced by officials who have been trained in Lusaka at the United Nations Institute for Namibia. This will accelerate the switch to English in the civil service and will confirm the new government's control in this domain. Unless the government is going to act autocratically, Afrikaans will still be used in many other domains. Since so few Namibians know English, we can expect that Afrikaans will remain, in the foreseeable future, the lingua franca — particularly in those domains in which the government's influence is limited.[50] It is important to note that a

Swapo government will not start an anti-Afrikaans vendetta.

Independence has brought one great advantage for Afrikaans in Namibia: the association with the National Party and apartheid will be broken and this may enable Afrikaans to function once again as an uncompromised language. Fishman indicates clearly that "languages are not liked in a vacuum, but rather liked or disliked as symbolic values, of peoples, of ideologies, of behaviours."[51] If Afrikaans can be evaluated only in terms of its usefulness in Namibia, and in terms of the Namibians who speak it, it could be an acceptable language for members of other language groups as well.

One of the interesting phenomena to analyse in Namibia that is directly relevant to the situation in South Africa, is the attitudes of Afrikaans-speakers to these changes in the status of Afrikaans and, by implication, to changes in their socio-political status. It is predictable that a reaction will set in after an initial period of restricted use of Afrikaans and that a natural revival will also occur in which Afrikaans will find a more natural position in the Namibian society. Non-racial sport and recreational clubs and cultural societies will help secure the continued existence of Afrikaans, and multiracial Afrikaans schools will further help to break down racial prejudices. The church will also play an important role in maintaining Afrikaans.[52]

Swapo officials have emphasized that Afrikaans has an important role to play in the interim period. It is clear that Afrikaans was far better established as a lingua franca than Swapo anticipated and their language policy seems to have been adjusted to make allowances for this fact.

Conclusion

The new government of Namibia will certainly try to establish its own identity as soon as possible. This will include the introduction of various social and economic reform programmes. One manifestation of the desire to be independent of Pretoria is the new language policy. The implementation of this policy will require dedication from Namibians, but the euphoria of independence will help to overcome some of the problems facing them.

One of the most important problems now requiring attention is how to switch to English as the language of education. Before independence, officials of the Department of National education had progressed quite far with the compilation of English courses. Many teachers have already attended crash courses in English. The crucial question remains as to when to switch over. If the switchover is too soon (before the education system is ready for it) many Namibians will not experience the advantages of independence because they will have dropped out of the school system. If the switchover is delayed too long, Afrikaans may remain the lingua franca or ethnicity may begin to develop.

There are clearly two interrelated problems in the implementation of the new language policy for education: the retraining of teachers and the acquisition of new English teaching material. Although retraining programmes are operational, they need to be extended and provision made for refresher courses. It is clear that badly trained teachers can do much to harm the new language policy.

In an independent Namibia Afrikaans will be able to prove that its continued existence is not dependent on laws, but that it can exist as a minority language alongside other minority languages. In other words, Afrikaans-speakers will be able to show that they have an underlying will to preserve the language. This situation might well help to reduce the distance between the various Afrikaans-speaking groups in Namibia.

Language planners in South Africa who are concerned with the future of Afrikaans will now be confronted with a situation in which they can promote the language in a foreign country without creating the impression that they are trying to meddle in the internal affairs of that country. This promotion will have to be targeted at Afrikaans-speakers of all races and at no stage should it be seen as an attempt to regain the previous status of Afrikaans. As is done in other countries, scholarships to attend South African universities can be made available to the best students — but again only on a non-racial basis.

Language planning is to a large degree future oriented. In this article some of the implications that follow from the introduction of English as the only official language of Namibia have

been discussed. Since English is already an official language, its status will not change much. However, the status of Afrikaans will change, and therefore some attention was given to the position of Afrikaans in Namibia since similar changes are possible in South Africa. What has happened in Namibia shows that a language policy is a variable and not a fixed unchangeable entity.

In this article it appeared that language attitudes are often a reflection of values that have been associated with a particular language. These values do not necessarily reflect inherent features of the language itself, but are rather reflections of attitudes and perceptions of features of the speakers of that language.[53] As these perceptions change, the attitudes towards a particular language change as well. However, these values tend to be absolute — in other words, all the members of a given speech community are seen to have specific characteristics — in this case Afrikaans-speakers are seen to be racist and oppressive. No community is as homogenous as this. The Afrikaans-speaking community in particular is divided into many groups and not all of them supported the apartheid policies of the government. As members of the (white) Afrikaans-speaking community find that life in a non-racial democracy is not so bad, they will be placed in a position to change the symbolic value of Afrikaans in Namibia, thereby securing its position. The effects of this on the position of Afrikaans in a future South Africa are difficult to establish, but one can be sure that it will help to remove some of the prejudices prevalent in South Africa at the moment.

The assumption that a foreign world language has the "capacity to unite African peoples against divisive tendencies inherent in the multiplicity of African languages within the same geographic state"[54] has been questioned in this article. This type of policy has the potential danger of replacing one form of discrimination with another. It would seem as if it is only an interim solution and that African nationalism will sooner or later require that the indigenous languages play a more important role in local matters. It would appear that Swapo's language policy has made provision for this development. It has repeatedly pledged "equal status and respect to all locally spoken languages."[55]

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The implementation of the 1988/89 district assembly (local government) elections in Ghana

The Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) of Ghana under the leadership of Flight Lieutenant Jerry Rawlings conducted district assembly (local government) elections from December 1988 to February 1989. Joseph R A Ayee, of the University of Legon, Ghana, interprets the elections as a practical demonstration of the commitment of the PNDC to place power in the hands of the people and give them the opportunity for genuine participation in the government of the country. In this article he identifies not only the factors that enhanced the smooth implementation of the elections but also the problems encountered.

Introduction

Perhaps the most ambitious political programme of Flight Lieutenant Jerry Rawlings' Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) since it came to power through a _coup d'état_ on 31 December 1981, was the holding of the district assembly (local government) elections from December 1988 to February 1989. These elections were justified by government officials as a move in keeping with the ideals of the "31st December Revolution", set forth by Rawlings when he came to power, aimed at ensuring that power is exercised by the people from grassroots level.

This article attempts to identify the factors that facilitated the smooth holding of the elections and the constraints encountered. It must be pointed out that the 1988/89 district assembly elections were not the first to be held in the country. Similar local government elections had been held in 1952, 1958 and 1978.

Background

On 6 March 1957 Ghana became the first African state south of the Sahara to achieve independence from British colonial rule. The new state embarked upon political independence with a legacy of Western structures at the centre and a politically informed, involved and active populace. But successive governments so dissociated themselves from the values that go with such structures that political instability, economic recession and the repression of political opposition became the order of the day. Since independence, for instance, Ghanaians have had to contend with nine regimes and eight heads of state (see Table 1).

The PNDC assumed power against a background of serious economic decline. According to the World Bank mission of 1984, income per capita fell by 30 per cent and real wages by 80 per cent between 1970 and 1982; import volume fell by two-thirds; real export earnings fell by one-half, and the ratio of exports to Gross Domestic Product

(GDP) dropped from 21 to 4 per cent.[1] Furthermore, the domestic savings rate fell from 12 to 3 per cent, and the investment rate from 14 to 2 per cent of GDP; finally the government deficit rose from 0,4 to 14,6 per cent of GDP and by the time of the 1984 mission represented 65 per cent of total government spending.[2]

In order to arrest this economic slide the PNDC launched an International Monetary Fund (IMF)-World Bank supported Economic Recovery Programme (ERP) in 1983. The first phase, ERP I (1983-86), was the stabilization phase, that is, it was aimed at halting the economic decline — especially in the industrial and export commodity production sectors; while the second phase, ERP II (1987-89) was the structural adjustment and development phase, the special emphasis of which fell upon growth and development, particularly in the social services. In 1987 one of the main measures taken was the unification of exchange rates — the dual exchange

Table 1: GHANA'S REGIMES, 1957-1988

Regime	Dates in power	Head of State	Type of government
1 Convention People's Party (CPP) 1st Republic	March 1951-Feb 1966	Dr Kwame Nkrumah	civilian, multi-party; then one party
2 National Liberation Council (NLC)	Feb 1966-April 1969	Lt-Gen J A Ankrah	military, police
3 National Liberation Council (NLC)	April 1960-Sept 1969	Lt Gen A A Afrifa*	military, police
4 Progress Party (PP) 2nd Republic	Oct 1969-Jan 1972	Dr K A Busia	civilian, multi-party
5 National Redemption Council (NRC)	Jan 1972-Oct 1975	Gen I K Acheampong	military
6 Supreme Military Council (SMCI)	Oct 1975-July 1978	Gen I K Acheampong	military
7 Supreme Military Council (SMCII)	July 1978-June 1979	Lt Gen F W K Akuffo	military
8 Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC)	June 1979-Sept 1979	Flt Lt J J Rawlings	military
9 People's National Party (PNP) 3rd Republic	Sept 1979-Dec 1981	Dr Hilla Limann	civilian, multi-party
10 Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC)	Dec 1981-present	Flt Lt J J Rawlings	military

* Lt Gen Afrifa's assumption of office as Chairman of the NLC and Head of State did not change the composition, orientation and policies of the NLC.

rate was terminated in February — accompanied by a devaluation of the currency, the cedi, by 13,2 per cent.[3] Public spending was cut, the ranks of the civil service were thinned out and the number of employees in the Cocoa Marketing Board (CMB) and other state enterprises also reduced.

Ghana has been singled out by the IMF as a country that has consistently followed IMF structural adjustment prescriptions, with an accompanying improvement in the economy. In the words of the United Nations, adjustment efforts in Ghana "produced a turnaround in the economy, which is now growing at a commendable rate after years of stagnation and decline".[4] Despite the supposed "turnaround in the economy", however, life has become unbearable for most Ghanaians. In the words of the chairman of the PNDC, Flight Lieutenant Rawlings:

> Statisticians and economists can quote fairly impressive figures to demonstrate the remarkable economic recovery which has been achieved in the past few years. ... We can see with our own eyes some of the tangible results in the form of roads, electricity, boreholes etc. And yet all of us know that it is not easy to make ends meet, much less think about saving.[5]

The structural adjustment programme has been vehemently resisted by trade unions and other urban interests, who have seen it as a ploy to further line the pockets of the rich few in Ghanaian society.

Now the district assembly elections, the cornerstone of the decentralization programme enunciated by the PNDC in 1987, were and are tied to the ERP, and failure to hold the elections "would constitute a breach of faith with the people".[6] The link between the elections and the ERP was further echoed by Rawlings:

> Ghanaians should know from the history of this country and other countries that the greatest enemy of democracy is a weak and chaotic economy. ... Democracy can be secured only on the foundations of a strong viable and efficient economy.[7]

This link between the ERP and the decentralization programme in general, and with the elections in particular, partly explains why it took the PNDC six years to formulate and implement a decentralization programme.

As a consequence of its concern for Ghana's political and administrative structures, on 1 July 1987 the PNDC promulgated a "Blue Book" on the Creation of District Authorities and Modalities for District Level Elections on 1st July 1987. The "Blue Book" set out proposals for the reform of local government and the holding of district assembly elections.[8] These proposals underwent country-wide discussion and were subsequently revised. On 11 November 1988, the Local Government Law embodying the proposals was promulgated, thus paving the way for the holding of the elections.[9]

The National Commission for Democracy (NCD)

The 1988/89 district assembly elections in Ghana were administered under the control of the National Commission for Democracy (NCD), which until 31 December 1981 was known as the Electoral Commission. The name was changed to NCD by PNDC Establishment Proclamation 1981 and further reinforced by PNDC Law 42 of 1983. These laws, it must be noted, were very sketchy in defining the membership, functions and operations of the Commission. In an effort to add more flesh to the membership, functions and operations of the NCD the PNDC therefore promulgated the National Commission for Democracy Law, 1988 (PNDC Law 208), which, however, took retroactive effect from 1 June 1987. The retroactive nature of this law was meant to take account of the activities of the NCD, which began with the launching of the "Blue Book".

The NCD is headed by a chairman, Justice D F Annan, who acts as chairman of the PNDC and Head of State in the absence of Rawlings. There is also a member/secretary, who is responsible to the Commission and also for the discipline and supervision of its staff. The chairman presides over meetings of the Commission and, in the event of a tied vote, he has a second or casting vote. Membership of the Commission was increased from 7 to 20 in December 1988, not only to take more accurate

account of more interests but also to give it more weight with which to handle the forthcoming elections. The chairman and members of the Council were appointed by the PNDC.

Under Section Two, Sub-Sections a, b, and c, the NCD has three main roles: to conduct and supervise all public registration of voters; to conduct and supervise all public elections and referendums; and to demarcate electoral boundaries. Other functions of the Commission include the formulation of a programme for the more effective realization of true democracy in Ghana; the dissemination within Ghanaian society of an awareness of the objectives of the "revolutionary transformation" being embarked upon by the PNDC in the interest of true democracy; and the winding up of political parties operating before 31 December 1981 and the recovering of all their assets.[10]

The NCD was allocated 1,7 billion cedis for the elections, out of the 6 billion cedis the PNDC voted for its decentralization programme. Of these 1,7 billion cedis, 85 million went to the preparation of a voters' register while 100 million were spent on the printing of ballot papers and so forth.[11]

We can now turn to the preparation for, and holding of, the elections.

The registration exercise

This lasted from 1 October to 30 November 1987. Unlike previous voters registration exercises, which had been backed by strong "political party" sentiments, the registration exercise conducted by the NCD in 1987 had no political party patronage. Would-be voters knew they were not going to vote for any political party or person with any particular political inclination. The exercise was also to compile registers for district level elections only. At the close of the exercise, 89 per cent of the estimated population of the country eligible to do so had registered their names (see Table 2). The exercise was relatively successful because of the intensive public education programmes expressed in different print and news media and in the course of lectures and symposia conducted by government officials and the NCD.

In order to get large numbers of people to register their names new techniques were used. For example,

Table 2: REGISTRATION OF VOTERS (MAIN EXERCISE) IN GHANA 1987

Region	Estimated population aged 18 and above (Nov 1987)	Population registered by NCD	Percentage of population 18 and above registered
Northern	621 706	498 523	81,36
Upper East	429 355	358 523	83,42
Upper West	225 760	212 192	93,99
Volta	638 684	562 873	88,13
Brong Ahafo	640 834	650 262	101,47
Greater Accra	844 563	792 012	93,78
Ashanti	1 090 067	946 033	86,79
Eastern	903 056	743 068	82,28
Central	591 961	549 564	92,84
Western	635 769	586 398	92,23
TOTAL	6 612 755	5 899 098	89,21

Source: National Commission for Democracy, Accra, 1989

registration assistants were permitted to register voters in their homes and offices; while in highly urbanized areas special centres were set up to which registerable voters would have easy access. The registration exercise was also extended to Ghanaians resident and exercising diplomatic functions abroad.

A mini-registration exercise was also conducted from 11-25 April 1988. The main exercise had officially ended on 30 November 1987. This mini-exercise was organized for two weeks. The register had to be reopened in this way to give equal opportunity to some areas in the Northern, Brong Ahafo, Volta, Ashanti, Western and Eastern Regions which it had been impossible to reach during the main exercise because of floods, poor roads, and the lack of vehicles powerful enough to enable registration personnel to get there. The mini-exercise brought in 23 917 more voters for the voters register (see Table 3).

Exhibition of register

In accordance with Legislative Instrument (LI) 1397 of 1988, the NCD exhibited the voters register in selected places to enable registered voters to check the accuracy of their particulars in the register before the polls. The registers were exhibited from 18-31 July 1988 in all regions of the country. A copy of the register was placed in every electoral area of the country. (Only about 15 per cent of the registered voters in the country visited the centres of exhibition to inspect their names.)[12] Electoral area information centres that had been opened up mainly in the urban areas of Accra, Kumasi and Sekondi-Takoradi were used as centres at which the register could be kept for exhibition.

Election timetable

The ten regions in Ghana were grouped into three electoral zones for the purpose of the elections. Regions of Zone One, comprising Ashanti, Central, Eastern and Western, held their elections on 6 December 1988; while Zone Two regions, consisting of Upper West and Northern, had elections conducted on 31 January 1989. The Zone Three regions, comprising Brong Ahafo, Volta and Greater Accra, had their elections on 27 February 1989. Three factors determined this phasing of the elections. The first was the region's state of preparedness, as decided by its logistics and political and geographical standing during the period just before the elections. For instance, changes in the weather and the economic and political activities of the different regions were studied by the NCD in grouping them for their elections. Second, the NCD also determined its own capabilities in logistic support, electoral personnel and administrative convenience. Thus in the opinion of the Commission, "it was wise ... that a

Table 3: VOTING PATTERNS OF THE DISTRICT ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS IN GHANA 1988/89

Region	Districts	Electoral areas	Polling stations	Nomina tions	Candi dates	Unopp osed	Regis tered	Votes cast
Northern	13	546	1 018	1 496	1 471	38	508 560	308 191
Upper East	6	270	702	n.a.	822	17	358 174	222 068
Upper West	5	198	768	460	458	42	212 192	143 017
Volta	12	498	1 885	1 885	1 343	71	568 590	334 445
Brong Ahafo	13	58	2 082	1 746	1 629	65	650 143	391 489
Greater Accra	5	236	1 244	n.a.	693	37	792 012	350 861
Ashanti	18	840	2 739	2 945	2 211	154	950 222	577 735
Eastern	15	684	2 154	1 861	1 825	62	744 160	452 449
Central	12	498	1 478	n.a.	1 421	7	549 564	307 668
Western	11	452	1 697	n.a.	969	49	589 221	328 479
TOTAL	110	4 804	15 765	n.a.	12 842	532	5 922 838	3 416 402

Source: National Commission for Democracy, Accra, 1989.

day's election for the whole country preceded by three weeks of keen and concurrent electioneering campaigns in all the districts would create untold hardships during the polls for both the voters and the Commission."[13] On the grounds of lack of resources and logistic support, therefore, the elections had to be phased in. A third reason behind the phasing in of the elections is that they were not being held on a party basis.[14] It should be pointed out that the election timetable, once decided upon, was never changed.

The district election committees (DECs)

In order to ensure that the elections were conducted in the most effective and fair manner, the NCD was empowered by Regulation One of the District Assembly Elections Regulations 1988 (LI 1396) to establish a five-member committee in every district, to be known as the district election committee (DEC). The committees were charged with the responsibility for the conduct and supervision of public elections and referenda within their districts. The candidates' platforms were created by the DECs under the general direction and supervision of the NCD. The committees were also responsible for the receipt of candidates' nominations and also ensured that candidates presented themselves and their programmes to the electorate. The districts were constituted by 600 election committee members.

Another 330 people were also engaged as reserves, to ensure that no vacuum would be created in the event of any committee member falling sick or meeting with some mishap. Teachers dominated the membership of the DECs, (constituting 85 per cent of it) because, in the words of Haizel, "they could lead the local people better" since they could read and write.[15] The DECs attended briefing courses in Accra and Kumasi on 19-20 September 1988. The DECs teamed up with the district public education committees in most areas to open information centres in their electoral areas for effective public education on the process.

The notice of nomination of candidates

The first exercise in the election process started with the notice of nomination of candidates. It was issued on 12 October 1988 for all three zones. Two days were set aside in each zone for the filing of nominations by candidates. Nominations so filed with the DECs were announced only a week thereafter. A further week after these nomination announcements was set aside in all zones for preparation for the mounting of platforms. Platform mounting, organized by the DECs, lasted for three weeks in all three zones. In all zones, again, elections were conducted one day after platform mountings had officially come to an end.[16]

The elections

Certain features marking a departure from previous elections may be discerned in the 1988/89 elections. First, they were funded entirely by the state. As we have already noted, 1,7 billion cedis was allocated for the conduct of these elections. This funding of the elections by the state was to enable as many people as possible, irrespective of their status in society, to stand as candidates. Even the candidates' basic publicity was paid for. Second, pictures of candidates rather than symbols were used in these elections, ostensibly to enable illiterates, who formed the majority of voters, to recognize the candidates they were voting for. Third, candidates campaigned before their electorates on a common platform organized by the DECs on behalf of the NCD. Fourth, no deposit was required. This differed from the situation in the 1978 elections, when a candidate was required to pay 500 cedis — the equivalent of a worker's wages for a month.

The 59,1 per cent turnout of registered voters was the highest of the three polls held over the last twenty years (see Table 4). In the 1979 parliamentary elections only 1,8 million or 35,25 per cent of the 5 million registered voters actually voted, while in the November 1978 district council elections 18,4 per cent of the electorate voted.

The low turnout for the 1978 elections could be attributed to a number of factors. These were the first local government elections since 1958, and not only took place during a state of emergency declared by Lieutenant General Akuffo's Supreme Military Council (SMC II) government to clamp down on a nationwide civil service strike, but also in an atmosphere of apathy and despondency still enveloping voters as a result of General Acheampong's discredited Union Government referendum of March 1978 only a few months before. In addition, these 1978 elections were announced and held with little prior warning. General Akuffo's SMC II government announced on 29 September that district council elections would be held on 17 November. There was, therefore, little advance publicity; some voters only discovered who the candidates were at the polling station on election day.

In contrast, the high voter turnout during the 1988/89 elections could be

attributed to the PNDC's public education campaign. PNDC members and various officials of the NCD, regional and district secretaries (ministers), members of the Committee of the Defence of the Revolution (CDRs) and the 31st December Revolution Women's Movement covered the country making speeches on the grassroot benefits of the proposed district assemblies.

Regional breakdowns indicate that the regions in Electoral Zone Two (Northern, Upper East and Upper West) boasted the highest performance — a 63,3 per cent turnout (see Table 4). These three regions, we must point out, together represent the largest but least densely populated area of Ghana. Upper West Region recorded the highest percentage of voter turnout (67,4) apparently as "a sign of gratitude" to the PNDC for creating the region in January 1983. Greater Accra Region — the region around and including the nation's capital, Accra — recorded the lowest turnout, probably through apathy and the fact that the Region contained the cream of the upper middle class opposed to the elections.

Out of the 12 482 candidates, only 532 (or 4,14 per cent) were returned unopposed, compared to 34,9 per cent in the 1978 district elections. Of particular interest was the level of womens' participation. 112 women were elected as assembly members compared to 17 at the 1978 elections. During the registration exercise Brong Ahafo Region scored the highest percentage turnout (101,47) (see Table 2). During the elections, however, this figure was reduced because some of the voters registered in that region had by that time left for their farms lying beyond the electoral boundaries. These farmers were mainly settlers in the Western Region who, at the time of the registration exercise, which coincided with the lean season, had come back to their homes in Brong Ahafo.[17]

What facilitated the smooth election process

The first fact contributing to the smooth election process was the political commitment the NCD had from the PNDC. This commitment was demonstrated by the chairman and members of the PNDC being openly involved in the campaign. This political commitment arose from the fact that the elections

Table 4: COMPARATIVE PERCENTAGE VOTES CAST IN ELECTIONS IN GHANA

Region	1978 District council elections	1979 Parliamentary elections	1989 District assembly elections
Northern	18,2	32,09	60,6
Upper East >Upper*	16,1	32,82	62,0
Upper West >Region			67,4
Volta	15,3	33,65	59,4
Brong Ahafo	18,7	33,16	60,2
Greater Accra	10,2	35,59	44,2
Ashanti	24,9	41,99	60,8
Eastern	16,6	35,95	60,8
Central	22,2	33,34	59,3
Western	20,6	34,04	55,3
NATIONAL AVERAGE	18,4	35,25	59,1

Source: 1978 District and 1979 Parliamentary Elections Results from National Commission for Democracy, Accra, 1989; and the 1988/89 District Level Election Results from Ministry of Local Government, _Information Digest_ Special Edition II 5 (Accra! Community Development Press, 1989), p 3.

* In January 1983 the PNDC split the Upper Region into two regions: Upper East and Upper West for administrative purposes.

were tied to the ERP and SAP. Also, and more significantly, the elections were seen as a way of legitimizing the power base of the PNDC. As we have already noted, the PNDC came to power through a _coup d'état_ and did not plan to return the country to democratically elected civilian government. There was thus much pressure on the PNDC, both within and outside Ghana, to set in motion some sort of programme to return the country to democratic rule. The 1988 Local Government Law and the subsequent district assembly elections, held to fill two-thirds of the membership of the district assemblies (DAs) — the most important tier of the new local government structure — would, it was hoped, be seen as a move by the PNDC towards democracy.

Since it saw these elections as a step to legitimacy, the PNDC sought to change its previously hostile attitude (or at least ambivalence) towards electoral processes and had also to explain or rationalize this. The PNDC, it was said, now considered the:

...ballot box as the best way of judging the electoral process and ... what the PNDC has criticized is the abuse of the ballot box by politicians. ... We want the ballot box to assume its true functions as the true arbiter of the electoral process.[18]

At the same time the government believes that the ballot box could bring out the people who best represent the interests of the community since:

We don't want vain promises and propaganda. We don't want a situation where the largest number of lies leads to the largest number of votes.[19]

This supposed faith in the electoral process was intended to "make the PNDC redundant, but the PNDC does not intend to do so by decreeing artificially conceived or borrowed forms of government."[20]

The PNDC's commitment to the elections as a way of legitimation went to prove once again the contention of Naomi Chazan that:

Elections in Ghana have ... been, to a large extent, a response to the crises of legitimacy experienced by military or authoritarian rulers. Although spurted by the insecurity of those in office, interest in elections has focused squarely on the issue of the bases of regime legitimacy.[21]

We should remind ourselves that in 1960 Kwame Nkrumah sought support for the centralization of power under his aegis; that in 1969 the National Liberation Council (NLC) tried to institute a liberal-democratic regime in the country; that Acheampong in 1978 wished to obtain public endorsement for a no-party system of government;

and finally that in 1979 yet another effort was made to restore democratic procedures.[22]

A second contribution to the successful holding of these elections lay in the assistance provided by supportive organizations and institutions, such as the armed forces, the police, the Ghana Private Road Transport Union (GPRTU), the Cocoa Marketing Board and the Post and Telecommunication Corporation, to augment the logistics, supplies and efforts of the NCD. For instance, military planes from the Ghana Air Force were used in air-lifting ballot papers to Tamale, Navrongo and Wa. They also assisted in reaching the inaccessible areas of Walewale in the Northern Region and Ntoaboma in the Afram Plains District of the Eastern Region.[23]

A third contribution to the smooth running of these elections was the renovation and modernization of the operations room of the NCD. Up-to-date two-way radio communication equipment was installed and, for the first time in the life of the Commission, walkie-talkies were made available to the staff working there. The existing radio network for the NCD's regional offices was maintained and put to effective use during the election period. In some few cases the police were called upon to assist the Commission by making available the services of their local communications units.[24]

What problems were encountered

One of the most important programmes embarked upon by the NCD during the preparations for the district assembly elections was the platform mounting and presentation of candidates. Soon after nominations had been filed by the candidates, which itself took two days to complete, a week was set aside preparing candidates and electorate for a three-week period of intensive platform mounting. The two-day filing period was expected to be used by the DECs in vetting the particulars of nominees — and investigating complaints about them. It was found that this two-day nomination period was too short for vetting by both the DECs and the electorate.[25] As we will now discover, the first series of problems encountered all concerned the time set aside for certain stages of the election process.

The one week preparation period that preceded the platform mounting could not be used as a vetting period for the DECs. Nominations had by then been closed. The platform mounting period of three weeks assigned to all electoral areas was also too brief. In this short time it proved difficult for anyone to disqualify a duly nominated candidate. Since the platform mounting was short in relation to the amount of work that had to be done by the DECs it became difficult for them to visit many electoral areas more than once. The time factor, coupled with transport constraints, made the presentation of manifestos by candidates very hard to monitor.[26]

A second series of problems concerned single candidates. There were 532 single candidates throughout the country (see Table 3). Now it was a declared policy of the NCD that, where there was only one candidate for an electoral area at the close of nominations, that candidate should go through with the election to "test his popularity". Some candidates were declared "unopposed" by their own electorate even before the polls. In a few cases there were difficulties in getting people to offer themselves as candidates. The issue of single candidature posed a few problems before the polls and even during them. Many people did not have the necessary enthusiasm to exercise their franchise in a situation of no choice, and the logic of "testing one's popularity" when there was no challenger in sight was often itself questioned. Several questions were raised regarding the "popularity" of a candidate. It was not, for instance, known exactly how many votes would be necessary to make a single candidate "popular".[27]

A third problem was the cumbersome legal process for handling election petitions. Part IV of the District Assembly Elections Regulations of 1988 stipulated that petitions would in the first instance be presented to the DECs. The DECs would then forward the petitions to the court or tribunal for prosecution after they had established a *prima facie* case for such a step. The legal implications created much frustration in many a petitioner. This may have accounted for the low number of petitions — only 27 in number, from the country's 4 840 electoral areas.[28]

Other problems included missing names from registers; the misarrangement of names; delays in supplies of

election materials; the counting of ballot papers in some rural areas being deferred until the next morning because of insufficient light; the partiality of some DEC members; and the ineffectiveness of security personnel on duty on polling day at some stations.[29]

Conclusion

This article has examined the holding of the 1988/89 district assembly elections in Ghana, the factors assisting the smooth conduct of these elections and the problems encountered. It should be pointed out that these elections attracted the least animosity and enmity (in both candidates and voters) ever experienced in the country. There was a more peaceful atmosphere about them altogether. The elections also, once again, demonstrated the faith of Ghanaians in democratic procedures. For once, the personal and élitist character of past electoral processes was overshadowed by a national, unifying event bringing together the various elements of the Ghanaian mosaic. This was made possible by the political commitment of the PNDC to these elections in order to legitimize itself. One thing is certain: the PNDC and the 1988/89 district assembly elections will be forever remembered by the Ghanaian illiterates, farmers, fishermen and artisans who, for the first time, voted or contested seats in an elections entirely funded by the state.

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Changing the guard: South African foreign policy into the 1990s

Dr Greg Mills, of the Department of Political Studies, University of the Western Cape, and Dr Simon Baynham, Chief Researcher at the Africa Institute look at the changing direction of South African foreign policy.

South Africa's foreign policy is still that if there is a Government which it does not like, it does not make war against it. As long as that Government leaves South Africa in peace, South Africa will leave that Government in peace. Foreign Minister R F "Pik" Botha, 1982.[1]

In the light of the massive changes in the Republic of South Africa's international position over the past twelve months, it would seem reasonable to refer now to the start of a "new" period of South Africa foreign policy. The country is breaking out from the deepening isolation of the past forty years. We therefore thought it appropriate to catalogue the shifts in South African foreign policy since 1945, thereby defining the factors that then shaped — and those that are now shaping — the process of policy formulation.

That South Africa is the unrivalled economic and military powerhouse of the Southern African region has been well documented. The nature of the economic integration of Southern Africa is largely a legacy of colonial appropriation and development. This occurred primarily through the establishment of a road and rail infrastructure, trade networks, capital and other forms of investment, and in response to the labour demands of South Africa. In more recent times these links were strengthened by the common political interests shared by the white-ruled

regimes in the period before 1974.[2] Thus, for various reasons, most of the neighbouring states have relied on South African transport and port facilities for the shipment of much of their commerce. Moreover, South Africa and its neighbours are inextricably interdependent economically in terms of trade revenue; power and water supplies; migrant labour supply and remittances; investment and aid; health, tourism, education and technology transfer. It would be difficult to overstate the Republic's economic and military primacy in the region. Within Southern Africa as a whole, South Africa accounts for some 80 per cent of total GNP; 78 per cent of all motor vehicles (which amounts to some 40 per cent of those in all Africa); 63 per cent of tarred roads; 56 per cent of the rail lines; 55 per cent of maize and 86 per cent of wheat grown; and 75 per cent of the total exports and 68 per cent of the total imports in 1985. South Africa's population, however, only amounts to some 37 million inhabitants out of a total of nearly 90 million (41 per cent) for the region as a whole.[3]

Relative to the Frontline States (Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe — known as the FLS grouping), South Africa has assumed the status of both a military and economic leviathan. Compared with the South African Defence Force's (SADF) total regular armed strength of 103 500, these states

together muster a total of 243 200 men. However, although Angola (in addition to the rapidly-diminishing Cuban garrison) has 50 000 reserves and Tanzania some 10 000, South Africa has a well-organized reserve of around 455 000 men.[4] Despite being at a disadvantage in terms of access to equipment and replacements, and outnumbered in certain types of military hardware, South Africa's military superiority and potential has been in its qualitative advantage: in the serviceability of its weapons systems, in its technological innovation, and in the superior administrative/logistical and strategic bases essential to the use of military power.

Despite its obvious economic importance and military superiority in the region, the Republic's political security since 1945 has rested on the stability of its regional environment. Consequently, throughout the post-war period successive South African governments made the creation of a stable regional milieu favourable to South Africa's economic and security interests a priority goal of foreign policy. Indeed, the stability of South Africa's domestic political order was perceived as critically dependent upon the success of such a policy. Any understanding of South African foreign policy thus demands knowledge of the Republic's domestic situation and related forms of state, government and politics; the nature and features of the region as well as any regional intra- and inter-state activity; and the dynamics of

post-1945 world politics. In South Africa's case, the very nature of the Republic's internal order meant that the impact of domestic policy upon foreign policy has been far more pronounced than is usual.[5] Conversely, changes in the regional context were often perceived as posing the gravest danger to the survival of the South African regime. Indeed, alterations and developments in the post-war order made it increasingly difficult for Pretoria to maintain the distinction between domestic and foreign policy, an effect that placed other states at a certain advantage in their dealings with the Republic.

For the purpose of analysing the evolution of South African foreign policy, the post-war era has been divided up into the following periods: 1945-1960; 1961-1974; 1975-1980; 1981-1984; 1985-1989; and, 1989-onwards. This makes it possible not only to chart the evolution of policy, but also to weigh the influence of individuals, to attribute the South African government's reaction to the changing international and regional environment, and to the deteriorating internal security situation. It also provides a means of examining the introduction of the government's total mobilization programme — or Total National Strategy — after 1978, together with those organizations of the South African policy-making process that accompanied this shift. It is necessary first, however, to set South African foreign policy in the changing international context that emerged at the end of World War II.

The Legacy of World War II

The post-war world differed profoundly from that which preceded it. The systematic persecution and extermination of the Jews by Nazi Germany promoted a new sensitivity about human rights. In the wake of the Holocaust it came to be regarded as morally indefensible and politically repugnant to create an elaborate and socially divisive system based purely on racism. This rejuvenated concern was clearly reflected in the UN Charter.

Concurrent with this internationalization of morality was the emergence of anti-colonialist sentiments and a desire for self-determination. These developments provided a common denominator and binding political link

between Third World states, which also faced problems of poverty and underdevelopment. The importance of this grouping — as a highly visible and vociferous voting coalition in the UN, as markets for Western goods, or as part and parcel of politically expansionist or global containment strategies — made their allegiance a major objective of superpower competition. It also gave them very special political leverage on such issues as the racial basis for political power in South Africa.

Despite these considerations, South Africa was quick to attribute its related internal and domestic security problems to a Cold War scramble for territory and influence. Later it elaborated this view into that of a "Total Onslaught" against South Africa. Portraying itself as a natural ally of the West under threat of being overthrown by lackeys of the Soviet Union, the government projected the challenges to South African security as part of a wider global struggle.

The post-war era also witnessed enormous technological improvements, especially in the area of mass communications. These in turn served to disseminate knowledge of South Africa's political system and stigmatize its politics. The media revolution internationalized the immorality of South Africa's domestic system, strongly influencing the relations between South Africa and other states in the international system.

1945-1960: Emergence as an international pariah

Despite a history of resistance to British interference and colonialism, the Afrikaner leadership has pursued a Western-oriented foreign policy and emphasized its cultural and political alignment with the West. However, the contrast of South Africa's pre- and immediate post-war position with its decline in international stature is revealing. Before 1945 the then Union of South Africa was a highly respected member not only of the British Commonwealth, but also of the League of Nations. As such it was regarded as a vital military and industrial base, "a link in the Commonwealth chain of defence whenever Africa was threatened by outside powers."[6] Seldom, if ever, was the international spotlight of condemnation thrown on the nation's internal affairs. Field Marshal J C

Smuts enjoyed a reputation as a statesman perhaps only now equalled as a white South African leader by that of President F W de Klerk. Smuts's acclaim and international standing — perhaps not entirely commensurate with the Union's wealth, size or strategic location — peaked during his second term as Prime Minister (1939-45), when he was the only Dominion premier to attend meetings of the War Cabinet in London.

In addition to his contribution to the formation of the League of Nations at the Peace Treaty of Versailles in 1919, Smuts played an important role in drawing up the preamble to the UN Charter. His input at the San Francisco conference proved, however, to be: "a watershed in South Africa's international standing; thereafter the country steadily declined into international unpopularity and eventual ostracism."[7]

In the early post-war years, South Africa, by virtue of its status as the most developed economy in Africa, entertained the notion of itself as a great power having a role to play — through inter-imperial co-operation — in shaping the course of events in the dependent African territories. However, these schemes of a regional or Pan-African Union came to naught. Although both the Commonwealth and the UN remained important international forums for South Africa, even before the National Party election victory in 1948 Pretoria was beginning to find itself isolated from the world community. An opponent of the National Party, Smuts was nevertheless severely criticized in the UN over South West Africa, the mandate over which had been ceded to South Africa at the end of World War I, and over the Union's treatment of its Indian minority.

This break from the past in South Africa's foreign relations was exacerbated by the advent of D F Malan's National Party government in 1948, which was committed both to the achievement of republican status and the creation of a new domestic order, apartheid. Apartheid was in part designed to counter feelings of black self-determination being espoused elsewhere in Africa. Consolidation of the colonial order in Africa, it was hoped, would safeguard South Africa's domestic status quo.

With this in mind, Malan's Africa Charter proposed guidelines for the

development of the continent along the lines of "Western European Christian civilization". Pretoria canvassed the idea of an African Defence Organization for African states in a series of talks involving the colonial powers, the Commonwealth and the United States.[8] These efforts came to nothing. Instead, they further identified South Africa with the colonial order by encouraging close links with white communities elsewhere in Africa, communities whose experiences during the transition to black majority rule were to have a profound effect on South Africa's external policies.

The independence of Ghana in 1957 gave emphasis to South Africa's growing realization that its future lay not in exclusive identification with the old colonial order, but rather as an independent African power. This acknowledgement that it had to adjust to new realities within the continent, coupled with the need to offset Pretoria's growing international isolation, were evident in H F Verwoerd's (1958-1966) policy of separate development. By providing for Bantu "homelands", which might ultimately become independent states, Verwoerd tried to identify with the decolonizing trend in Africa. He outlined plans for regional co-operation, initially focusing on South Africa, the homelands, and the British High Commission territories of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland (the BLS states), though he envisaged in time a commonwealth-type relationship of economically dependent states covering the entire subcontinent as far north as the Congo (now Zaire).[9] This, he argued, "was a policy which does precisely what those countries in Africa which attack us desire to have themselves".[10] This reformulation of Smuts's ideas on regional co-operation was again expressed in P W Botha's proposals for a Constellation of Southern African States (Consas) in 1979.

However, these proposals came to nothing. Intensifying international and domestic pressure over the country's internal policies and mounting violence at home left South Africa in no position to launch any major new foreign policy initiative. Instead its domestic policies were responsible for frustrating its long-held aspiration to incorporate the High Commission territories.

Significantly, the reaction to Verwoerd's initiatives demonstrated

that foreign opinion had an influence upon domestic policy, and domestic policy imposed constraints on the conduct of external affairs. Further ways in which apartheid affected South Africa's foreign relations were in the forming of economic and military links with the West. Militarily, there was the issue of Pretoria's domestic strategies and its efforts to enter into a formal defence alliance with the West. By presenting the internal and external threats to South Africa's security as part of an international communist offensive, Pretoria asserted that it was a major bulwark against communism. By making this appeal it sought to make common cause with the Western alliance and thereby enlist the support of its members in defence of white interests in South Africa. Although its pro-Western credentials had been established by its participation in both World Wars, the South African government further endorsed its solidarity with the West by taking part in the Berlin airlift and in sending an élite South African Air Force (SAAF) squadron to Korea.[11]

However, while Pretoria would have liked Nato to extend its cover into the South Atlantic, either in the form of a broader African alliance, or a South Atlantic Treaty Organization including several South American states, Western antipathy towards apartheid combined with other strategic considerations to preclude such an arrangement. Furthermore, unlike the situation in the Middle East, the Western powers did not share Pretoria's fears of imminent communist penetration of the subcontinent.

An identical relationship between domestic and foreign affairs can also be identified in South Africa's economic links with its major trading partners. Again the purpose was to align South Africa closely with the West commercially and industrially. This concept of maximizing integration and stressing the primacy of economic considerations over political differences was also manifest in Verwoerd's policy towards black Africa; the hope being that such an approach would "spill over" to the benefit of diplomatic relations.

Although its domestic policies consistently frustrated its foreign policy ambitions, South Africa's prospects appeared relatively secure until the Sharpeville crisis of March 1960. At that time there was the cordon sanitaire of white-ruled

states to the north; the Simonstown Agreement of 1955 which assured — in very broad terms — a British defence commitment against external aggression; and, at home, a black opposition which remained largely apolitical, "in no position to challenge the state in armed confrontation."[12]

Sharpeville marked a new stage in the Union's deteriorating international position. The banning of the African National Congress (ANC) and the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC), together with the imprisonment of their leaders, undermined those of South Africa's political allies who were prepared to support Pretoria's claim that it was a major force in the maintenance of political order and democratic values in the subcontinent. South Africa's moral and political order became major international issues; vigorously debated at the UN and elsewhere, they led to demands for international economic sanctions against Pretoria. It was only through Verwoerd's "politics of security"[13] — the restoration of order through repression and consolidation — that South Africa found a new basis upon which it could reconstruct its foreign policy.

1961-1974: The outward movement: Vorster's search for international acceptance through détente

Verwoerd's "politics of security" restored white confidence in South Africa through the suppression of internal violence and a stress on economic growth.[14] The mood of optimism created during this period of consolidation enabled Prime Minister B J Vorster to embark on the "outward movement" phase of South African foreign policy, which sought *rapprochement* with black Africa. Despite initial fears, this mood was little altered by the declaration of South Africa as a Republic in 1961, a change which appeared to do little further harm to Pretoria's international relationships.

The South African government hoped that by improving relations with black Africa, it would improve the Republic's international position. Although the outward movement was primarily directed at northern block African states, Pretoria hoped to capitalize on its economic hegemony in the region. By seeking to maintain close

economic and technological co-operation among all the countries in the area, Vorster sought the eventual creation of a Southern African economic community. Like Verwoerd before him, he hoped that this functionalist approach would spill over into the political and diplomatic fields, thereby acquiring the tacit acceptance of a white-ruled South Africa and its internal policy of separate development. Yet, while his predecessor had attempted to provide a domestic policy consistent with the requisites of South Africa's foreign policy, Vorster's initiative "was essentially externally oriented and implicitly denied that foreign policy demanded a domestic corollary."[15]

In the event, the outward movement made little progress towards formalizing relations with either black Africa, or the newly independent states in the region. Diplomatic relations were established with Malawi in 1967, however, which even by the 1990s remained the first and only such formal link with a black state.[16] Closer links were achieved with the BLS states through a revision of the Customs Union Agreement in 1969, and in the mid-1970s, Presidential summit meetings were held with the Ivory Coast, Zambia, Senegal and Liberia.

Vorster's initiative was lost in the escalation of the guerrilla conflicts in Rhodesia and the Portuguese colonies, for it was politically disadvantageous for any black African regime to be seen to be co-operating with the South African government, even if — as in the case of the joint Vorster-Kaunda settlement initiative for Rhodesia — it was intended for the benefit of the black states themselves.[17] Indeed, Pretoria's attempts at both dialogue with black Africa and at regional détente encountered vociferous rhetorical opposition. For example, in April 1975 the Organization of African Unity (OAU) Council of Ministers — an organization from which the Republic was excluded — adopted the Dar es Salaam Declaration on South Africa which included the statement that "any talk with the apartheid regime is such nonsense that it should be treated with the contempt it deserves."[18] In addition, this African bloc was instrumental in terminating South African membership of various non-political specialized UN agencies. Despite these continuing political difficulties, Africa's imports

from the Republic increased from some US$280 million in 1966 to US$680 million in 1969.[19]

Pretoria's efforts to achieve diplomatic legitimacy were evident also in its deep reservations about the Smith government's unilateral declaration of independence in 1965, and in its willingness to enter into negotiations over the question of Namibian independence. These reservations, together with South Africa's commitment to the maintenance of economic growth in the region, meant that the Republic's search for international acceptability found a certain sympathy in Washington and London. In particular, South Africa "could fairly claim to be a strong candidate for the Nixon doctrine of 1969 (NSSM 39) with its emphasis on the role of regional powers in helping to defend and assert Western values in the contest with Moscow."[20] Though this amounted to tacit acceptance of the Republic's external policies, it was not — as Pretoria would have liked — translated into a repeal of the voluntary UN Arms Embargo of 1963.[21]

The realization that South Africa could not count either on Western help in the event of an external attack, or on arms purchases, was behind the massive programme in the 1960s aimed at the modernization of the SADF. This received added impetus from a deterioration in internal security and the dangers of a more unstable international environment. The guerrilla wars in Rhodesia and the Portuguese territories threatened to spill over into the Republic. There was, in addition, the beginnings of a violent internal struggle in Namibia. These external developments fuelled the growth of a "garrison-state" idea, a psychology central to the evolution of the Total National Strategy of the late 1970s. The Republic's siege mentality was emphasized by the forging of close links with other pariah states, such as Israel, Paraguay, Taiwan and Chile. The Israeli connection in particular was to become essential in providing South Africa with the technology and equipment with which to modernize its security forces.[22]

Despite substantial economic and military aid to the Smith regime, the "occasional and studiously vague outburst" about "putting out one's neighbours' fires", and the threat voiced by Prime Minister Vorster "to hit [Zambia]

so hard that they will never forget it",[23] the primary role of this increased military capability and growing militarization was internal. Any large-scale intervention would have irrevocably damaged South Africa's shaky international position, and set back Vorster's search for détente. Though it undoubtedly provided a measure of external deterrence, the military instrument played an "insignificant role"[24] in South African foreign policy up to 1974. It was a period which saw the heyday of the Department of Foreign Affairs cut short by the events of the mid-1970s.

1975-1980: The development of the Total National Strategy

The early years of P W Botha's premiership saw substantial domestic, regional and international change. The sudden collapse of Portuguese control in Mozambique and Angola set in motion a chain of events that considerably altered Pretoria's foreign policy options, forcing a policy retreat to within the boundaries of Southern Africa.

By the mid-1970s South African foreign policy had made little progress towards its ultimate objective of securing international acceptance of the white government and its domestic policies. The ill-fated military involvement in the Angolan conflict and the subsequent failure of the Anglo-American peace initiative for Rhodesia were primarily responsible for ending the era of détente which had promised to legitimize Pretoria's role in the region.

Encouraged by assurances of American aid, and assistance from several African states, Prime Minister Vorster committed an estimated 3 000 SADF troops in support of non-Marxist FNLA (National Front for the Liberation of Angola) and Unita (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) guerrillas in Angola.[25] However, South African troops were forced to withdraw after having come close to the capital, Luanda, when US support failed to materialize. By then, Cuba had rushed between 15-20 000 troops supported by massive supplies of Soviet war *matériel* to help the Marxist MPLA

(People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola) launch a counter-offensive. Defence Minister P W Botha, who had reportedly pressured Vorster into intervening in the first instance, was especially disillusioned by the absence of US support and the vacillations of the West in general. The military, for their part, became dissatisfied with the politicians' handling of the war.

With the independence of Mozambique and Angola came a major escalation in the guerrilla wars on the borders of Namibia and Rhodesia. SADF involvement in Angola ended any prospect of enduring co-operation between South Africa and the Frontline States designed to resolve the Rhodesian issue. The creation of these two new states, together with the SADF's retreat from Angola, arguably encouraged the civil unrest which began in Soweto in June 1976.

After Soweto, rioting spread rapidly around the country. The events which followed, including the death in detention of the Black Consciousness leader Steve Biko and the harsh internal security clampdown in October 1977, hastened "the Republic's slide into deeper international opprobrium and ostracism."[26] This deterioration in South Africa's relations with the West was aggravated further by the impasse over Namibia, and by the threat to economic stability and investment derived from internal and external reactions to apartheid. The boom of the 1960s was succeeded by economic crisis. The early 1970s brought a wave of strikes and a substantial outflow of foreign capital and skilled manpower. Western countries realized that important social change was essential if their economic and political interests were to be secure. In essence this was the basis upon which the West, and the USA in particular, founded its constructive engagement policy of the 1980s: cataclysmic political upheaval, they maintained, could be prevented only through political and economic support for internal reform.

As Vorster was preparing to step down as Prime Minister in 1978, his administration was rocked by the "Muldergate" scandal. This involved criminal and political wrong-doing on the part of senior officials in the South African Department of Information. They had been conducting a covert propaganda and espionage campaign as part of the government's outward movement, designed to discredit South Africa's critics and improve the regime's international image. Exposed by the Muldergate affair, their efforts were shown to be self-defeating and only served to aggravate relations with Western governments, some of whom had themselves been targets of the campaign.

These events, the imposition of a mandatory UN Arms Embargo in 1977, and the increasing antipathy of the Carter administration towards South Africa's race policies, heightened Pretoria's perceptions of vulnerability and threat and "set the stage for a fundamental policy reappraisal."[27] South Africa was faced with a "Total Onslaught". Emphasizing that South Africa was simultaneously vulnerable to attack from external aggressors and internal revolutionary forces, the threat to its security became depicted in terms of a Marxist-inspired master-plan. From this perspective, the black nationalist groups, especially Swapo and the ANC, were each portrayed as conscious, or even inadvertent, agents advancing the aspirations and responding to the dictates of international communism. Conventional external military threats, externally supported domestic insurgency, anti-apartheid propaganda, and international economic pressures became projected as a Kremlin-manipulated war waged against Pretoria. Furthermore, the conflict in Southern Africa was presented not merely as a regional one but as an element in Moscow's wider aim of global dominance. According to South Africa's *White Paper on Defence and Armaments Supply,* 1982:[28]

> The ultimate aim of the Soviet Union and its allies is to overthrow the present body politic in the RSA and to replace it with a Marxist-oriented form of government to further the objectives of the USSR, therefore all possible methods and means are used to attain this objective. This includes instigating social and labour unrest, civilian resistance, terrorist attacks against the infrastructure of the RSA and the intimidation of Black leaders and members of the Security Forces. This onslaught is supported by a world wide propaganda campaign and the involvement of various front organisations and leaders.

In short, a whole panoply of instruments and strategies were perceived as gnawing away at the Republic, its society and values. Boycotts, the activities of radical anti-apartheid groups, industrial disputes, confrontations with the security services and sabotage were all linked in a single grand design: a concerted anti-South Africa offensive waged through a mix of political, military, social and psychological means.

Although the regime had not abandoned all hope of developing an anti-communist Western alliance, anti-communist rhetoric under the Total Onslaught served a quite different purpose. It was devised to achieve the mobilization and militarization of society necessary to safeguard white South Africa's interests. Furthermore, it was also intended to placate government supporters by illustrating that the pariah status of the Republic and its internal troubles resulted not from domestic racial policies, but from a global, communist offensive.

In order to thwart the perceived menace of a foreign-inspired onslaught, Pretoria deemed it necessary to develop an integrated plan in which all functions of the state apparatus were geared to one overriding security consideration. Drawing its inspiration from a range of post-war counter-insurgency campaigns, and from the theoretical and empirical discourses of such men as André Beaufre and John J McCuen, a "Total Strategy" emerged as the guiding ideology for white survival.[29] It was only in the aftermath of the collapse of Portuguese authority in Southern Africa, however, that this strategy was spelled out in specific terms. In one of the clearest statements describing the total response, the *White Paper on Defence, 1977* identified the dynamic linkage between the military and political dimensions of South Africa's counter-revolutionary strategy:

> It is ... essential that a Total National Strategy be formulated at the highest level. The defence of the Republic of South Africa is not solely the responsibility of the Department of Defence. On the contrary... it is the responsibility of every population group.[30]

Thus, a successful response "demands interdependent and co-ordinated action in all fields — military, psychological, economic, political, sociological, technological, diplomatic, ideological, cultural, etc...".[31]

The manifestation of this response was most evident in the construction of a sophisticated National Security

Management System (NSMS), at the apex of which stood the State Security Council (SSC). The only one of four principal cabinet committees to have been established by law (the Security Intelligence and State Security Council Act of 1972), the SSC aroused considerable speculation about its role in domestic and foreign policy making. The formation of this "inner cabinet" evolved from the Westminster model of government in which the executive branch of government (the cabinet) has a more powerful role in policy-making than that of the legislature. While it is known that uniformed officers and heads of security agencies together made up half of the SSC's permanent membership, even now very little has been revealed about its inner workings.[32]

It is generally accepted, however, that changes in the government's threat perceptions remodelled the machinery and manner in which security-related decisions were handled. The evolution and rationalization of the contemporary national security system enhanced not only the public profile but also the political influence of the military élite. But this centralization and streamlining of executive power in the cabinet — to the detriment of both Parliament's and the National Party's position — had been devised at the behest of the civilian politicians, especially P W Botha, whose twelve years as Minister of Defence accounted in large part for the "shifts in the institutional setting and centre of gravity for high-level policy making. In each of these shifts, the security establishment and especially the defense services, gained influence at the expense of other bodies."[33] In the 1960s South Africa's armed forces were politically insignificant. In the 1980s they became active participants in domestic and foreign policy making at the highest levels of state.

Further evidence of increased militarization in the Republic is incontrovertible. This was reflected in the size, structure and sophistication of the SADF, which depended, in turn, on national threat perceptions and the health of the economy.[34] The growth of defence expenditure as a proportion of the budget and GNP, as well as in absolute terms, provides one of the clearest indicators. Before 1960, the SADF accounted for less than 7 per cent of annual government spending and under 1 per cent of GNP. In response to

changes in the perceived security threat discussed earlier, defence expenditure soared: from R44 million in 1960 to R120 million in 1962. By the 1964-65 fiscal year, defence accounted for a fifth of the budget and almost 3 per cent of GNP. Although spending declined to 12 per cent of the budget, or 2,1 per cent of GNP, in 1972-73 (R335 million), the major deterioration in South Africa's strategic position in the subcontinent in the mid-1970s saw a new spurt in the Republic's military spending. By the 1977-78 fiscal year, defence appropriations (R1 654 million) were just under five times the 1972-73 level — roughly a threefold increase in real terms — accounting for 19 per cent of the budget and about 5 per cent of GNP. These allocations surpassed R2 billion in 1980-81, R3 billion in 1983-84, R4 billion in 1985-86, R5 billion in 1986-87, and R6,6 billion in 1987-88. The 1989-90 budget of R9,94 billion was up some 20 per cent on the 1988-89 appropriation of just over R8 billion.[35]

Measures taken to bolster the SADF included the rapid expansion of conscripted white manpower — the National Service requirement for white men, for example, was increased from twelve months to two years in the early 1970s. Efforts were launched to enlarge the Permanent Force (PF) element of the armed services, as well as various schemes to attract white females into uniform. Both politically and militarily, however, the most significant element in the expansion of the SADF was the enlistment of black, Indian and coloured South Africans into combat roles. Today an estimated 30 per cent of the PF are "non-white". The security forces of the homelands, especially those designated "independent", were also strengthened.[36] With mandatory national service for all white males and a much greater emphasis on Citizen Force, commando and civil defence organizations, virtually every white family became enmeshed in the state's security apparatus.

The insinuation of martial inputs into scientific, educational and recreational fields was also an important indicator of an increasingly militarized polity. This manifested itself in a wide variety of activities which included defence-oriented university research, the Civic Action programme, "youth preparedness" courses in the classrooms, the school cadet system, Southern Cross

Fund collections for the "Boys on the Border", military displays and parades, and the manipulation of the media networks to sharpen a siege mentality. As one observer put it, "The average South African is confronted with a veritable psychological barrage directly designed to stimulate an emotional climate conducive to total strategy."[37] These tendencies were especially marked during the political crisis in the latter half of the 1980s.

While there are considerable difficulties in accurately quantifying these mutually reinforcing dimensions of state militarization, the rapid rise of a military-industrial complex provides a more tangible index of the process. International isolation and the UN arms embargo stimulated a symbiotic relationship between private industry and finance on the one hand and the state security sector on the other. At the hub of this complex rested the Armaments Corporation of South Africa Limited (Armscor), the controlling body of weapons research and development and manufacture. At its peak Armscor employed about 25 000 personnel directly and another 130 000 indirectly. It controlled ten affiliated nationalized industrial subsidiaries and distributed work to some 1 000 subcontractors in the private sector. From 1977, self-sufficiency became a top priority for Pretoria's strategic planners. This military-capital nexus is now capable of producing a wide range of basic and sophisticated weaponry. Although some gaps remained in the SADF arsenal, South Africa became largely self-sufficient in modern weapons-systems. The military-industrial complex centred on the SADF/Armscor penetrated, and became an integral part of, the central machinery of government.[38]

Because it is not sound economics to create an arms manufacturing capability solely for one's own needs, South Africa also became a major exporter in its own right. In addition, it was virtually certain that South Africa possessed the potential to produce nuclear warheads. In short, Pretoria's impressive technological and logistical achievement in anticipating, and largely overcoming, the arms embargo furnished the regime with an essential tool when confronting its enemies in its hostile regional environment.

The vastly altered regional environment also required a new preoccupation

with South Africa's neighbours. A new "go-it-alone" strategy, independent of the West, was evolved. This in essence had two main objectives: first, the creation of a peaceful Constellation of Southern African States; and, second, the defence of South Africa against external interference in every possible way. These policies formed an integral and major part of Pretoria's Total National Strategy.

Although Prime Minister Botha inherited the concept of a "constellation" from his predecessors, the events of the mid-1970s and the resultant break up of the Republic's perceived cordon sanitaire elevated the idea into a major foreign policy initiative. Consas was to have included the BLS states, Malawi, Rhodesia, Namibia and South Africa, the TBVC states (Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei[39]); and possibly Zambia and Mozambique as well. Economic co-operation would be formalized into specific areas, a key to the success of this scheme being the support of private capital from South Africa. Like Verwoerd and Vorster, Botha hoped that economic co-operation would acquire a functionalist dynamic, thereby producing regional interaction in the fields of politics and security. Not only would the inclusion of the TBVC states result in tacit recognition of South Africa's homeland policies, but such co-operation would also improve the Republic's international position as Western nations would find themselves under less pressure from black Africa to break off ties with Pretoria.

However, this strategy did not rest either on a clear perception of the new regional realities, or on a realistic evaluation of South Africa's various policy options.[40] Pretoria overestimated both the attraction of its economic strength, which was seen as a sort of "offensive paternalism", and the extent to which there was a common regional fear of a Marxist threat. Conversely, it underestimated the potency of the political and ideological factors that had previously precluded such co-operation.[41] As Millar points out: "the objective of South Africa in protecting its social system from predatory neighbours, and the objective of those neighbours in destroying South Africa's social system, have had an irresistible incompatibility."[42] In brief, there was no chance of members of the

OAU joining a formal association with either the non-recognized former homelands, Rhodesia, or a South African-controlled Namibia.[43] The blunt refusal of participation by the BLS states and the independence of Zimbabwe under the premiership of Robert Mugabe in 1980, sounded the death knell for the constellation scheme. Instead, Zimbabwe — along with the BLS states, Angola, Zambia, Malawi and Tanzania — joined forces in the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC), designed to reduce their dependence on the South African economy. These developments forced Pretoria to amend its ideas on a constellation and restructure it to include only the TBVC states. This "inner constellation" was, however, of little relevance to South Africa's foreign relations, as the homelands have never been recognized internationally and do not, in effect, constitute sovereign states.

Following the failure of these attempts to create a favourable regional environment, Pretoria was forced to lower its sights, realising that if the black states were not to join the Consas scheme, relations with them could not be improved and formalized through elaborate plans for institutionalized co-operation. Then, as domestic and regional threats to South Africa's security mounted in the early 1980s, "basic considerations for security took precedence over ambitious plans for regional co-operation."[44] If Consas could be equated with the "soft" aspect of South Africa's regional policy, as the prospects for a constellation faded, Pretoria was already embarking on the "hard", interventionist component of this policy. This involved a campaign of pre-emptive and punitive attacks, both covert and overt, against those neighbouring states that afforded sanctuary to anti-government guerrillas. The military, with its access to the policy-making process, was able to introduce this preferred "pragmatic" approach to ensure a quiescent regional context. This was deemed essential to enable Pretoria to carry out the internal reform programme necessary for its political and economic stability. In contrast with the Vorster and Consas eras, in the regional arena diplomacy was now reinforced, and in some instances replaced, by military and economic muscle.[45] This militant approach also

reflected a mood of defiance and intransigence towards the international community, so that the National Party government was domestically seen to be both strong and determined. It is this policy which has been so commonly referred to as "destabilization".

1980-1984: Regional repression and limited internal reform

Already in the process of re-establishing its presence inside the Republic, the ANC, and to a lesser extent the PAC, were able to exploit the political exhilaration generated by the Soweto riots to recruit and train dissidents for a campaign of sabotage and assassination. Following the first wave of violence between June-November 1976, thousands of young blacks left the country, many of them to enlist in the ANC, which used the neighbouring states either as training bases, administrative centres or conduits into South Africa.[46]

From the late 1970s the scale of infiltration of ANC cadres into the country increased markedly. As a result, between 1976-80 nearly seventy attacks and explosions were reported by the security forces. In the early 1980s the activities of armed saboteurs expanded dramatically, with attacks on targets of significant strategic, economic and symbolic importance. Between 1981-88 there were an estimated 885 insurgent attacks.[47] Among the most spectacular bombings were those of the Sasol petroleum complex (June 1980), a number of electricity stations in the eastern Transvaal (July 1981), the Koeberg nuclear plant (December 1982) and the SADF Headquarters in Central Pretoria in May 1983.

Using the favourable climate created by the Reagan administration's Southern African policy of constructive engagement, to combat the threat posed by the ANC South Africa embarked on what became the most controversial era in its relations with Africa: an *á la carte* strategy of mainly military and economic coercion. Ostensibly, the purpose of this "destabilization" policy was to keep the neighbouring states off balance, especially those that had been used to launch ANC and Swapo attacks against the white regime. Because these countries were heavily dependent on South

Africa for their imports, exports and communications it was a simple matter for Pretoria to apply economic pressure. For instance, in 1987, about 90 per cent of Zimbabwe's external trade and all of Botswana's petroleum supplies depended on South African transport.[48] By imposing economic sanctions, Pretoria could wreak havoc throughout the region. The Republic's scope for damaging its black neighbours in this manner was best illustrated by the virtual blockade it imposed against Lesotho in December 1985: within a month the tiny kingdom had experienced a military coup and a tough new approach towards any ANC presence in that country.[49]

This economic stranglehold was often linked with military measures. Attacks from guerrillas operating from border states invariably invited "hot pursuit" (as well as pre-emptive) retaliation from the Republic, as in the raid across the Lesotho frontier in December 1982.[50] A team of South African special forces' commandos assassinated "twelve ANC targets" in Maseru. Within a month, 100 ANC operatives were reported to have been expelled from Lesotho.

South Africa obviously would not have admitted to destabilizing its neighbours. However, in line with this tit-for-tat policy Pretoria's spokesmen acknowledged that if the neighbouring states continued to harbour anti-South African forces, they should not be surprised if South Africa considered doing the same to them. These operations, together with large-scale assistance for pro-South African dissident armies such as Unita in Angola and the Mozambique National Resistance (MNR/Renamo) in Mozambique, underlined South African military supremacy in the subcontinent. Because of the importance of Namibia/Angola in Pretoria's regional foreign policy calculations, some further elaboration is required on South African activities in these areas.

Since the time the territory was taken from Germany under a League of Nations mandate in 1919, the Namibian issue was critically linked to the South African one. South Africa subsequently virtually annexed the territory of some 318 000 square miles (larger than the United Kingdom, Italy, West Germany and the Low Countries combined) and refused to recognize the UN's claim to inherit the League trusteeship. In turn,

the UN revoked South Africa's mandate. By the mid-1970s, the situation concerning Namibia's transition to independence had reached a virtual impasse. The issues behind this were complex, for South Africa's Namibian policies became hostage to wider domestic political, economic and security considerations. These factors largely explain South African attempts to seek an "internal solution": installing a moderate government and moving the country towards independence only on its own terms.

South Africa's occupation was supported by Namibia's estimated 110 000 white population of ex-German settlers augmented by Afrikaners, who constituted about 10 per cent of the total. Faced with charges of "selling-out" Namibia's whites, it was crucial — especially in light of its own race reforms — for Pretoria to adopt a firm stand over the independence issue. In addition, any perceived capitulation would arguably have given encouragement to the Republic's blacks. Second, although it was claimed by Pretoria that the costs of staying in Namibia were high in financial terms,[51] similar white perceptions of Namibia's enormous wealth (especially the importance of retaining control of diamond production) aggravated this dilemma.

Furthermore, since the late 1960s South Africa had been confronted by Swapo (South West African People's Organization) guerrillas. For the most part, these forces operated from bases in neighbouring Angola. Virtually guaranteed strong support because of their power-base amongst the majority Ovambo tribe and their wide recognition as the only organization to have militantly fought for the departure of the South Africans, Swapo was by contrast portrayed by Pretoria as a communist organization and a tool of the Soviet Union. After Angola's independence in 1975, the threat posed by Swapo became considerably more effective and demanded the massive use of South African forces against them.

To prevent Swapo guerrillas seizing control of the country, a large South African military presence was maintained in Namibia. These forces made numerous raids against Swapo camps in Angola. The SADF also co-operated with Jonas Savimbi's Unita rebels who are engaged in a civil war against

Angola's Marxist government with, by 1988, its estimated 50 000 Cuban troops. According to the Pretoria authorities, this foreign communist presence was the main stumbling block to a peaceful resolution of the Namibian conflict. The US government shared this view, and both its military support for Unita and its insistence that South African participation was a necessary condition for a Namibian settlement, provided Pretoria with an important Western ally in the region. As long as Unita could present itself as a genuine alternative to the Angolan government, it appeared that South Africa would be able to justify its intervention. Until the end of the 1980s, the Angolan and Namibian issues remained as inseparable, and as important for South Africa's foreign policy makers, as ever.

During the early 1980s Botha's strategy of regional destabilization and limited internal reform appeared to prosper. The South African Department of Foreign Affairs was able to take advantage of the situation made possible by the adoption of the military's "pragmatic" strategy in the area. Early in 1984, South Africa concluded a cease-fire agreement with Angola (The Lusaka Accord) which provided for the joint disengagement out of southern Angola by South African, Cuban and Swapo forces. In March that same year, South Africa concluded a non-aggression pact with Mozambique (The Nkomati Accord) designed to halt SADF support for the MNR in exchange for Mozambique denying military bases to the ANC. Two weeks after Nkomati was signed, it was disclosed that South Africa had reached a similar accord with Swaziland, which had remained secret since its conclusion in 1982. These agreements — particularly Nkomati — were hailed both within the Republic and Western countries as major diplomatic coups for the South African government. They were certainly a vindication of Pretoria's "thump-and-talk" regional approach.

In the wake of Nkomati there was a significant improvement in South Africa's relations both with its neighbours and with Western countries. On the evidence of P W Botha's official European visit in May 1984, it appeared that Pretoria was at last emerging from political isolation. Western leaders welcomed Botha's

efforts both at "regional détente" and his internal reforms.

These changes in the regional milieu also enabled Pretoria to demonstrate to the white electorate its resolve towards a process of reform, at its own pace, even in the face of international, regional and right-wing domestic pressures. The support of the white voters found expression in a two-to-one majority in a 1983 referendum in favour of a tricameral parliamentary system to include the coloured and Indian minorities. However, it was Botha's cautious pace towards internal reform and the failure to accommodate the political aspirations of the black majority that were to prove the undoing of the Republic's international position and its domestic stability.

1985-1989: The State of Emergency and the Angolan/Namibian Accords

South Africa's internal policies have often been viewed as the crucial determinant of its international foreign policy response. Such a perspective has been evident in the universal moral condemnation of apartheid since the early 1960s. This was never more evident than in the period following the declaration of the first State of Emergency in July 1985, when the South African authorities faced a major political and security crisis. This manifested itself in an escalation of organized and sporadic opposition in both urban and rural black townships.

Rioting had broken out initially in September 1984 in response to what was later described as "unaffordable rent increases" in some black townships.[52] The issue, however, was only part of wider political and economic tensions affecting the black population as a whole. The economic recession had already reduced black living standards to unacceptably low levels relative to those of white South Africans. Furthermore, Pretoria had made no attempt to accommodate black political aspirations in the tricameral parliamentary system introduced in September 1984. The establishment of the United Democratic Front — though at first used to mobilize various anti-apartheid organizations against the new constitution — provided an "umbrella" organization through which these frustrations

could be channelled.

Violence and counter-violence spread throughout the country, and it was not long before the SADF was deployed to restore order. In October 1984, 7 000 troops were sent into the black township of Sebokeng in a "seal and search" action which provoked widespread protest that the SADF was being thrust into a central political role. From September 1984 to mid-July 1985, 450 people died and thousands were injured. Very few of these casualties were sustained by the security forces, but large numbers of policemens' homes were destroyed. Damage to shops, factories and government buildings was massive. Against this background of civil disturbance and local government collapse the administration decided to act. The emergency was declared to break the spiralling cycle of violence, to protect the regime's black supporters and to reassure its white supporters that Pretoria was determined to respond resolutely to restore order. It also conferred a stamp of legality on the tough action P W Botha wanted to take as an essential prerequisite if political change and constitutional reform were to proceed at the "desired pace".

The decision to impose emergency regulations was made only after some agonizing on the part of the cabinet and its security advisers. It is understood that the views of the military and police chiefs prevailed against those who felt that the declaration would damage foreign investment in South Africa. Indeed, these measures aroused immense international concern, and led to the sharp fall in the value of the rand and repeated calls for economic sanctions from Western governments.

Given almost unfettered powers of search, arrest, detention, interrogation and censorship under the sweeping emergency provisions, SADF and Police action was ruthless enough to curb most instances of violent mass action. As a consequence, and in an attempt to present a picture of returning normality to international and domestic audiences alike, the emergency was lifted on 7 March 1986. This, however, did not help South Africa abroad. As the violence continued, and under pressure both from the more radical Frontline States and at home, the EEC and the US initiated a policy of "creeping" sanctions in which each new package threatened to be more substantial

and less symbolic than the last.[53]

From a security perspective the lifting of the emergency proved to be counter-productive.[54] There was an immediate resurgence of disorder in the black communities, increased violence in and near "white" areas and a new wave of explosions. With the approach of the tenth anniversary commemorating the Soweto uprising on 16 June, Pretoria decided to take drastic action. On 12 June, President Botha declared a new countrywide state of emergency which included severe media restrictions. This followed the visit of the Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group mission to the Republic, which had been abruptly terminated following a series of SADF raids aimed at the ANC in Botswana, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Pretoria would henceforth have to give priority to security considerations and domestic political constraints, rather than meet any external incentives designed to promote black structural reform.[55] The pressure on the West to impose far-reaching sanctions intensified.

With the success of South Africa's efforts at regional diplomacy in 1984, there was hope that some sort of regional *modus vivendi* might serve to stimulate domestic *rapprochement* within South Africa. However, the violations of the Nkomati Accord and the deterioration in relations with neighbouring states after 1985 signalled the failure of Pretoria's regional policy to facilitate internal political accommodation. Indeed, the declining fortunes of South Africa's foreign policy prospects were directly related to the unrest and violence which erupted from late 1984. By the mid-1980s, South Africa's domestic security considerations took precedence over its regional and international foreign policy aspirations. This compelled a significant change in Western attitudes towards South Africa, culminating in the imposition of both "private" and "public" sanctions.[56]

President Botha's landslide election victory on 6 May 1987 demonstrated that the white electorate was firmly behind the emergency provisions and the domestic and regional actions of the security forces. If anything, the emergence of the ultra-right wing Conservative Party as the official opposition illustrated that Botha's internal reforms were moving too fast for the white population. The use of anti-US rhetoric in

the run-up to the election showed that the government was prepared to give priority to the stabilization of its internal, rather than international, environment, thereby enabling controlled change to take place. The use of this anti-Western platform created some doubt as to the exact role this "international equation" might be likely to play in determining a future outcome in South Africa. This in turn raised questions as to the utility of economic sanctions. Many observers were profoundly sceptical of sanctions in promoting fundamental change in South Africa's domestic policies. Proponents of sanctions, however, stressed that because of South Africa's economic dependence on it, the West could exert formidable leverage. By curtailing trading and investment links, it was argued, apartheid could be undermined and economic sanctions could also be used as a means of reducing the regime's military power to resist internal insurgency.

However, the case for punitive economic measures was firmly denied by those, such as Britain's Margaret Thatcher, who maintained that sanctions would have a disproportionately negative impact on the black population and wreck the economies of neighbouring African states. For the Republic possessed the capability — if full sanctions were to be imposed — of crippling the economies of the neighbouring states, even though such a strategy would be self-defeating as these states are amongst the Republic's most important trading partners. In addition, this type of measure was likely to have a negative effect on South Africa's internal security situation. Despite this, and in the face of mounting international pressure and internal dissent, Pretoria did not show constraint in dealing with those who were perceived as fomenting violence from within and in the regional area. Counter sanctions were thus perceived by Pretoria as a means of meeting destabilization with destabilization.[57]

It was also argued that the imposition of sanctions would exacerbate a laager mentality on the part of the white population, thereby hindering rather than promoting the process of reform. It was also maintained that the increasing dependence of the Republic's economy on black workers and the growing economic leverage of the black population were the major dynamics for political

change. By thwarting such forces, the process of reform would be held back.

Pretoria continued to stress, both as an argument against sanctions and as a means of highlighting the related threat to Western interests, the country's geopolitical and strategic importance. There could certainly be no doubt about the importance of South Africa's mineral wealth. This strategic — as opposed to purely economic — significance rests essentially on four commodities and their alloys: chromium, manganese, vanadium and the platinum group of metals. Pretoria argued, with considerable statistical backing, that in these strategic materials at least, South Africa was more important to the West than the West to South Africa. Moreover, the vulnerability of the West was increased by the USSR being more often than not the main alternative supplier. For South African policy makers, this factor both increased the Soviet threat and Western dependence upon the Republic. For this reason, during the latter half of the 1980s, it was contended that it would be in South Africa's best interests _not_ to align itself too closely with the West, and instead play the Soviet "card".

Indeed, South Africa earned little political sympathy from its continued identification with the West. However, it would — the argument went — gain both a measure of domestic and regional stability through accommodation with the USSR. There were many in the SADF, for example, who for a long time were ambivalent about South Africa's pro-Western stance and Western motives towards South Africa. However, the exaggerated polemic surrounding the Total Onslaught would have appeared to preclude such a switch from being engineered. Nonetheless, this did not necessarily rule out indirect co-operation with the Soviet Union over, for example, a peace agreement with the Angolan government.

Events in Angola in 1987-88 were to have a profound effect upon the conduct of both South Africa's domestic and regional policies. By the mid-1980s, with substantial South African backing, Unita's operations had grown to the point where they posed a considerable threat to the security of the MPLA government. As a result, from 1985 onwards Angolan government forces embarked on what became an annual "dry-season" campaign intent

on capturing the rebels' headquarters at Jamba in the south-eastern part of the country. Accordingly, South African assistance to Savimbi's movement grew dramatically.

In 1987, after intensive training and careful logistical preparations, which included massive Soviet arms shipments, the MPLA launched their largest assault in July. Led by a high-ranking Soviet general, the government advance was stopped short of its objectives by a combined SADF/Unita force. This was the first time since 1975-76 that Pretoria had admitted to intervening to prevent a Unita defeat, and this acknowledgement had major international, regional and domestic implications for South Africa.[58] Faced with an increasingly sophisticated air force and an enlarged Cuban garrison in Angola, and mounting economic and political disquiet at home, there was an awareness of limits to Pretoria's ability to project its power in the region. Utilizing the framework of negotiation set up by Chester Crocker, with concessions being made on both sides, in December 1988 agreement was reached concerning the implementation of the Namibian independence agreement (UN435) and the linked withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola. Furthermore, Pretoria was able to tie the agreement (and presumably the termination of its support of Unita) to the closure of the ANC military bases which were situated in central and northern Angola.

As a result of the positive climate which emerged from the negotiations, President Botha embarked on a series of visits to African countries. In September 1988, his meeting with President Joaquim Chissano of Mozambique led to the signing of a number of agreements between the two countries in respect, inter alia, of security, labour, transport, power, forestry and health. Other visits were conducted to Malawi and Mozambique.

Thus by the end of the 1980s, it was apparent that Pretoria operated under constraints imposed by a number of factors. First, since the declaration of the State of Emergency, South Africa had been fighting a losing battle in its efforts to stave off international sanctions. A more belligerent regional posture would only have added fuel to these flames. Second, international sanctions had conversely made the country more dependent on its African

neighbours, which Pretoria was well aware of despite its posturing over the "threat" of counter-sanctions. Third, South Africa faced an increasingly expensive struggle (both politically and economically) to maintain its pre-eminent military position in the region. Any further demands on the SADF would severely stretch an economy already weakened by sanctions and in the depths of a major recession. The stress was rather on economic reform and savings, which, of course, were related to and complemented by the moribund issue of political reform. And at the same time that Pretoria faced these obstacles, there appeared a realignment of influence away from the so-called "securocrats" who favoured military force as a means of ensuring a quiescent regional environment, towards those who preferred diplomatic means.

Although South Africa's more militant regional policy did have its successes in the various bilateral non-aggression pacts, the Namibian peace accords and the related closure of the ANC's military bases in Angola demonstrated both the limits of South African military power and the wide scope for diplomacy in the region. Furthermore, the agreements also ended the viability of the Total Onslaught concept, which had been fed to the white South African public since the independence of Angola and Mozambique. Constructive dealings with the Soviet Union during the course of these negotiations discredited the white perception of it as the mastermind and sponsor of a black revolution. This was confirmed by President Gorbachev's reforms and the sudden developments in Eastern Europe in 1989. Thus, paradoxically, by the end of P W Botha's tenure of office the use of South Africa's military force in the region was likely to endanger rather than protect the survival of white power.

Into the 1990s: De Klerk and Mandela

In many ways President F W de Klerk inherited an environment not dissimilar to that of his predecessor eleven years earlier. Although he initially continued with the visits to black African states begun by Botha in the wake of the Namibian agreements, his approach was totally different. Recognizing that

South Africa's international position could not be improved without internal political accommodation, De Klerk set about to achieve just that. Avoiding the frequent displays of hubris and the need to placate the conservative elements in his white constituency that characterized his predecessor's term of office, the new president embarked on the most radical period of political reform yet seen in South Africa. This has had enormous foreign policy ramifications. His initial actions — the composition of his cabinet, the change in emphasis towards civilian input into the NSMS, the reduction in the National Service period from two years to one, and the trimming of both the SADF and Armscor — were followed by the dramatic unbanning of the liberation movements (including the ANC and South African Communist Party), the release of political prisoners and, very importantly, the freeing of Nelson Mandela. These actions confirmed the realization that internal security could never be achieved either through regional repression or foreign diplomatic exercises.

Thus, in the light of the advances in South Africa's international position, it seems quite appropriate to consider the foreign policy options facing a post-apartheid government. But formulating these is no easy task. The nature of the international order has changed dramatically and irrevocably in the last year. The US-Soviet conflict has been substituted by a whole new set of tensions: the extremes of Arab nationalism and Islamic fundamentalism, problems (primarily economic and social) in Eastern Europe, and the rise of nationalism in the Soviet republics.

The problems facing the foreign policy analyst do not end there, however. Any consideration of the future has to recognize the influence of a probable ruling party and its policies. To take the ANC, for example. Given its history, both as one of socialist internationalism and of close allegiance with the SACP/CPSA, it was likely that until 1989 — when the Berlin Wall came down — an ANC government would have been firmly entrenched within the Soviet camp. Yet since his release Mr Mandela has discounted the widely-held belief (especially among whites) that communists dominated the ANC executive. He has also openly courted Western governments, realizing that the

history of this country is inextricably enmeshed with this rather than the Soviet side.

Given the history of the international stances of both the ANC and the National Party, and bearing in mind the implications of the developments within the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, what then are the foreign policy options facing South Africa? Historically there have been three broad alternatives. First, a pro-Western position; second, a pro-Soviet stance; and, third, one of non-alignment neutrality. Recent developments have made the first two unlikely.

But what exactly is meant by non-alignment? This carries with it connotations of membership of the Non-Aligned Movement, but in the past such neutrality has carried little weight in terms of East-West politics in an organization that has tended to be at least as anti-American as pro-Soviet.

Non-alignment in South Africa's foreign policy context can be substituted for the term "regionalism". Even now there is talk of a regional economic community structured around SADCC and South Africa. The end of apartheid would mean for Pretoria that this is no longer an ambitious pipe-dream, unlike P W Botha's constellation plan.

Regionalism holds benefits for all. For South Africa, it would provide ready access not only to regional markets, but most probably also to those in the EEC through the Lomé conventions. For the neighbouring states, access to South African finance and expertise would assist their economies which have suffered from both the ravages of mismanagement and the years of regional destabilization. It is to be hoped that this would be accompanied by diplomatic effort to solve the conflicts in Angola and Mozambique, and crises elsewhere.

This is not to say that the scrapping of apartheid will end regional instability. This requires also a willingness on the part of South Africa's neighbours to meet these challenges and to shift away from their own undemocratic practices. These states must realize, too, that a new South Africa, given its previous record of turning investment into profit, will attract most of the foreign aid to the region. Of course, South Africa's own future is dependent upon the scale of international investment. The chances of attracting this have to be

measured against the level of industrial unrest and political violence and rhetoric in the Republic; and also against the demands of developing areas, particularly those in Eastern Europe. The new government must find a formula for economic redistribution that will maintain investor confidence. As an establishment British Conservative MP put it during a recent visit to this country: "A lot of companies may take the view that they would rather invest in countries which have been communist and now wished to become capitalist, than in a country which has been capitalist but where some of the politicians want it to go communist."[59]

Prospective military alliances might also take on this regional flavour. Following Botha's restructuring, the SADF is now tailored to Pretoria's specific needs rather than its potential contribution to an international alliance. The Navy, which had a capable anti-submarine element, has been relegated to coastal duties. Though emphasis is once again being placed on the Army's conventional role, until recently it was tasked mainly with counter-insurgency. In the region, South Africa and Armscor could help in keeping down increasing costs. Low-cost, tough and reliable equipment has long been Armscor's trademark. And the arms organization must be aware that its survival, in economic terms, is linked to their ability to export.

South Africa cannot, however, be hamstrung by regionalism if it is to survive economically. Major international donors are now focusing their attentions on Eastern Europe, where they see higher returns than in an Africa characterized by economic ineptitude, political nepotism and military upheavals. In Africa, South Africa can, on a much larger scale than at present, offer a sympathetic approach, and with specialist equipment and know-how.

Ironically, since one of the four pillars of the ANC's anti-apartheid strategy was "international isolation" (the others being armed struggle, underground structures and mass mobilization), cadres might have a lot to offer here. The organization's forty-odd international branches have a useful core of experienced staff, especially well-versed in the needs and circumstances of Africa. It remains to be seen whether these members, particularly those of the post-1976 generation, can

successfully make the transition from revolutionaries committed to armed insurrection to international diplomats. If they can, however, they will contribute an expertise alongside that of the established diplomatic corps essential to promote South Africa into the next century.[60]

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13 N M Stultz, "The politics of security: South Africa under Verwoerd, 1961-6", _Journal of Modern African Studies_, vol 7, no 1, April 1969, pp 3-20.

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17 The "political" problems that black Africa experiences in negotiations with South Africa are well illustrated by the difficulties that President Kaunda of Zambia had with President Nyerere of Tanzania in his (Kaunda's) discussions with Vorster over the reopening of the railway line between South Africa and Zambia in August 1975. This intriguing story is told at length in D J Geldenhuys, _The diplomacy of isolation_, _op cit_, p 271.

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Nationalization: Lessons from Southern Africa

Sam Kongwa, Researcher at the Africa Institute, presented this paper on Southern Africa's experience of nationalization, at the National African Federated Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Nafcoc) Economic Conference held at the Wild Coast Sun, Transkei, on 2-3 May 1990.

At independence most African countries, including those in Southern Africa, inherited deep-rooted problems of underdevelopment and retrogression. These manifested themselves in gross inequalities among the population, mass poverty, developmental imbalances between the urban and rural areas, food shortages, an inadequate production base and unsophisticated technology, unemployment, an indigenous population lacking in skills, deficiencies in basic and social infrastructure, an inadequate human resource base and inappropriate physical capital. In addition, foreigners and multinational corporations owned or controlled most of the economy.

Nationalization came to be regarded as the logical solution to these economic and social problems, and as a means of realizing the essence of political independence.

This paper will highlight the major nationalization programmes in Southern Africa, and Zambia in particular, the justifications put forward by these states for greater government involvement in the economy, and the lessons to be learned from their experience.

Rationale for nationalization

Nationalization in Southern Africa was justified on the following, familiar, economic, ideological and political grounds.
- Political independence also entailed economic independence for the newly sovereign nation. This, it was

postulated, could only be achieved if the state acquired ownership and control of at least the "commanding heights of the economy". An egalitarian and classless society could not accept private ownership of some of the vital economic sectors.
- The emergence of a small, privileged capitalist class whose lifestyle and patterns of consumption would be incompatible with the rest of society had to be prevented.
- Private ownership of the means of production had to be discouraged, so that the labour force could not be exploited by wealthy concerns.
- It was said that the new public enterprises arising from nationalization would provide the much-needed revenue for social investment in such areas as education, housing, health and transport by ensuring that profits were retained in the country and by strengthening economic sovereignty, particularly with regard to multinational companies.
- It was believed that vital services, such as public utilities, could not be left to market forces without this defeating the objective of an egalitarian society.
- National security necessitated the running of the steel, petrochemical and arms industries as public enterprises. Furthermore, the realization of important equity objectives, such as the redistribution of income, job creation and regional development, were thought to require government

control of the relevant sectors of the economy.
- In order to control the prices of essential commodities and to counteract speculation, unfair trading practices, and hoarding by the private sector, the government had to direct the marketing and distribution of essential consumer goods.
- Whenever it was deemed to be in the national interest, the government had to intervene in the economy to protect a deficient private sector enterprise or to take over one that had failed.

There was also a hidden agenda, however: the acquisition of resources necessary to dispense patronage to important political constituencies and state bureaucrats.

Forms of nationalization

Nationalization in Southern Africa has been brought about by direct action or outright seizure, and indirect action or partial seizure.[1] Direct nationalization took place when the government expropriated a private company or private property, often after assurances of compensation had been given. Direct seizure without compensation occurred only when property had been abandoned by foreigners who had left the country, as in Angola and Mozambique soon after independence. In view of the negative publicity and threats of reprisal by foreign nations always generated by direct nationalization,

this method was seldom used.

The most popular technique involved various methods of indirect nationalization, including the creation of state monopolies, requirements for obtaining licences, and citizenship, taxation and compulsory savings schemes.

State monopolies were established through legislative action that stipulated the reservation of certain sectors of the economy for state activity, making it an offence for any private company or individual to engage in similar business. A state monopoly could assume the guise of a state corporation, a marketing board or a co-operative. The government would occasionally permit private companies to compete with established public enterprise, but the public enterprise would be afforded special rights and privileges regarding taxation, rent, interest on borrowed capital, free use of government buildings and land, unlimited access to foreign exchange, and unrestricted import and export provisions. As a result of these concessions to public enterprise, any competing private enterprise was quickly marginalized and ultimately had to cease operations simply because it could not compete.

Another subtle method used to exclude "alien" businesses from participation in certain selected sectors was for the state to instruct public enterprise management to allow only indigenous agents or distributors to tender for certain services.

Licensing laws not only regulated the functioning of the particular economic sectors mentioned above, but also conferred upon state bureaucrats enormous discretional powers of either granting or refusing licenses. So-called citizenship laws were meant to exclude non-citizens from participating in specified sectors of the economy. However, the ultimate result of this provision was that the government monopolized most businesses in these sectors, because local entrepreneurs lacked the required skills and capital.

Another popular method was to impose various taxes on private sector companies and to compel them to channel a substantial percentage of their profits into savings.

The record of nationalization in Southern Africa

The record of nationalization in Southern Africa reveals a mixed pattern of strategies (direct and indirect nationalization) and motives.

In the case of Zambia, the first phase of the nationalization measures were announced by President Kaunda as part of the 1968 Mulungushi economic reforms. The Zambian leader noted that in the four years since independence, the country had witnessed a considerable economic boom, but that this prosperity had benefited only the expatriate business community. He further pointed out that instead of using some of this money to expand their businesses, foreign companies had "expatriated increasingly large portions of their profits".[2] Also, principally because of the inherited colonial socio-economic structure, no local private sector involvement was discernible. It was imperative therefore that the government institute certain economic reforms aimed at achieving greater economic independence for Zambia.

After the nationalization measures of 1968, 1969, 1973, 1976 and the 1980s,[3] the government monopolized or had a majority share interest in over 130 companies operating under the holding company, the Zambia Industrial and Mining Corporation. The companies operated in a number of sectors: mining, railways and airways, electricity, coal, agricultural and mineral marketing, breweries, transport, building supplies, large-scale consumer retailers and wholesalers, publishing and the news media, fertilizers, hotels, pipelines, farming machinery, maize, tobacco marketing, copper mining, banking and insurance, communications, real estate, hospitals and clinics, and motor plants. The government also had a minority interest in cement, explosives, textiles, sugar, tyres, construction, engineering, pharmaceuticals, forestry, bakeries and ceramics.

Prior to nationalization the majority of these companies formed part of 25 foreign-owned concerns in building and construction, road transport, retail and wholesale, and breweries. They were directed to sell 51 per cent of their shares to the government.

A number of additional economic measures were put into effect. Companies owned by foreigners were allowed to remit a maximum amount equal to 30 per cent of their equity capital or 50 per cent of their net profit. Financial institutions were directed to accord local entrepreneurs privileged access to credit. Retail business licences for small and medium enterprises throughout the country (except in urban central business districts) were reserved for Zambians. Road transport licences and small public works contracts were reserved exclusively for Zambians. All foreigners operating in the specified sectors were directed either to sell to local entrepreneurs or to become Zambian citizens.

Nationalization of the Zambian copper industry

The most far-reaching economic measure was the 51 per cent nationalization of the Zambian copper mines in August 1969.

Copper is the mainstay of the Zambian economy. In 1969 it accounted for 95 per cent of visible exports, 59 per cent of recurrent government revenue, 48 per cent of GDP growth and 14 per cent of job opportunities.[4]

As part of his 1969 Matero economic reforms, President Kaunda announced that the state would take over 51 per cent of the mining sector. Government bonds issued as compensation to the two mining companies concerned, Anglo American and Amax, were to be repaid over a maximum period of 12 years and a minimum of 8 years. The government also signed management and marketing contracts with the two firms. In 1973, these management and marketing contracts were prematurely terminated by the state, which felt that despite the 1969 nationalization move, production and investment in mining had not shown a substantial increase. Once the contracts had been cancelled, the bonds established as compensation for the nationalized shares were redeemed immediately.

Nationalization measures in Mozambique, Angola, Tanzania and Zimbabwe

Soon after assuming power in Mozambique in 1975, the Frelimo government embarked on a series of measures aimed at nationalization. At the conclusion of the Frelimo Third Congress in 1977, a number of sectors were taken over by the government:[5] all land, hospitals, schools, the legal profession, privately-owned buildings,

funeral agencies, hotels and tourist facilities, major industrial and commercial concerns, and all retail and wholesale interests.

In Angola the state began to intervene in economic matters in 1975, but it was only in 1976 that major decisions on nationalization were taken. President Neto announced that the MPLA government would take over all abandoned economic assets as well as other strategic sectors of the economy. The nationalized sectors included[6] a major steel works, a cement plant, textile and sugar mills, twelve agricultural complexes, all newspapers, all radio stations, the central bank, all commercial banks, and the insurance industry.

In Tanzania major decisions on nationalization were communicated in the 1967 Arusha Declaration, and involved the sisal, tea and coffee export industries, retail and wholesale businesses, commercial banks, the insurance industry, most industrial companies, including companies in the important shoe manufacturing, breweries and plastics industries, and the import trade.

The method of state intervention in Zimbabwe differed from that in other African countries. In most cases where the state decided to intervene, it took only a minority share interest in the enterprise (for example in CAPS, a pharmaceutical manufacturer, and in Heinz). The Zimbabwean method also involved state intervention in the form of wage restraints, price controls, trade union legislation and measures to protect workers. All these measures conveyed to the business sector a strong desire on the part of the state to increase its involvement in the economy.

Despite the good intentions of the governments referred to above, and the plausible reasons put forward for their actions, nationalization's balance sheet in Southern Africa can hardly be described as favourable. With few exceptions, nationalized industries in Southern Africa have performed unsatisfactorily. Despite their privileged access to capital and subsidies and protection from competition, public enterprises have often run at a loss or, at least, have not shown the profit expected.

The financial weaknesses of nationalized enterprises in Africa have been attributed to a number of causes. A recent paper published by the World

Bank identified some of these causes as "unclear, multiple or contradictory objectives, bureaucratic meddling, overly centralized decision making, inadequate capitalization, managerial ineptitude, excessive personnel costs and high labour turnover".[7]

In the light of these poor financial and performance records, the following lessons should be learned from experience:

• Nationalization per se does not result in economic efficiency. On the contrary, there is often a decrease in efficiency once professional managers have been replaced by political appointees lacking in managerial experience. Rapid promotion of inadequately qualified personnel and a high turnover of staff contribute to this poor performance. As a result, very little or no additional revenue is generated for social and productive investment.

• The timing of the nationalization process often results in weak management in the public sector because it is invariably embarked upon at a time when there is lack of managerial, technical and entrepreneurial skills among local people. In addition, the business environment in nationalized enterprises is not one where professional, skilled employees will be encouraged to function according to the accepted rules of business — and without undue political interference.

• Political constraints do not allow managers of state enterprises either to discipline or to motivate subordinates, and promote the uncontrolled recruitment of staff. State enterprises are generally considered to be extensions of the civil service and the political leadership shows very little understanding of the need of these enterprises to function as independent economic entities.

• The state always assumes that its primary function is to initiate and encourage economic growth. Instead of limiting its involvement to creating an environment conducive to economic growth and providing needed infrastructure and services, it takes on the role of an entrepreneurial manager;

• The proliferation of bureaucratic regulations, such as quotas, licensing and various other controls, and the placing of enormous discretion-

al powers and resources at the disposal of state officials, all of which are aimed at reducing foreign control and increasing local involvement in the economy, has the effect of encouraging corruption and nepotism.

• Nationalization does not seem to have eradicated economic inequality through a more equal distribution of wealth.

Invariably, the chief beneficiaries of nationalization have been the state bureaucrats and the politicians. The visibly opulent lifestyle of the Zambian élite led President Kaunda to admit in 1974 that "the reforms have created a form of state capitalism where tremendous power is concentrated in the hands of a small managerial group who have their hands on the important switches and whose elitist attitudes set social patterns far beyond their immediate realm of command".[8]

Marcia Burdette's findings on the nationalization of the Zambian copper mines seem to confirm this, and she points out that:

> ... analysis of the Zambian negotiations and their aftermath casts doubt on governmental intention. A government may nationalize for many reasons other than to benefit the majority of the population; leaders may nationalize foreign assets to gain political capital on the domestic scene, to enjoy the profits themselves, or to direct those profits within the economy in a different fashion.[9]

She also disputes the common assumption "that the governments are acting on behalf of the welfare of the population, rather than for a smaller group".[10] In conclusion, she points out that nationalizations in Zambia, like those in most other African countries, arose from an internal leadership struggle for:

> ...control within the parastatal bodies, ministries, and political parties of the host state. The ideological justification for a nationalization to better the national welfare can be a chimera in this still capitalistic change of assets.[11]

More recently the Zambian government has decided to institute major reforms in the field of public enterprise. These include the establishment of a stock exchange; the sale to the private sector of 40 of public utilities, such as the Zambia/Tanzania Railway Authority, Zambia Railways, Zambia Electricity Supply Corporation, the

University Teaching Hospital and the Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation; the offer to the public of 49 per cent of the equity in state-owned mining, industrial and commercial enterprises; and the gift of shares to workers in public enterprises as a productivity incentive.[12]

In the cases of Angola and Mozambique, one can hardly find a single example where nationalization was to the benefit of the people, not only because of the ensuing internecine wars, but also on the evidence that nationalization measures alienated the people to the extent that they turned against the very schemes that were meant to benefit them.

At its Fifth Party Congress, Frelimo formally committed Mozambique to a mixed economy, and established a scheme to promote and facilitate foreign investment. Foreign investors have now been guaranteed that their investments will not be nationalized.

In Tanzania, the reversal of many of Julius Nyerere's nationalization measures by his successor, and strong internal opposition to nationalization, clearly illustrate that the people felt cheated by the political leadership. In an important recent study on Tanzanian nationalization, Diane Bolton concludes that "changes in patterns of ownership are generally failing to produce a better life and working conditions for labour,"[13] and that in the end nationalization in Tanzania clearly symbolized "a transition towards the consolidation of power and privilege by the bureaucratic ruling stratum."[14]

The continuing economic liberalization policies of the Tanzanian government have now confined the concept of nationalization to the past in that country.

Evidence from elsewhere in Southern Africa shows that nationalization ultimately brought about a financial loss as a result of compensation and management payments and loss of potential private investment stemming from a decline in investor confidence.

Although it is true that in Mozambique and Angola the major reason for the lack of investment was a lack of security, private investment in both Zambia and Zimbabwe has been negligible because both countries were seen to be moving towards greater state involvement in the economy. Since independence ten years ago, Zimbabwe

has had only three foreign investments: in a baked bean factory, a cooking oil plant and a chewing-gum factory. In May 1989 Zimbabwe established an investment promotion centre to disseminate information about investment opportunities in that country. Legal protection for investments is promised.[15]

To summarize, it is evident that nationalization in Southern Africa did bring about effective control of the "commanding heights of the economy", it did realize the expected exponential revenues in taxes and dividends, and it acted as a positive force in promoting the development of skills and human resource among the indigenous populations. Indeed, the process of nationalization can be credited with instilling a sense of urgency and pride and a spirit of responsibility in the local labour force.

Evidently, training and career development programmes established as part of the nationalization schemes enabled the African labour force to acquire technical skills and industrial experience. The acceleration of local human resource development facilitated the growth of indigenous enterprise, and established the foundation of present-day entrepreneurship.

When all the ideological, political and dividend benefits are measured against the losses in socio-economic terms, however, one is inclined to conclude that nationalization is, after all, the attainment of the non-economic objective of control of the economy by the indigenous population. But this is negated by the realization that control of the "commanding heights of the economy" without the attainment of economic benefits is absurd. Still, there are those who argue that the poor performance of nationalized enterprises has nothing to do with the type of ownership, but with the rules under which these enterprises are made to operate by the state.

Therefore, the argument goes, if state enterprises were permitted to operate freely, like any private enterprise, they would prove viable. Evidence from Southern Africa, and perhaps elsewhere, however, shows that although the outcome under these conditions would certainly be better, it is rather difficult for the ownership of an enterprise to be wholly separated from its control and from accountability for its performance. Besides, there is still

the problem of work ethic: that human beings are inclined to perform better when working for themselves.

With hindsight, all Southern African countries today are inclined to agree that it was unnecessary to embark on the road of nationalization in order to effect control of the "commanding heights of the economy", retain profits in the country, control the prices of essential consumer products, regulate wages and salaries in a more egalitarian fashion and achieve a better contribution to the economy. They realize that these objectives could have been achieved more efficiently through fiscal, monetary and other state policies.

It is on account of this realization that in a recent document entitled "Enterprise, skills and productivity", the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC) proposes the strengthening of the private sector as one of the major priorities of the present decade. Southern Africa, the paper states, "requires entrepreneurs, skilled people, the creation of an enabling environment to promote investment and development, the work ethic and the efficiency required to compete successfully in the modern world."[16] It concludes by pointing out that the controls introduced by most governments of Southern Africa "on almost every sphere of economic life in the last decade have almost all impacted negatively on productivity."[17]

History consists largely of the study of mankind's past mistakes. I have no doubt that as South Africa moves inexorably towards a free and just society, its future leaders will take cognizance of the history of the nationalization process in Southern Africa.

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Adequate economic prosperity as a prerequisite for political stability in a post-apartheid South Africa: The relevance of the nationalization/privatization debate

Ronnie M J van Wyk, of the Department of Sociology, University of Port Elizabeth, *argues that the process of privatization could damage the spirit of negotiation in South Africa.*

Introduction

Those who believe that a democratic and free society is a good society should also acknowledge that democracy demands equality and fairness. For people to be free and happy they must have a say in their own destiny and be able to co-determine whatever access there may be for them to life's opportunities. Any attempt to create a democratic society under conditions of economic scarcity or gross inequality is doomed to failure and can only result in exploitation and domination.

Regarding the distribution of power in a democracy any claim to a legitimate title to rule can be maintained only as long as effectiveness and efficiency are demonstrated. The loyalty of various groups will only be gained and ensured if they are convinced that the system is the most effective one. Their test for legitimacy is very pragmatic: what are the results? Given the "revolution of rising expectations", results in the form of access to consumer goods and an increase in living standards are

very important to create the belief or myth that the system is working or that it is the best; in other words, that it is legitimate. This legitimacy test, which also applies to post-apartheid South Africa, raises the issue of the achievement of adequate economic prosperity. We can begin to address this issue by investigating the role of the state in the economy.

The role of the state in the economy

At root, economic activity in any society has a dual purpose. First it must solve the problem of survival. Only when this has been done satisfactorily through the provision of the basic needs of all members of society — such as food, clothing and shelter — can economic activity begin to provide for additional needs. Only when the national household has been arranged in such a way as to prevent anyone dying can steps be taken to beautify the house and make it more comfortable. Now the

question changes from how to survive to how to improve the quality of life.[1]

Maasdorp argues that there are basically two types of economic systems: centrally planned and market.

> In the centrally planned economies (CPEs) the state is virtually all-embracing, characterized by a command system with decisions percolating down the hierarchy. In the market system, the role of the state today varies widely and this has given rise to the mixed economy where both market and non-market mechanisms exist to allocate scarce resources.[2]

In mixed economies it has become a common economic function of the state to provide a physical infrastructure as well as social security through education, health, welfare, housing, and so on. The establishment of public corporations in key economic sectors such as steel production, coal-mining, banking and transport is another example of government involvement in the economy.

As we move towards a new society in South Africa the general socio-economic debate will have to address

the issue of how to blend a free market with democracy based on social justice. This debate and the prospect of finding an appropriate "mix" is complicated, however, by our own peculiar socio-economic and political history. It is therefore appropriate to turn now to a discussion of the legacy of apartheid, although for the sake of the argument certain descriptions will have to be somewhat oversimplified.

The legacy of apartheid

In the eyes of many South Africans who find themselves on the receiving end of apartheid, capitalism is part and parcel of apartheid. In fact it is argued that capitalism was a partner in establishing and maintaining apartheid and has therefore benefitted from it all along. For instance, it guaranteed a huge pool of cheap labour and until recently well-paid mining jobs were reserved for whites.

For many people in South Africa, given their experience of the South African political economy, capitalism has failed to provide employment and a decent living for most of its people. Another reality is that the acquisition of most — though by no means all — managerial skills is the prerogative of whites. Thus it is clear that domination in South Africa, or the inequality characterizing our society, are not only of a political nature but are embedded in economic imbalances. Therefore, even if we find a political settlement along peaceful lines, while the existing property relationships are left undisturbed, the vast majority of dominators will still be whites. In other words, liberation or a political settlement will have little meaning and will not bring lasting peace and happiness if the existing structures which determine access to resources, as well as the distribution pattern of wealth and resources, remain intact.

Reviewing the legacy of apartheid, Maasdorp identifies the following main features of South African society:

1. Whites control most of the land, only some 13,4 per cent being reserved for African use, mostly on a communal basis of tenure.

2. Whites fill most of the skilled, well-paid positions in the economy, enjoying per capita incomes on average some 12,9 times that of Africans in 1980.

3. Whites own and manage almost the entire spectrum of large businesses in the economy.

4. Whites enjoy far higher standards of education and other services such as health, and receive a disproportionately high share of state expenditure on these items.[3]

Since the State President's speech in parliament on 2 February 1990 and the subsequent opening of the political debate, arguments are being offered in favour of and against nationalization and privatization. This immediately incorporates a further issue into the broader political debate: economic restructuring. It is to this debate that we now turn.

The nationalization/ privatization debate

A feature of the present debate on the economy is an exchange of rhetoric reflecting certain aspects of the reality of the situation. On the one hand there is the reality of dispossession, suffering and poverty experienced by many South Africans for a number of years; on the other hand a different reality is experienced by those for whom free enterprise and capitalism worked to produce a high standard of living.[4]

Support for socialism and the cry for the nationalization of the "commanding heights" of the economy — the mining and banking sectors — are understandable in terms of a specific experience of South African reality. As Munro argues:

Nationalization is rapidly becoming an emotional rallying cry divorced from historical reality and from experience elsewhere. Yet an understanding of the historical experience of dispossession, past inequalities in wealth, resources and income based largely though not entirely upon race, and the past emphasis on ethnic identity make the appeal of nationalization understandable.[5]

At the same time, big business argues in favour of free enterprise and is more than in line with government thinking when it comes to privatization. This is probably a result of business's experience of partisan government intervention in the economy throughout most of the period of National Party rule. Big business in South Africa is quite content at the moment with the government's support of privatization — which is in line with the "New Right" thinking and the world-wide trend against centrally planned economies.

The positions of the main participants — the ANC/UDF/Cosatu/SACP

on the one hand and the South African government and private sector on the other — in this privatization/ nationalization debate require brief clarification.

The ANC and its allies are convinced from their own point of view of what can be achieved through nationalization and are also fully aware of the pressure that will be put on them to "produce" in order to maintain legitimacy in the aftermath of a political settlement. Although nationalization is also still part of the ANC's officially adopted policy, it is important to bear in mind that the ANC views nationalization as one alternative. In other words, state ownership is only one means of intervention, and if another policy is proposed that can achieve the same or better results, the ANC will seriously consider it. Nationalization is on the agenda, it is not a non-negotiable.

An argument often heard is that private enterprise or a private corporation is more efficient than a state corporation. David Lewis, offers a counter-argument:

> The characteristic argument is that a privately owned corporation is subject to the threat of bankruptcy or takeover and that this will generate the profit maximising/cost minimising efficiencies that allegedly evade public sector enterprise. However, this has no relevance to the privatisation argument in South Africa. Those parastatals earmarked for sale in South Africa are too large and produce too vital a commodity to be subject to either takeover or bankruptcy. ... The efficiency argument will only hold if the sale of a public asset generates competition. There is no reason for assuming that this will generally be the case. Many of the parastatals — Escom, for example — are natural monopolies. In any event most of the public sector enterprises are very large corporations that enjoy a dominant position in their markets.[6]

Perhaps it can then be asked whether the government is not busy selling the proverbial "family silver"? If the words of Mr Craig Williamson, NP member of the President's Council are anything to go by then one is forced to believe that this might well be the case. Mr Williamson has been quoted as saying that through privatization the government is making sure that "... no future government has the power we did".[7]

Big business also argues that new wealth can be created only with time, whoever governs. Coupled with this is the argument that the only way to

improve the income and thus the wealth of all South Africans is by economic growth. The open market in conjunction with a market-based economic system where resources are allocated, prices determined, information gathered and value judgements made, is then offered as the only way to realize this growth. Government must therefore avoid temptation and keep well clear of the wealth-creating process.

Nevertheless, there seems to be common ground as far as meeting the needs of the poor is concerned. Opinions differ about how best to meet these needs and address inequalities; this indicates an urgent need to negotiate.

The challenge

Any post-apartheid government will face enormous demands to match political with economic emancipation. The precedent of using the state to engineer the economic upliftment of a group in society has already been created with the solution of the poor-white problem.

Private capital, domestic and foreign, and participation by those prepared to contribute their talents and acquired managerial skills to build a prosperous non-racial South Africa will undoubtedly be needed. Economic restructuring will have to go hand-in-hand with building a new democratic state in South Africa and vice versa. To argue that socio-economic development must be removed from the political negotiation process is naive, given the importance of legitimacy in any socio-political process of change. We will have to realize, and the sooner the better, that satisfaction of socio-economic expectations is central to breaching the country's political impasse. At present

we lack a national identity with a common vision of the future. We now realize that intentional or unintentional racial domination is no longer acceptable, but on the other hand nationalism among both blacks and whites apparently remains a potent political force in our society.

Conflicts over the role of the state will revolve around three broad issues — redistribution of wealth, ownership of the means of production, and the economic upliftment of blacks. Related matters that will need to be addressed are those of landownership and wage policy.

The primary challenge is to allocate political and economic opportunity more equitably without sacrificing higher per capita incomes and sustained economic growth. Appropriately Munro observes:

> In the final analysis the achievement of economic growth and development involves the setting of precisely defined goals which may well involve social sacrifices. Perhaps this is the greatest challenge, for the political and social price of economic growth may be too high for all South Africans to contemplate.[8]

A way must be found to meet black aspirations, however, and to address seriously legitimate grievances without destroying what is left of our economy. It seems increasingly probable that the future South African economy will be a social democracy or a mixed economy.

The solution therefore lies not in unbridled free market capitalism, nor in a centrally planned command economy. An acceptable balance, perceived by the majority of South Africans to be a legitimate socio-economic and political dispensation, must and definitely can be found. Policies must focus on creating a

fair deal for all South Africans regardless of colour, creed or sex. No economic "new deal" must be developed using undemocratic structures. South Africa's economic future will not be stable if it is not based on democracy, nor will it enjoy political stability if economic emancipation along legitimate lines is not guaranteed.

Negotiations in good faith means that good faith must be sustained by all parties involved. It is ironic, therefore, that business and government are upset about nationalization while simultaneously continuing with the process of privatization. I would argue that for the sake of keeping good faith negotiations going what is required is at least a suspension of the process of privatization, pending the outcome of real negotiations.

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7 *Ibid.*

8 K Munro, *op cit,* p 273.
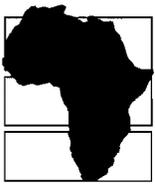
AFRICA MONITOR

Africa monitor
April to June 1990

Jenny Macgregor

NORTH AFRICA

Algeria

Marches and outbursts of violence characterized the country during the months of April and May prior to **local and provincial** elections — the first democratic elections to be held since independence in 1962. During April tens of thousands of young fundamentalists marched on the presidential palace demanding the dissolution of parliament and the holding of new parliamentary elections. In an even greater show of force, a loose coalition of moderate and leftist parties organized a nationwide march of some 150 000 people in May, hoping to present an alternative to the increasingly powerful *Front Islamique du Salut (FIS)* and to the largely discredited *Front de Liberation Nationale (FLN)*. However, coalitions among the 20-odd political parties remained loosely organized and presented no electoral threat to the well-organized Islamic fundamentalists. Drawing mainly on support from the young and unemployed, the fundamentalists won a major victory on 12 June when the FIS took control in 55 per cent of the districts. The FLN, which has been in power for 28 years, took only 32 per cent of the districts, leading to speculation about its future role in the government. The FLN blamed its defeat on its failure to adapt to a new democratic era and promised renovation of the party, but political analysts also pointed to growing support for the FIS's brand of Islam. The "protest vote" of 35 per cent of the population who did not vote was attributed to the failure of the FLN to adopt a more democratic approach (AED 30/4, 28/5, 4/6, 16/6, 25/6; DT 7/5, 16/5, 25/5, 31/5; SWB 12/5, 14/6, 16/6; ARB 15/5, 15/6; JA 28/5, 4/6, 13/6, 20/6, 27/6; C 13/6, 19/6; S 14/6; WA 25/6).

At the end of March the National Assembly approved new legislation opening the door to **foreign investment** for the first time since independence. The draft law on banking and investment, which effectively made the banks instead of the treasury the main financing vehicle, was heralded as the key to economic recovery and to solving the problem of mounting foreign debt, which was estimated at $24 bn (AED 2/4, 7/5; ARB 30/4).

The World Bank approved a $99,5 mn credit to help restructure three public sector manufacturing companies, its first loan to the **industrial sector** for several years. The success of the three companies will be seen as a test case for economic reforms (WBN 7/6; AED 11/6).

Chad

Between 18-20 April some of the fiercest **fighting** to take place over the past three years broke out between government troops and rebel forces in eastern Chad, claiming 783 lives. Special force reinforcements sent by **France** were withdrawn on 10 May after the situation had stabilized (SWB 2/4, 8/5, 15/5; AED 23/4; WA 14/5; JA 14/5; ARB 15/5).

The task of finding a negotiated settlement to the dispute over the **Aouzou strip** was threatened in early May by the Chadian seizure of a convoy of Libyan military lorries in Sudan. The 10 drivers captured by Chad were only released on 17 June after both countries had appealed to the International Court of Justice to intervene (AED 21/5; SWB 21/5, 20/6; DT 28/5; ARB 15/5).

Egypt

Egypt launched a $49 mn project to rehabilitate aging water pumping stations in agricultural areas to help sustain production among 560 000 **smallholders.** (Water for agricultural use accounts for about 90 per cent of total demand.) The World Bank approved a $31 mn loan for the programme. Agriculture in Egypt generates 20 per cent of GDP, 35 per cent of civilian employment and 25 per cent of merchandise-export earnings (WBN 17/5; S 25/5; AED 11/6).

On 6 May the government announced a series of **price rises** covering fuel (a 33 per cent increase), basic food stuffs and cigarettes, in an effort to reduce its annual subsidy bill of $1,4 bn following talks with the IMF on rescheduling part of its $50 bn foreign debt. In late May a broad agreement was reached with the IMF, opening the way for further loans. In June the government took a major step towards unifying its multi-tiered exchange rate system by **devaluing** the pound from £1,10 to the dollar to £2,00 to the dollar. The 1990/91 **budget** of £E 41,248 mn introduced on 1 July was 22 per cent higher than the previous budget, but reflected little increase in real terms because of an annual inflation rate of 20 per cent (DT 4/5; C 7/5; KT 7/5; AED 14/5, 21/5, 4/6, 25/6).

Amid rumblings of popular discontent following the major food subsidy cuts, the **Supreme Constitutional Court** ruled on 19 May that **parliament** had not been elected in 1987 in accordance with the constitution and was therefore **"null and void"**. Nevertheless, the Court accepted the validity of all legislation passed during the past three years, but after 2 June all laws passed would be legally invalid. In response to the ruling the opposition called for parliamentary elections to be brought forward from 1992 (C 21/5; DT 23/5; TS 23/5; AED 28/5).

Morocco

After a year of negotiations, agreement was secured on 10 April with the main creditor banks on a new **debt rescheduling,** making Morocco the first African country to conclude a debt reduction agreement with commercial banks under the Brady plan. Morocco secured a rescheduling of $3,2 bn of its $22 bn debt (AED 23/4).

On 2 May the **dirham was devalued** by 9,15 per cent to MD8,85 to the dollar and an amended austerity budget aimed at cutting the deficit by more than 85 per cent was tabled. The devaluation was expected to boost exports after the 1989 **trade deficit** doubled to MD18 bn ($2,25 bn). The measures, which were adopted in reaction to the poor economic results recorded in 1989, served to strengthen Morocco's hand in negotiating a new deal with the **IMF**. On 26 June the government announced that it had reached agreement in principle with the IMF for a new nine-month $130 mn facility prior to a longer and more comprehensive programme being put into

place. Agreement with the IMF is an important prerequisite of the major debt rescheduling initiative agreed under the Brady plan (AED 7/5, 14/5, 2/6; KT 7/5; ARB 31/5).

Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia are to develop a 6 000 km **railway link** — designed for speeds of over 200 km per hour — connecting the countries' rail networks at an estimated cost of $10 bn (AA 25/5).

Plans to **privatize** 112 enterprises, about 40 per cent of state holdings in public sector corporations and parastatals, were outlined in a royal decree issued in June. The largest concentration of enterprises is in the tourism sector (AED 25/6).

On 8 May more than 2 000 Islamic supporters of an outlawed **Islamic party,** Justice and Welfare *(Adil wal-Ihsan),* demonstrated in Rabat. The **demonstration,** Morocco's biggest since 1984, was a show of support at the trial of six leaders of the Islamic group who were sent to jail in March. All were arrested by the security forces, but, in an unprecedented step, King Hassan ordered their release and postponed the trial of the six (SWB 10/5; E 12/5; AE 6/90).

Thirty-eight **tribal leaders** from both Morocco and the Western Sahara, as well as refugee camps in Algeria, held talks with **UN** officials in Geneva in early June on a **proposed referendum** on the future of the territory. The main purpose of the meeting was to set out details of the referendum and validate electoral lists as the 1974 **census** has 74 000 people listed, whereas Polisario estimated in 1987 that the Saharan population totalled 207 000, of whom 150 000 were in refugee camps (DT 5/6; AED 11/6).

Sudan

Lt-Gen al-Bashir signed a **non-aggression pact** with **Uganda** on 3 April after a two-day official visit to the country. Uganda has more than 60 000 refugees who have fled from the seven-year-old war in southern Sudan (SWB 5/4, 10/4; AED 16/4).

A government **reshuffle** on 10 April served to tighten the Islamic fundamentalists' control of the government. The key change was the appointment of the National Islamic Front's leading banker, Abdel Rahim Mahmoud Hamdi, as finance minister (DN 12/4; AC 20/4; ARB 15/5).

On 23 April the military government claimed to have foiled a **coup attempt** in which rebel soldiers tried to seize key installations in and around Khartoum. The second attempt in less than a month and the third since al-Bashir came to power in June 1989, it was by far the most serious threat to his rule. The next day **28 officers,** 17 of whom were active and 11 retired, were **executed.** Among them were Maj-Gen Abdul-Kader and Brig Karar, two former senior officers identified as the plot leaders. Eight **officers** were **dismissed** from the army, four of them also imprisoned for terms ranging from three to fifteen years. A report that another six army officers were executed on 28 April was denied by Sudanese authorities. Political commentators said the disgruntled officers were motivated by the

recent sacking of hundreds of officers from the country's already demoralized army, on suspicion of being communists or opponents of the militant brand of Islam favoured by the government. Gen al-Bashir reaffirmed his commitment to **Islamic** *(shari'a)* **law** after the coup attempt (SWB 24/4-27/4, 5/5; S 24/4; AA 27/4; ION 28/4, 5/5; AED 30/4, 7/5; TWR 2/5; C 3/5; WA 7/5; AC 7/5, 14/5; JA 14/5; ARB 15/5).

Sudan began talks with the **IMF** on 16 May after being threatened with expulsion. It's arrears to the IMF are the largest in Africa. The overall debt is now estimated at $12 bn, loans having been unserviced since 1985. In February 1986, the IMF declared Sudan "ineligible to use the general resources of the Fund." (AED 12/3, 28/5).

Three powerful **earthquakes** on 20, 25 and 26 May left hundreds dead and more than 300 000 people in rebel held southern Sudan without shelter (S 28/5; DT 6/6; AED 11/6).

Tunisia

In April **three leftist parties** announced a **joint manifesto** as an alternative to the ruling *Rassemblement Constitutionnel Democratique* (RCD) and the increasingly popular, but banned, fundamentalist *en-Nahda* movement. They said their aim was "to create a new progressive and democratic force to save the country from polarisation", criticizing the government's failure to fulfill its promise of multi-party democracy (JA 30/4; AED 30/4).

The **local elections** held on 10 June were boycotted by all opposition groups — six legal parties and the banned Islamic fundamentalist *en-Nahda* party, all of whom took part in last year's legislative elections. The ruling RCD was accused of dominating the civil service and of a lack of neutrality in its administration of the poll. Nevertheless, there was a 79 per cent turnout, with the **RCD** winning control of all but one of the 245 municipal councils (DT 8/5, 11/6; E 9/6; SWB 12/6, 13/6; ARB 15/6).

Pres Ben Ali met **Pres Bush** on 15 May during his first official visit to the USA (AED 21/5).

At the end of May the World Bank loan granted Tunisia a $17 mn loan towards the launch of the first phase of a programme to improve **agricultural extension and research.** The five-year programme will result in increased agricultural production nationwide through the upgrading and strengthening of extension services in 15 regions. In particular, the programme will focus on providing extension services to women in rural areas and of improving farmer access to new agricultural technologies (AED 4/6; WBN 7/6).

WEST AFRICA

Benin

On 12 April a 15-man constitutional commission submitted the preliminary text of a **draft**

constitution to the High Council. It recommended multi-partyism and the installation of a balanced presidential regime: an elected National Assembly, a High Council of the Republic, a constitutional court, a High Authority for Audio-Visual Affairs and Communications, a mediator and an economic and social council. The constitution was to be put to a referendum in August (SWB 19/4; DT 24/4; ARB 15/5; AED 28/5).

The **People's Revolutionary Party** (PRPB), formed in November 1975 and the sole ruling party until December 1989, decided at its annual congress on 1 May to **dissolve itself** and create a new progressive party to be called the **Union of the Forces of Progress** (UFP). Mashudi Disudi, an economics lecturer, was to lead the new party (SWB 3/5, 16/5; ARB 15/6).

On 19 May two of Benin's four main **opposition parties,** the National Front for Democracy and the Democratic Republican Movement, announced plans to **merge** (SWB 22/5; ARB 15/6).

Burkina Faso

The effective number two of the ruling Popular Front, **Oumaraou Clement Ouedraogo,** was sacked on 14 April as secretary general of the *Organisation pour la Democratie Populaire-Mouvement de Travail* — the dominant group in the Popular Front — and stripped of his political and ministerial posts in a 19 April **cabinet reshuffle.** His dismissal was prompted by "grave short-comings from the principles and political line of the movement". He was replaced by ideologue **Christian Roch Kabore,** as executive committee secretary in charge of political affairs (SWB 19/4, 21/4; AED 30/4; ARB 15/5).

Cape Verde

The National Council of the country's only political party, the African Party for the Independence of Cape Verde (PAIVC), announced on 13 April that **free, multi-party elections** would be held in December to prepare the country for transition to democracy. The changes would permit the election of the country's president by direct, universal suffrage (C 16/4; SWB 16/4; ARB 15/5).

Côte d'Ivoire

Schools and colleges were closed once again on 7 April, having been reopened only five days earlier, following the death of an Ivorian school student during an anti-government demonstration the day before. The government then declared the academic year 1989-90 "blank", a decision affecting some one and half million pupils and students. Nevertheless, on 21 June in a final effort to save the school year, the government announced that schools would **reopen** on 3 September (WA 11/4, 23/4, 2/7; SWB 25/6).

The government announced on 17 April that it had **suspended** the **economic austerity**

measures after public protest and political pressure forced a review of government policy. At the same time it announced the establishment of a ministerial committee to review the economic austerity programme. On 1 June a new **economic recovery plan** for "stabilization and economic relaunch" was unanimously adopted by the government. Seen as a last-ditch attempt to win back donor support and prevent the downfall of the government, the programme planned to save the state CFAFr90 bn on its administrative expenditure, and to bring in CFAFr40 bn in tax and other revenues. However, the increasing intractability of the country's **$13 bn debt** was seen to be the most serious problem (AA 13/4; SWB 19/4; WA 30/4; ARB 15/5, 31/5, 30/6; AED 28/5, 18/6).

After the outbreak of the worst public unrest since independence 30 years ago, **Pres Houphouët-Boigny** announced on 20 April that he was ready to step down, provided he could go "with head held high". He said, however, that he could not resign during the "present crisis", but gave no indication as to when he would step down, or who would succeed him (C 21/4; SWB 24/4; JA 7/5, 20/6).

A request by the ruling Democratic Party on 30 April that the government **legalize opposition parties** was endorsed by Pres Houphouët-Boigny a few days later. Political commentators believed the request to have been timed to pre-empt a resumption of the protests which erupted in mid-February and lasted two months. On 1 June the government formally **ended 30 years of one-party rule by legalizing nine opposition parties**. A further five political parties were legalized during June. On 23 June leaders of four opposition parties formally called for the president to resign. The four parties were the Ivorian Popular Front, the Union of Social Democrats, the Ivorian Workers Party and the Ivorian Socialist Party (C 2/5, 8/6; AED 7/5; SWB 8/5, 19/6, 27/6; AA 11/5; JA 28/5; S 2/6; ARB 15/6).

In late May hundreds of young **armed force conscripts** went on the **rampage** in Abidjan and other urban centres, and some 50 air force conscripts seized Abidjan international airport and held it for 12 hours. An attempt by national servicemen to take over the state-run television station was foiled by police the same day. The recruits called for re-enlistment at the end of their compulsory two-year military service (in the light of high unemployment rates), better living and working conditions, and a substantial salary increase. After the government agreed to their requests the recruits returned to their bases (C 17/5, 18/5 19/5; S 17/5; SWB 17/5, 18/5, 21/5, 22/5; AED 21/5; WA 28/5; AE 6/90; ARB 15/6).

The Gambia

Presenting the **budget** for 1990-91, the minister of finance announced several tax measures to increase revenue. The duty on petroleum products was raised and sales tax was also increased (WA 2/7; AED 2/7).

Ghana

In April, Ghana and **Mozambique** agreed to establish a permanent joint commission for **co-operation** to enhance their relations in the political, scientific, cultural and economic fields. A cultural co-operation agreement was signed with Libya in May. Covering the period 1990-92, the agreement was a follow-up of the main cultural and technical agreement signed with Libya in 1982 (SWB 9/4, 8/5; ARB 15/5).

Ten people **detained** for "subversive" activities were released on 4 June, the 11th anniversary of Flt-Lt Rawlings accession to power. They were not among those arrested in September last year or January this year in connection with the alleged 1989 coup attempt. During the celebrations, Rawlings called for "tolerance of opposing views" (SWB 6/6; DN 6/6).

In May the World Bank agreed to support the second phase of the **education reform programme** with an IDA credit of $50 mn. The programme, which was to run until 1992, called for the reform of senior secondary school education by reducing the length of the secondary school cycle, the introduction of a more practical content into the curriculum, the provision of learning and teaching materials and more effective teacher training. The reforms also supported greater access to education, particularly for children from low income families (WBN 31/5; AED 11/6).

Guinea-Bissau

After holding talks with the IMF in mid-April, the government announced a number of measures to introduce **stricter control** of government administrative costs (AED 30/4; ARB 31/5).

On 15 May Pres Vieira affirmed that the ruling party was in the process of creating conditions for the installation of a **multi-party state**, despite insisting only the month before on the maintenance of the one-party system. The president explained the necessity of liberalizing politics in order to bring about the necessary socio-economic changes in the country. Pressure to democratize after 16 years of one-party rule has come from the _Resistance-Bafata Movement_ which has repeatedly called for dialogue (SWB 10/4, 17/5, 19/6; ARB 15/5).

Finance minister dos Santos warned unprofitable state industrial and commercial enterprises in June that they might face **privatization**, rehabilitation or liquidation. The majority of the 50 state companies are in difficulties (WA 25/6).

Following four days of **armed clashes** on the 18-22 May along the **Senegalese border** which left at least 17 people dead, Guinea-Bissau appealed to the international community for help. At the ministerial meeting held in Paris on 22 May, Guinea-Bissau and Senegal agreed to withdraw troops from the border, reaffirmed their commitment not to harbour each other's subversive movements, and pledged to strengthen military co-operation. A joint commission was set up to monitor the border issue, the most serious of a number of land, sea and air violations which occurred during April and May (SWB 17/4, 8/5, 22/5, 24/5, 25/5, 28/5, 29/5, 1/6, 18/6; WA 30/4, 11/6, 25/6; AED 14/5, 28/5, 18/6; S 29/5; AC 1/6; ARB 15/6; AA 22/6).

Liberia

The **fierce fighting** which broke out in Nimba county during January between government forces and rebels led by **Charles Taylor**, spread southwards rapidly during April, following the government's outright rejection of Taylor's peace overtures. In early May the Liberian authorities lost control of the iron-ore and logging industries to the rebel National Patriotic Forces (NPF). By the end of May the rebels had taken the strategic port of Buchanan, south-east of Monrovia, and the main national airport was under threat. An offer by Pres Doe to hold a snap general election (in which he would not contest the presidency) as a way of resolving the conflict, was rejected by legislators as unconstitutional and too costly. On 6 June the world's largest rubber plantation — and Liberia's biggest foreign exchange earner — fell to the rebels, giving new momentum to their bid to **overthrow Doe**.

In mid-June, when the rebels were only 120 km from the capital, the two sides agreed to take part in **peace talks** mediated by the Liberian Council of Churches. However, the talks between Pres Doe and Taylor's representatives broke up after five days on 16 June, without result, over the rebel demand that Doe resign before a ceasefire could be agreed. On 18 June Doe lifted a ban on opposition parties and announced an amnesty for the rebel forces in the hope that the NPF would mobilize itself into a political party. The offer was declined. The resumption of peace talks planned for 25 June failed to take place, and instead Nigerian leader, **Pres Babangida** was asked to initiate fresh peace talks.

By the end of June Samual Doe's 10 year rule of Liberia was hanging in the balance with rebel leader Charles Taylor seen to be on the brink of taking control of the country. The capital, **Monrovia**, was under rebel siege, cut off from the world, with no telephone or telex links, and no flights whatsoever. Water and power supplies were cut off in the last week of June, and the capital was completely surrounded by Taylor, who now blocked all land routes. Most of Doe's cabinet and senior officials had fled the country, as had many wealthy Liberians. Many **foreign expatriates** have been evacuated or were ready to leave on the American and British warships standing offshore. Only 800 of the 5 000 Americans remained in the country, exacerbating the plight of the country's already shattered economy, as expatriates comprised 95 per cent of all managerial staff (AED 9/4, 16/4, 23/4, 7/5, 21/5, 28/5, 4/6, 11/6, 18/6, 25/6, 2/7, 9/7; WA 23/4, 7/5, 25/6, 2/7; ARB 15/5, 15/6; SWB 4/6, 18/6, 20/6-22/6; AC 4/6; JA 4/6, 13/6; S 5/6; DT 6/6; H 6/6; WR 8/6; AA 22/6; C 25/6; ACon 18/6, 25/6, 9/7; NA 7/90).

On 19 June **Pres Babangida** pledged to work with other countries in the region to reconvene peace talks between the Liberian government and the rebel National Patriotic Forces. He added that in the spirit of Ecowas, leaders in the region had a responsibility to ensure the situation did not deteriorate further (WA 28/5, 4/6; SWB 6/6, 21/6; AED 2/7).

Mali

At a conference held by the UN Development Programme during March, the government won substantial **aid agreements and pledges** of which the most important was a $173 mn donor package. The meeting was aimed at raising finance for some 250 employment promotion projects (AED 9/4).

The foundation was laid for greater democracy and the eventual installation of a **multi-party system** at the Bamako regional conference of the ruling Democratic Union of the Malian People held on 1 April. Discussions in the capital focused on multi-partyism, most participants insisting that political pluralism was urgently needed. In contrast regional conferences held elsewhere in the country focused on internal matters (JA 9/4; SWB 13/4; WA 23/4; ARB 15/5).

In June the International Development Association granted a **loan** of $53 mn to help the government streamline the state-owned cotton corporation and reorganize the cereal marketing board, and for investments in rural infrastructure. The programme was expected to help farmers increase production of cotton, cereals and other crops and to earn higher incomes (WBN 28/6; AED 7/7).

According to the final figures of the **census** held in 1987, Mali's population was 7,696 mn. Males comprised 49 per cent of the population; 46 per cent of the population is less than 15 years old; 22 per cent live in urban areas; and only 19,4 per cent of the population is literate (ARB 15/6).

Mauritania

Four ministers were sacked and a civilian was appointed to the foreign affairs portfolio in a **cabinet reshuffle** on 29 April, the second this year. The appointment of the former minister of education, Hasni Ould Didi, was notable as being the first appointment of a civilian to the foreign affairs post since the 1984 coup (SWB 30/4; AED 7/5, 14/5; WA 14/5; ARB 15/5, 15/6).

Proposals put forward by OAU chairman, Egypt's Pres Mubarak, in an attempt to broker a lasting solution to the **border conflict**, were accepted in May by **Senegal**, but rejected by Mauritania, which demanded the release of "300 000 Mauritanians" held in Senegal against their will. However, a Red Cross investigation found the refugees to be in Senegal "willingly". Responding to continued incidents along the border during May and June, the Mauritanian foreign minister accused Senegal of acts of aggression and warned that the situation was potentially

explosive (ARB 15/5, 2/6; WA 2/6, 2/7).

A **new black opposition group**, the United Front for Armed Resistance in Mauritania (Furam), announced its creation on 1 May. Furam, which said it had opted for armed struggle, placed the blame for conflict between black and Arab-Berber components on the government's refusal to acknowledge black Mauritanian cultural identity. It also said that a solution to the Senegalese-Mauritanian conflict was rooted in solving the country's internal problems. There are only two other opposition movements in the country: the African Forces of Liberation in Mauritania, created in 1986, and the Resistance Front for Unity, Independence and Democracy in Mauritania, created in September 1989 (ARB 15/6).

IDA support for Mauritania's efforts to restructure some **public enterprises** and close down others was given in June when two credits worth $50 mn were granted. The country has 80 public enterprises, accounting for more than half of all public investment, but many of them are unprofitable. In terms of a public-enterprise reform programme to modify laws and formulate policies, the government will be able to privatize, restructure or close a number of public enterprises (WBN 28/6; AED 9/7).

Niger

On 11 April the government adopted immediate **austerity measures** providing for a reduction in the number of diplomatic missions and allowances for cabinet members and other state officials, and restrictions on the use of water, electricity and telephones. The government appealed to students to end protests, which had continued despite a March agreement to this end, saying these could jeopardize the school year. Niger is faced with a serious loss of income following the fall in the price of uranium, its main export product, and regular food deficits (SWB 13/4; AED 30/4; ARB 31/5).

The **Niger Federation of Labour Unions** (USTN) called for a multiparty system for Niger on 1 May, but Pres Saibou warned that any such reform would be premature and would require rigorous preparation. The Union also demanded the withdrawal of recent budgetary cuts — in particular the freezing of civil service appointments, pay rises and promotions — an end to the privatization of public enterprises that entailed loss of jobs, and the resumption of work by the liaison committee set up in March to consider student grievances and educational reforms. Their call for a **general strike** on 11 June was widely observed in the capital of Niamey. In response to the strike action and student protests, the supreme governing body of Niger, the Council of National Orientation (CSON), set up an *ad hoc* committee to help facilitate dialogue. Following a meeting between the USTN and Pres Saibou on 18 June, the government released 48 students and two trade unionists arrested in Niamey during the general strike. In return the USTN agreed to cancel further protests. On 16 June the

government bowed to growing pressure from unions and students alike and revised the **constitution** to make provision for the introduction of political pluralism (SWB 11/4, 20/4, 24/4, 11/6, 12/6, 13/6, 15/6, 18/6, 19/6; JA 20/6; AED 25/6; WA 25/6, 2/7).

Government sources reported thirty-one people killed in clashes between government troops and **Touareg rebels** in northern Niger on 7 May. (In contradiction a French newspaper, *Le Monde*, reported that hundreds of Touaregs has been killed in the clashes.) Two of the rebel leaders — Mohamed Abdoulaye, a minister until December 1989, and Mohamed Ahmoundou, a former adviser in the president's office — were arrested. The Touaregs, many of whom recently returned to Niger after having been expelled from Libya and Algeria where they had moved in 1984 to escape a severe drought, had complained that the government had done little to facilitate their reintergration. Since the beginning of the year more than 18 000 Touareg nomads had returned to the remote desert area in northern Nigeria (SWB 10/5, DT 11/5; WA 21/5; JA 21/5; ARB 15/6; WA 25/6).

Nigeria

On 22 April the military regime survived an **attempted coup** by junior officers, carried out with the novel participation of civilians at both the planning and execution level. One of the bloodiest coup attempts in the country's history, it ended only after several hours of fighting in central Lagos, mainly around the radio station and Dodan Barracks. By the following day, however, Babangida was firmly in control, senior commanders and other members of the AFRC having pledged their support to him.

Claiming to have the support of lawyers, students and the National Labour Congress, the coup leader, **Major Gideon Orkar**, gave as his main grievance "the oppression and deliberate impoverishment" of people in the middle-belt and southern states by the Muslim north. He called for the exision of the five core Moslem Hausa-Fulani states from the Federation of Nigeria. His extravagantly worded manifesto also accused the Babangida regime of being dictatorial and corrupt.

After the coup attempt, Babangida was quick to assure the public that it would not distract the country from its transition to civilian rule by 1992. Concerned that the **regional bias** of the coup could renew north-south conflicts, the government also dismissed speculation that the dissidents were motivated by religious bias. It further showed reluctance to release casualty figures, in case these should fuel the tension. Since 1986 when Nigeria was formally admitted into the Organization of Islamic Conference, tensions between the (primarily) Islamic north and Christian south had been exacerbated. Babangida, a moderate Muslim, however, comes from the middle-belt.

Of the more than **350 people arrested**, more than half were **civilians**, many of whom the government said were "rich and powerful" people who provided active support to the

rebels. Among those captured was Maj Orkar and nine other junior officers. A reward was offered for the arrest of the three people — Great Ogboru, a high-profile multi-million-aire, Maj Saliba Mukoro and Maj GTO Edoja — thought to be the brains behind the plan, after they fled the country.

On 21 May 10 people went on trial before a 10-man military tribunal on charges of **high treason**. By the end of June more than half of those arrested had been released.

In a speech at the end of June, the president said that had the abortive coup succeeded it would have plunged Nigeria into a second civil war. He announced the appointment of a committee to carry out an immediate and comprehensive reorganization of the security services as well as a drastic reduction in the size of the armed forces (G 24/4, 29/4; TWR 25/4; E 28/4; AED 30/4; WA 30/4, 28/5, 2/7, 9/7; JA 7/5; AC 7/5, 14/5; SWB 14/5, 19/6, 25/6, 27/6; ARB 15/5, 15/6; AC 18/5, 4/6; C 22/5; NA 6/90, 7/90; AE 6/90; AA 8/6).

Elections for local government congresses of the two political parties, the **National Republican Convention** (NRC) and the **Social Democratic Party** (SDP), were held without incident on 17 June. Each party selected five delegates from each of the 449 local government councils to attend the national convention. In contrast, the ward elections held in May were reported to be "rowdy and chaotic" (SWB 22/6; WA 25/6).

Nigeria launched a $483 mn project to upgrade its **telecommunication services** with the help of a $225 mn World Bank loan. The project supported the commercialization of Nigerian Telecommunications Ltd, a government-owned company, to enable it to become financially viable, and aimed at improving the quality of telecommunications services and people's access to these services (WBN 28/6). *(Nigeria to play a role in resolving Liberian crisis — see Liberia.)*

Senegal

The foreign ministers of Senegal and **Gambia** met on 18 April to discuss a new framework for **co-operation**. The move followed the dissolution of the Senegambia Confederation last year amid disagreement over the pace of trade and customs' integration (AED 7/5).

For the fourth consecutive year the government has outlined an **austerity budget** balanced at $1 836 mn - a rise of only 1,9 per cent on the estimate for 1989/90 (AED 7/5). *(Conflict with Mauritania — see Mauritania; Border dispute — see Guinea-Bissau.)*

Sierra Leone

On 25 April the government announced a new **floating foreign exchange** system to replace the fixed rate of $1 to LE 160. The system allowed commercial banks to trade between themselves, or with the central bank at a mutually agreed exchange rate (AED 14/5).

The government reached agreement with the World Bank and IMF in June on a structural adjustment programme designed to help halt economic decline, check the spread of parallel markets, stabilize prices and improve fiscal and external balances (AED 25/6).

A national **teachers strike** broke out on 24 May when discontented teachers rioted in protest over outstanding salaries. A week later four people died in riots in Freetown when security forces dispersed students demanding overdue pay for their teachers. Tension on campuses was only broken at the end of June when the government agreed to unban student unions so as to foster open dialogue (WA 23/4, 11/6, 2/7; SWB 27/4, 1/6, 12/6, 13/6).

Speaking at the opening of parliament on 9 June, Pres Momoh dismissed recent calls for **multi-party democracy** on the grounds that it would be divisive and lead to conflict. In response, the powerful **Bar Association** called for the one-party constitution of 1978 to be scrapped and for parliament to adopt a multi-party constitution "without delay" (WA 23/4, 2/7; SWB 27/4, 1/6, 12/6, 14/6, 4/7; AED 25/6).

Togo

At its national council meeting on 27 May, the ruling party, the *Rassemblement du Peuple Togolais* (RPT), unanimously agreed not to introduce a **multi-party system**. It was agreed, nevertheless, to give consideration at the next congress to the president's call for the cancellation of all legislation that put the ruling party above all other institutions, and urged acceptance of the need for greater freedom of expression. An estimated 5 000 students demonstrated in Togo in favour of the announcement to maintain the RPT as the sole legal party (SWB 24/5, 29/5, 31/5; E 16/6).

CENTRAL AFRICA

Cameroon

In April the **World Bank** approved a $21 mn credit to extend agricultural services in order to increase farm production and the incomes of more than 700 000 **small-scale farmers**. The government would provide $7 mn and bilateral donors $3 mn towards the project. The country's economic growth depends heavily on agriculture, which employs 75 per cent of the population and generates 25 per cent of export revenues. Nine of 10 farmers are smallholders, and many of them are women — who are the main producers of food crops for home consumption and for the market.

The World Bank also approved a $21,5 mn loan towards a **special project to protect the poor** and other vulnerable groups as the country undertook reforms to re-establish economic growth. Donors committed an additional $86 mn towards the 4-year project which would support ongoing efforts to design and implement national policies in population, health, and women in development. The policies will be geared toward providing basic social services to the most disadvantaged segments of the population and toward establishing cost-effective and sustainable means of delivering these services (WBN 5/4; 31/5; AED 16/4, 11/6; ARB 30/6).

In April **Yondo Black**, a lawyer and former president of the Cameroonian Bar Association, and **11 others** were **sentenced** to between three and five years in prison for subversion. They were arrested in February for circulating pamphlets "hostile to the regime", although newspapers linked the arrests to Black's attempt to merge his own fledgling *Mouvement national pour la démocratie* with a new English-speaking organization, the Social Democratic Front (SDF). Leader of the SDF, human rights activist **Albert Mukong**, was **acquitted** on 5 April on the same charges. The opening of the trial by a military tribunal was preceded by a major lawyers strike. In a nation-wide address following the trial, Pres Biya described calls for multi-partyism in the country as "manoeuvres for diversion, intoxication and destabilization" (WA 5/3, 26/3, 16/4, 23/4; SWB 23/2, 27/2, 11/4, 13/4; ARB 15/4; AC 20/4).

In a "gesture toward national unity" Pres Biya announced on 22 April that all the detained coup plotters of the April 1984 coup attempt would be released (SWB 25/4; WA 7/5; ARB 15/5).

Six **protesters** were **shot** dead by police during a rally by some 20 000 members of the banned **opposition** SDF in the north-west English-speaking city of Bamenda, on 26 May. The demonstration was called by the newly-formed SDF to mark the beginning of its public activities, despite being banned by the authorities. About 300 students arrested at the time were subsequently released.

The government's hard-line responses to events during April and May in the face of growing calls for a multi-party system, provoked a serious crisis for Pres Biya. At the end of May the **French** co-operation minister cancelled at the last minute his official visit to Cameroon, and on 8 June the vice-president of the sole party *Rassemblement Democratique du Peuple Camerounais*, **John Ngu Foncha**, **resigned** from the party in protest at Biya's intransigent attitude towards reform. Foncha, who is from the north-west city of Bamenda, was vice-president of Cameroon from 1962 to 1970, becoming RPDC vice-president in 1985. His resignation symbolized the growing loss of support for the government from the English-speaking provinces. At the end of June during the ruling party congress, Pres Biya in a surprise shift hinted that **multi-party politics** might soon be permitted. Cameroon's constitution permits rival parties, but since 1966 there has only been one party (SWB 28/5, 31/5; ARB 15/6; AC 15/6; AED 18/6, 25/6, 9/7; ACon; AA 22/6; WA 25/6; C 30/6).

Central African Republic

On 26 April the **World Bank** approved a $61 mn loan for a $139 mn five-year project to improve **transportation links**. With economic development hampered by the long distances between production sites and seaports, the project would repair and maintain roads — which carry about 23 per cent of traffic — and will

look into ways of improving the navigability of the Oubangui River, which carries about 75 per cent of all traffic (WBN 26/4; AED 7/5; ARB 31/5).

In a sweeping **government reshuffle** on 5 June nine ministers were dismissed, 11 new-comers appointed, and one portfolio was added to the cabinet. Carried out as part of Gen Kolingba's "new policy of openness", the reshuffle brought the appointment of two ministers of state to oversee parliamentary affairs and the economy, and **Kolingba's** relinquishment of his post as defence minister (SWB 7/6; ARB 15/6; AED 25/6, 2/7).

Congo

The World Bank's lending agency, the **IDA**, approved a \$45 mn loan in support of the third annual programme under the **structural adjustment facility**. The principal objectives of the 1990-92 programme were to achieve a growth in real GDP of 3,6 per cent, to help stabilize the economy, strengthen the administrative capacity of the government and make sure the basic needs of the poor were met as the economy underwent change (IMF S 18/6; WBN 28/6; AED 9/7).

On 14 March a draft agreement was reached with the **IMF** for a standby credit to support the second structural adjustment programme after the government agreed to **cut public expenditure** and keep strictly within budget targets. It also agreed to **diversify the economy** away from dependence on oil exports, which account for more than 70 per cent of the annual budget. On 12 April the budget for 1990 was reduced by CFAFr5,7 bn (AED 2/4, 30/4; ARB 30/4, 31/5).

At a meeting of the ruling *Parti Congolais du Travail* (PCT) in April, Pres Sassou-Nguesso said that questioning the leading role of the party was not "sacrilege", but warned against the push for pluralism endangering national unity. In a significant shift, the **PCT** agreed at its central committee meeting held at the end of June to move towards greater democracy within the party by reducing the central committee form nine to five members, and to the introduction of a **multi-party system**. Stressing the need for a transition phase, the president said its introduction would follow the holding of an extraordinary congress in 1991 to draw up legislation on multi-party politics. He ruled out at present the holding of a national conference to discuss political pluralism. For nearly three decades the Congo has been under single party rule. The PCT also agreed to discard Marxist-Leninist dogma in favour of a more loosely defined socialism (AED 30/4; SWB 6/7, 9/7, 10/7; C 6/7).

Equatorial Guinea

A political opponent of Pres Mbasogo, Primo Jose Esono Mica, who had been in prison since 1988 for having participated in an attempted coup, was released (ARB 15/4).

A study carried out for the government by the UN Fund for the Study of World Populations estimated the country's **population** to be 350 000. Life expectancy was estimated at 48 years, with infant mortality at 120 in every 1 000. Seventy-two per cent of the population lived in rural areas (AED 7/5).

Gabon

The deficit in **France's trade** with Gabon increased threefold in 1989 as against 1988. Total trade between the two countries reached FF6,4 bn (\$1,1 bn) in 1989, representing a 21 per cent increase on the previous year. Exports to France rose by 39 per cent to FF4,0 bn, while imports fell by 1,4 per cent to FF2,4 bn. The increase was due to the 50 per cent rise in the volume of oil exports, which cost France 105 per cent more than the previous year. Oil accounted for 64 per cent of exports to France (AE&M 29/3; AED 9/4; ARB 30/4, 31/5).

The **national conference on political reform** held on 19-21 April which was attended by 73 political groupings, agreed to begin a transition to multi-party politics immediately rather than to phase it in over a five year period. Pres Bongo officially announced the establishment of a **multi-party system**, the immediate amendment of the **constitution** and the replacement of the cabinet with a **transitional government** of 15-20 members. The delegates agreed to a transitional period ending with the general elections in October, and to respect Bongo's mandate to stay in office until 1994. As no agreement was reached as to what would constitute a political party, 13 political groupings formed a **united opposition front**, the *Front Uni des Associations et Partis de l'Opposition*.

On 29 April the newly appointed 29-member cabinet to oversee the transition was announced. Casimir Oye-Mba replaced Leon Mebiame, who had dominated the political stage for more than 20 years, as prime minister and head of government. Eighteen new ministers were sworn in.

On 24 May the National Assembly and Gabonese Democratic Party central committee adopted the **new Constitution** for the four-month transitional period (SWB 21/4, 1/5, 8/5, 22/5, 25/5; JA 23/4; AED 23/4, 30/4, 7/5, 21/5; WA 30/4, 7/5; ARB 15/5, 15/6).

Despite his agreement to democratize the constitution and hold multi-party elections, Pres Bongo faced a resurgence of **unrest** at the end of May. Sparked off by the death of Joseph Redjambe, leader of the little-known **Gabonese Progressive Party** (PGP), whose supporters presumed to have been murdered, rioters went on a week-long rampage destroying many official buildings, businesses and property owned by Bongo. Rioters called for the resignation of Pres Bongo as well as economic and political reforms. The army was called in to maintain order and a nationwide curfew was imposed, while 500 reinforcements from the 1 000 permanently stationed **French troops** had to be called in so that oil production by the French oil company, Elf, could be resumed at Port Gentil, the country's economic capital. Eight hundred of France's 3 000 citizens were airlifted out by France from **Port-Gentil** where a number of deaths were reported. The volatile situation was aggravated by **tribal divisions** which came to the fore during the riots, evoking a statement by the prime minister that "the country was on the verge of civil war". The most populous **Fang tribe** which supports the illegal National Renewal Movement, demanded that Bongo's Haut-Ogoue people share political power with them.

On 31 May Pres Bongo began **negotiations** with opposition leaders to try to end the violence. He subsequently said that despite the unrest the October multi-party election would go ahead. Opposition political parties had requested their postponement for a year, so as to give them more time to prepare. On 1 June parliamentary speaker Augustin Boumah resigned, after troops raided his home in search of one of his relatives. By the end of June **calm** had been restored in the country (ARB 15/5, 15/6; DN 25/5; C 25/5, 26/5, 28/5-30/5; S 25/5, 28/5; SWB 25/5, 26/5, 29/5-1/6, 13/6; AE&M 31/5, 28/6; DT 30/5; JA 4/6, 11/6, 13/6; AED 11/6; AC 15/6; NA 7/90; AA 6/7).

Sao Tomé & Principe

On 30 March the government announced that new legislation would soon be promulgated to institutionalize **political parties** in the country. On 25 April opposition leader **Afonso dos Santos** and 35 of his supporters, imprisoned in August 1989 for attempting to oust the president in 1988, were granted amnesty. The government said the move formed part of the new policy of setting up a multi-party system and calling elections (SWB 3/4, 27/4; ARB 15/6).

Zaire

A decision by Pres Mobutu in March to conduct a nationwide sounding of popular opinion, opened the door to widespread criticism of his regime and created a climate of expectation. In an attempt to halt the growing and **widespread unrest** that ensued, seen to be the worst during his 25-year rule, Pres Mobutu then ordered rises (of up to 78 per cent) in civil service wages and student grants on 12 April. In an address to the nation on 24 April he tried to further placate his electorate with the announcement of **sweeping changes** to the political system: the establishment of a multi-party system and the creation of three political parties in the first phase; the resignation of the government and imminent appointment of an interim government followed by the formation of a transitional government up to April 1991; and the appointment of a committee to draft a new constitution. **Lundu Bululu**, a former legal adviser to the president, was named as prime minister and head of the interim government, although Mobutu reaffirmed his own position as head of state. On 7 May, when the new government was sworn in, political parties had still not been legalized. When it became apparent that Mobutu had **reneged** on his promises to introduce political reforms, insisting instead on a gradual phasing in over a two-year period, disappointed students in Kinshasa took to

the streets to show their anger. As **unrest** spread rapidly to other parts of the country, the government reacted by arresting hundreds of students and closing down several **universities** and schools. Teachers then in turn went on strike as a protest against government repressions and also for better wages. A spiral of violence was quickly set in motion in the universities with security-men killing students, and students in turn killing other student-spies. On 11 May the violence reached a climax when Mobutu allegedly sent soldiers of the elite presidential guard, disguised as civilians, to quell the unrest. After cutting water and electricity supplies at Lubumbashi University, the commando force, known as the **"red berets"**, evidently separated students from Mobutu's Equator Region from the rest, and proceeded to beat and murder students from other parts of the country. Unofficial sources estimated that between 50 to 150 students were slaughtered in a **gruesome massacre**.

When news of the killings became public there was a wave of **nationwide protest** activity. Throughout May and June there were demonstrations and strikes by government health workers, teachers and mine workers, most notably in the Shaba province. On 11 June teachers ended a month-long stoppage after the government threatened to close down schools and other institutions and suspend students.

On 25 May **Belgium** announced the suspension of all official bilateral assistance and postponed a joint commission meeting scheduled for June, in protest at the brutal repression of students. It was joined by the **European Community** in their call for a full and independent enquiry. Despite initially denying the mass murder, the government agreed to a parliamentary enquiry. On 20 June the government reported that it had established the "regional character" of the incidents and prosecuted the former governor of **Shaba** province and ten other senior local officials. Nevertheless, Belgium continued its suspension of aid because of the government's refusal to allow an international inquiry. On 23 June in retaliation for "interference" in the country's internal affairs, the government ordered the closing of three Belgian consulates, the return of 700 Belgian aid workers and threatened to break relations with Belgium, which responded by warning Zaire that it risked losing IMF and World Bank support.

On 4 June, foreign affairs minister **Karl-I-Bond**, who was excluded from the newly appointed transitional government, announced the creation of a new political party, the **Party of Independent Republicans** (PRI). A week later the diplomatic representative to the UN in Geneva, Kumbu Kilutete, announced the creation of another new party, the **National Alliance of Democrats for Reconstruction**, bringing the number of political parties seeking registration to eight. In addition to these there are another four or five small movements (SWB 11/4, 19/4, 25/4-27/4, 3/5, 5/5, 10/5, 15/5, 17/5, 28/5, 11/6, 19/6, 20/6, 21/6, 25/6, 27/6, 28/6, 29/6; JA 16/4, 30/4, 7/5,

21/5, 28/5, 4/6, 6/6, 13/6, 20/6; AC 20/4, 18/5, 15/6; AED 23/4, 30/4, 7/5, 14/5, 4/6, 18/6, 2/7; WA 23/4, 7/5, 28/5, 11/6, 25/6, 2/7; BD 25/4; C 26/4, 23/5, 26/5, 13/6; AA 27/4, 11/5, 25/5, 8/6; ANews 30/4, 11/6; E 5/5; ARB 15/5, 15/6, 30/6; NA 6/90, 7/90; AE 6/90; DT 7/6; S 5/6, 21/6; DN 25/6).

On 24 June **Uganda** and Zaire signed an agreement to explore for **oil** along their 1 500 km common border. The deal, which signalled the end of three years of talks, detailed terms for the sharing of proceeds from oil, which is believed to exist in the Lake Albert Basin (AED 2/7, 9/7).
(Extradition treaty with Uganda and Rwanda — see Uganda.)

EAST AFRICA

Burundi

On 5 April 3 000 university **students protested** in the capital against reforms to the education system which effectively limited access to the few secondary schools in the country. Significantly the (authorized) demonstration was the first to take place in the country since 1966, and was without incident. The government responded by suspending the reforms (SWB 10/4; NA 6/90).

On 16 May the draft **"charter of national unity"** was submitted to the public, a year after the commission was charged with the task in order to prevent a repeat of the violent ethnic strife in August 1988. The charter committed Barundi to respect human rights and to fight injustice based on ethnicity, region or clan. On the same day Pres Buyoya announced that the Military Committee for National Salvation (CMSN) would be replaced by a Central Committee in Uprona, Burundi's political party, and that in early 1991 a commission would be set up to write a **new constitution**. He added that Burundi would even get the opportunity to decide if they wanted a multiplicity of parties. The CMSN has been the supreme ruling body since the coup in September 1987 (SWB 18/6; AE 6/90

The World Bank supported a project designed to boost **coffee exports** with a $28 mn credit. As coffee exports account for almost all of Burundi's export earnings, the project was expected to increase the country's foreign exchange earnings (WBN 12/4; AED 23/4; ARB 31/5).

Comoro

The **presidential elections** held on 19 February — the first free elections to be held since independence in 1975 —. were subsequently **annulled** due to wide-scale **fraud**. In the second ballot which took place on 11 March, the relatively unknown **Said Mohamed Djohar**, who was previously head of the supreme court, becoming interim head of state in November 1989 following the assassination of Pres Abdallah, was elected president. Despite an official accusation of fraud by an opposition candidate,

Mohammed Taki the leader of the National Union for Democracy, as well as accusations by all seven opposition candidates that Djohar had rigged the actual vote in his favour, the elections were endorsed by the supreme court. Pres Djohar announced the formation of a **new cabinet** on 22 March, shortly after being sworn in for a six-year term of office. The cabinet, which would be transitional government until the new Constitution had been drawn up and a general election called, did not include a single minister from the previous cabinet. Included were two of the seven candidates who stood against Djohar in the presidential elections — **Said Ali Kemel** who took the strategic economy and trade portfolio and was the de facto prime minister, and Ali Mroudjae, who was appointed to head the production, industry an handicrafts ministry. Some of ex-Pres Abdallah's ministers who split from his government in recent years made a comeback.

On 27 April the president pledged to revise the present constitution, which effectively made the country a one-party state, to allow for **multi-party democracy**. He also announced tighter controls on **public spending**, economic reforms and fresh negotiations with the IMF. On 1 June the government voted to abrogate legislation made in 1979 to introduce the single-party system.

On 2 May Pres Djohar decreed that all **civil servants** and agents of the State who were suspended or dismissed by former Pres Abdallah because of their political opinions be reinstated. However, it excluded supporters of opposition leader Mohammed Taki (ION 31/3, 7/4, 21/4, 5/5, 12/5, 26/5, 9/6; AED 2/4, 7/5; SWB 10/4, 13/4; DT 11/4; ARB 15/4, 15/5; DT 3/5).
(Visit by Pres Mitterrand — see Mauritius.)

Djibouti

In June two **diplomats** living in Washington, DC, USA, announced their **defection** and decision to join the newly formed opposition group, the *Union des Mouvements Démocratiques* (UMD). Ali Dahan and Abdulkarim Ali Amarkak, who asked for political asylum in Canada and France, denounced "the violations of human rights and corruption" in Djibouti (S 18/6; SWB 21/6; ION 23/6; AED 25/6).

Relations between Djibouti and **Somalia** deteriorated in early May when the former was accused by Somalia of involvement in clashes between the rebel Somali National Movement and government troops. In the **fighting** which took place on 5 May at Loyada, a small settlement on the border, several dozen Somali government troops were killed. Djibouti, which denied that their armed forces had been involved in any way, subsequently sent major military reinforcements to the area (SWB 10/5, 11/5; ION 12/5, 2/6; ARB 15/6).

On 5 May violent **tribal clashes** broke out between **Issas** and **Gadaburst** communities in the capital, Djibouti. Two people were killed and twenty-three injured (SWB 8/5; ION 19/5; ARB 15/6).

Ethiopia

Nine days of **talks** with the **Tigre People's Liberation Front** (TPLF) broke down on 29 March after the government refused to accede to the rebel demands that Mengistu step down and rejoin a transitional coalition government to draw up a new constitution. The Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) failed to attend peace talks scheduled for 8 April.

During April, as **fierce fighting** erupted on **all fronts** in the civil war threatening famine relief supplies to more than four million people in the north, it became apparent that government forces had decisively lost the initiative in the war. Troops from the **TPLF** and an alliance of other opposition movements were advancing on the capital, Addis Ababa, while troops from the **EPLF** had 10 000 government troops besieged in Asmara, the capital of the disputed region, and were firmly entrenched in the port of **Massawa**. Aggravating the government's position was the Soviet Union's reduction of military assistance and withdrawal of the bulk of its military advisers. In his May Day speech Pres Mengistu admitted to serious military setbacks and called for a renewed commitment to the war against the rebel movements. He added that popular support for his government was waning.

In early June the government accepted an offer by the EPLF to open up the port of Massawa for deliveries of **food aid** to government and rebel-held areas. The decision followed the announcement that US Pres Bush and Soviet Pres Gorbachev had agreed to co-operate in an airlift to help speed aid deliveries. However, because of EPLF accusations that the Soviets were hiding behind international relief efforts to deliver fresh armaments to the government, the port remained closed.

Following a call by presidents Bush and Gorbachev for an international peace conference, Pres Mengistu met **Pres Moi** of Kenya in Nairobi on 10 June to discuss initiatives aimed at ending the 29 year-old civil war. Although rejecting the prerequisite of a ceasefire, the government called for a revival of negotiations with the EPLF. However, hopes that peace talks with the EPLF (which broke down in November 1989) could be resumed were dashed when the rebel group's mediator, **Jimmy Carter**, announced on 14 June that it would not return to **peace talks** and was demanding instead a UN organized referendum on the future of the disputed territory. The **TPLF**, on the other hand, offered to resume peace talks with the government on 20 June, and agreed to an immediate ceasefire if the government stepped down. In an address to the National Assembly (Shengo) on 21 June, Pres Mengistu said that the country was on the **verge of collapse** and called for immediate and all-out **mobilization** to meet the growing threat from rebel forces (AED 16/4, 30/4, 7/5, 28/5, 18/6; ION 28/4, 5/5, 26/5, 2/6, 23/6, 30/6; C 30/4, 9/6, 15/6, 26/6, 27/6; DT 2/5; SWB 6/5, 12/6, 16/6, 22/6, 25/6, 27-29/6; TWR 9/5, 6/6, 20/6, 27/6; ARB 15/5, 15/6; ANews 28/5; NA 6/90; S 6/6).

On 22 May the former commanders of the Land Army and the Police Force and ten other senior officers were **executed** for their alleged roles in the failed coup attempt of May 1989 (SWB 24/5; 2/6).

Kenya

In early May **Kenneth Matiba** and **Charles Rubia**, two former ministers who were expelled from Kanu's ruling party in 1988, called for a multi-party system and the holding of fair elections. Pres Moi responded by saying that such systems were a recipe for inter-tribal conflicts, and promised to clamp down on opposition factions. In an apparent reference to the public support shown by the US ambassador for multi-partyism, Pres Moi denounced Matiba and Rubia as "agents of foreigners".

Their appeal, the strongest yet, served to open up **widespread public debate** on the issue which had long been stifled. Amid growing calls for **political pluralism**, which included those of the Catholic Church, Pres Moi adopted a renewed hard-line policy. On 13 June armed men raided Matiba's home, and on 16 June Moi ordered that any further debates about multi-party politics be closed. Political analysts believed Moi to feel threatened not only by the debates on pluralism, but also by the growing dissatisfaction about the policies and practices of his government (DT 8/5; WR 11/5, 18/5, 29/6; AED 14/5, 21/5, 4/6, 11/6, 25/6; ARB 15/5, 15/6; SWB 18/5, 19/5, 25/5, 26/5, 18/6, 25/6; ION 19/5, 23/6, 30/6; AA 25/5, 22/6; KT 16/6; E 23/6; TWR 27/6; NA 7/90).

The IDA has supported a $41 mn **population programme** with a credit of $35 mn. The fourth demographic control programme project aimed to improve the accessibility of family services and to reinforce existing organisms of this kind set up by the government, building on previous programmes which had already brought down the growth rate from 3,8 per cent. Kenya's rapid population growth of **3,6 per cent** — one of the highest in Africa — has placed strains on the education system, the labour market and the environment, and has hindered economic and social development (AED 16/4; ION 12/5; KT 23/5).

Madagascar

Five people were killed and 20 wounded in a **coup attempt** on 13 May, in which a 13-strong armed rebel unit seized the national radio station in an attempt to overthrow Pres Ratsiraka. The coup plotters, who evidently had no popular support, planned to replace the president with **Gen Jean Rakotoharison**, an opposition leader who denied any connection with them. Among those arrested were Joma Ernest and Jean-Jacques Rasalimanana, members of the conservative opposition party *Vonjy Iray Tsy Mivaky* who took part in a "radio coup" attempt in July 1989 (S 14/5; SWB 15/5, 18/5; C 15/5; ION 19/5, 26/5; AED 21/5; WA 21/5; E 9/6; ARB 15/6; AR 7-8/90).

French Pres Mitterrand paid a 3-day visit to Madagascar on 14 June, the first visit by a French head of state to the country since independence in 1960. His visit was preceded by a donation of MFr 1 500 mn worth of military engineering equipment. Pressure was put on France by the opposition to reschedule the visit because of apparent fears that it would serve to entrench Pres Ratsiraka's position, at a time when demands for political reforms and an end to the president's 15-year rule are growing. By the end of June the number of **political parties** to register following the lifting on the ban in March had risen to **12** (ION 28/4, 5/5, 26/5, 2/6; SWB 10/5, 28/5, 7/6, 14/6; ARB 15/5; AED 21/5; E 5/6; S 15/6).

Richard Andriamaholison, a former police chief condemned in 1983 to life imprisonment for plotting a coup attempt, was pardoned on 26 June by Pres Ratsiraka as part of celebrations to mark the country's 30 years of independence (SWB 29/6; ION 30/6; AED 9/7).

On 13 June the **IMF** approved a $33,6 mn loan in support of the second annual programme under the **enhanced structural adjustment facility** (ESAF). Most of the objectives of moving towards an open, market-oriented economy set under the first ESAF were achieved. The new programme aims to maintain positive per capita real growth, a further reduction of inflation, and a narrowing of the external current account deficit while also safeguarding social and environmental priorities (AED 25/6; IMF S 2/7).

(Restoration of economic relations with South Africa — see South Africa.)

Mauritius

In a visit seen to reaffirm France's interests in the region, French **Pres Mitterrand** paid an official visit in June to the four Indian Ocean island States of Madagascar, Mauritius, Seychelles and the Comoros. It was the first visit by a French head of state to the region since their independence. For each of the four states, France is their first trade partner and first aid donor (ION 16/6).

Rwanda

At the end of March the government announced that **producer prices for coffee** — the country's main export — would be cut by 20 per cent. The minimum price has been fixed since 1986. Export earnings have fallen from $150 mn in 1986 to $70 mn in 1989 (AED 9/7).

During his visit to France in early April, Pres Habyarimana secured a commitment from the French government to help establish **a television broadcasting service** within the next 3 years. Rwanda is one of the few countries in the world without a national television service (AED 9/4; AA 27/4).

During May **Tanzania** expelled more than 5 000 Rwandese illegal immigrants who had been living in the country since 1986. The Rwandese government was forced to seek international aid to help resettle the immigrants (SWB 19/5, 21/5, 29/5).

Seychelles

Speaking on 5 June at the 13th anniversary of his coming to power, Pres René reiterated that he had no intention of changing the island's **one-party** socialist system (SWB 7/6; ION 9/6).

Revenues from **tourism** in 1989 were 19 per cent higher than the previous year, reaching $95 mn. However, a negative effect of the tourist boom was that it exacerbated the trade deficit by 11 per cent, a consequence of increased imports of products for visitors and spending on the improvement of infrastructure. The number of tourists was forecast to increase by 60 per cent within the next five years (ION 26/5, 23/6).

Somalia

The International Development Association has provided a $26 mn credit towards a seven-year $32,5 mn **education project** which was aimed at improving the quality of teaching, upgrading school facilities, reversing the fall in enrolments and increasing supplies of teaching materials. The quality of education, which received only 1,5 per cent of the national budget, is poor and attendance very low — in 1988 only one in 10 children of primary school age was enrolled (WBN 29/3; AED 16/4; ARB 15/5).

On 20 May the government approved plans for **constitutional amendments** with a view to introducing a multi-party system by the end of the year. Nevertheless, Prime Minister Ali Samantar said that multi-party politics could not be introduced until there was a ceasefire with the Somali National Movement. Pres Barre promised to legalise opposition parties, but no legislation had been passed to abolish the one-party system and set an election date (SWB 5/5, 14/5, 18/5, 25/5; AED 21/5; ION 26/5).

About 70 prominent Somali personalities were **arrested** on 11 June after they had published a **manifesto** on 15 May calling for a **multi-party political system** and a caretaker administration to restore human rights and public order. The 112 signatories of the manifesto were composed of lawyers, politicians, intellectuals, elders and chiefs, many of whom were former members of the civilian government overthrown in 1969. Headed by the country's first president, **Aden Abdulle Osman**, the newly formed group known as _"Destouri"_ (the constitutionalists) were strong supporters of the prime minister. Condemning the governments repression of anti-government riots and recent arrests of opposition leaders, **Italy** threatened in late June to withhold economic and political co-operation unless its former colony made a stronger commitment to democracy (DT 8/6; ION 9/6, 16/6; AED 11/6, 25/6, 2/7; SWB 14-16/6; AC 15/6; AE 7/90).

On 29 May two Somali air force officers flew a transport aircraft with 49 people on board to Djibouti and asked for political **asylum**. The two were handed over to the UNHCR, and the plane returned to Somalia (DT 31/5; AED 4/6; SWB 21/6).

Tanzania

On 12 May Pres Mwinyi closed the university in Dar es Salaam and sent home more than 3 000 students in an effort to curb intermittent **student unrest** over the previous month. Student grievances focused on corruption within the country, the declining education budget, terms of service and salaries for academic staff, and other national issues. Pres Mwinyi, who is also the chancellor of the university, closed the university after boycotting students refused to return to classes on time. Significantly, the events coincided with the opening up of debates about the introduction of a multi-party system (SWB 18/4, 20/4, 15/5, 16/5, 26/5; ION 21/4, 28/4, 19/5, 26/5; AA 25/5, 8/6).

In an historic announcement on 29 May, Chairman of the ruling _Chama Cha Mapinduzi_ party, **Julius Nyerere**, said that he would relinquish the post of party chairman by August 1990. The 68 year-old Nyerere continued to hold this powerful post after stepping down as president in 1985. His **resignation** would leave him without any leadership role in either party or the government. Political observers attributed the move to Nyerere's ill-health, as well as his need for self-respect in the face of demands for multi-party politics. Although Nyerere had encouraged an open debate about multi-partyism, he had refrained from indicating his own preference prior to a CCM meeting on 26 June at which he said that multi-party democracy was inevitable. In contrast, Pres Mwinyi showed himself to be strongly against the idea on 3 June when he warned Western countries about linking the adoption of pluralistic democracy to economic assistance. On 11 June it was announced that parliamentary and presidential elections would take place on 28 October (SWB 31/5, 4/6, 29/6; S 31/5; E 2/6; TWR 6/6, 9/6; AA 8/6, 22/6; ION 9/6, 23/6, 30/6; AC 15/6).

A new **investment code** giving foreign and local investors tax incentives and investment guarantees, was announced on 9 April. Strong approval was given by the Nordic countries, Tanzania's principal donors, during Pres Mwinyi's visit to these countries in April. In May the government announced a programme to deal with severe infrastructural problems which are seen as likely to deter new investors. The poor state of the transport sector has also been cited as one of the major obstacles to the successful application of the government's economic recovery programme, costing the country about $200 mn annually. Over the next ten years more than $1,5 bn would be invested, by international organizations and assisting countries (AED 9/4, 30/4; MSE 12/4; ION 19/5; ARB 31/5; MSE 1/6; WBN 7/6).

Up to 100 people died and an estimated 142 000 made homeless when the worst **floods** for more than 50 years occurred in the southern coastal area around Lindi and Mtwara in early April. Crop damage was severe and there was widespread destruction of infrastructure. An appeal was made to the international community for $6 mn in foreign

assistance. A further nine people were killed and thousands of homes destroyed when flooding also occurred in the coffee-growing area around Mount Kilimanjaro in the north (SWB 12/4, 17/4, 24/4, 30/4; C 16/4; AED 23/4, 7/5; TWR 9/5; ARB 31/5).
(Repatriation of Rwandans — see Rwanda: Extradition treaty with Zaire and Uganda — see Uganda.)

Uganda

Sudan and Uganda concluded a mutual **non-aggression pact** in early April, obliging each country not to allow its territories to be used for committing hostile actions against the other. The Sudan-Uganda border had been the scene of mutual recriminations since al-Bashir seized power in Sudan in June 1989. Uganda is host to more than 60 000 refugees from the seven year old war between the government and the SPLA, whose leader John Garang, is a friend of Museveni (AED 23/4; ARB 15/5).

At the end of May, **Rwanda, Zaire** and Uganda agreed to enact **bilateral extradition treaties** and to initiate legislation in their national legislatures forbidding acts of subversion against each other. They further agreed to promote and strengthen co-operation among their security services, and to hold regular summit meetings at ministerial level (DT 30/5).

More than 2 000 **prisoners-of-war** from the northeast who had been detained without trial were **freed** on 27 April. Nevertheless, Amnesty International complained to the government that thousands of civilians are still being held illegally without trial (AED 7/5).

Opening parliament on 30 April, Pres Museveni said the **economy** was forecast to grow at 6,1 per cent in 1989-90 and 6,6 per cent in 1990-91, a slight drop on the 1988-89 growth rate of 7,2 per cent. Economists blamed the projection of slower growth on the collapse of world prices for **coffee**. Export earnings from coffee fell by 59 per cent in 1989 to $160 mn, despite the crop being the biggest in 14 years. The fall in world prices was particularly serious for Uganda as coffee accounts for 95 per cent of export earnings.

Uganda's steady economic progress was being received favourably by donor countries and agencies. When the ruling National Resistance Movement took power in 1986, the country had a negative economic growth rate and inflation stood at more than 370 per cent. In the twelve months up to October **inflation** was 60 per cent. On 9 May, shortly before the arrival of a joint IMF-World Bank economic commission, the government **devalued** the shilling by 1,3 per cent. Only 35 days later it was devalued again by 4,2 per cent to equal USh400=$1. Economists said the devaluation was made in order to increase the local return on coffee exports, rather than being a response to inflation (AED 16/4, 7/5, 4/6, 11/6, 18/6, 25/6; DT 3/5; ION 9/6; A Con 11/6; AA 6/7).

SOUTHERN AFRICA

Angola

In early April both the government and **Unita** rebels issued statements proposing direct talks on resuming the peace process. The moves followed efforts by the **Soviet Union** and the USA to bring the two sides together. Ending a 10-month break in **peace talks** punctuated by heavy fighting country-wide, officials of the ruling MPLA and Unita forces met on 24-25 April in **Portugal** for "exploratory" talks to discuss a new ceasefire. Although the two sides agreed to meet again, there was no firm peace agreement and fighting broke out almost immediately. A call by Unita on 1 May that a ceasefire be signed by June and that direct talks be held with Pres dos Santos, whom they agreed to recognize as the leader of Angola, was rejected by the government. The breakdown resulted in a large-scale **MPLA military offensive** against **Mavinga**, situated in the heart of Unita territory, and renewed military offensives by Unita in northern and central Angola. The fight for the control of the strategic town Mavinga which had been under way since late January, ended with the announcement on 9 May by government forces that they had withdrawn — as a "goodwill gesture" towards peace. A further defeat by the rebels at Mukundi in the south-east highlighted the government's weakened military position and increased pressure on them to revive negotiations.

A meeting held between Unita and the US secretary of state for African affairs, **Herman Cohen,** in May was described by the Angolan government as a conspiracy to "overthrow" it. Continued US support of an estimated R130 mn annually in **military aid** to Unita, contributed to government mistrust.

A second round of **talks** in the search for a cease-fire was held in Lisbon on 16-18 June. These broke up abruptly after the Unita delegation suspended further talks until "misunderstandings" had been cleared up. Sticking points remained the MPLA's refusal to extend explicit recognition to Unita, and on how best to enforce a ceasefire. A week later Unita said it was willing to resume exploratory peace talks.

After a meeting with Pres Mobutu in late June, Unita's **Dr Savimbi** said that he was ready to hold direct talks with Pres dos Santos. He also called on the USA and Soviet Union to help to end the 15-year civil war and allow emergency food and medical aid to reach civilians.

On 29 June the government announced the release of 60 former Unita members under the terms of an amnesty law passed in 1989. The state radio said that 1 800 prisoners had been released in May (SWB 9/4, 3/5, 11/5, 7/6, 8/6, 22/6, 30/6; WM 12/4, 20/4, 4/5, 25/5; C 12/4, 26/4, 2/5, 4/5, 7/5, 10/5, 26/5, 19/6; AED 16/4, 7/5, 14/5, 28/5, 9/7; JA 16/4, 30/4; DN 30/4; ARB 15/5, 15/6, 15/7, 15/8; WA 11/6; DM 28/6; AR 7-8/90).

In a move aimed to increase **private sector participation** in the economy, the government issued a decree in early May giving the

ministries of industry and commerce and fisheries 31 days to come up with ideas to re-establish small-scale business in their sectors. In response, the ministry of industry and commerce announced the first concrete steps towards the privatization of factories, breweries, canneries, textile mills, state retail chains and other manufacturing enterprises, reviving hope that the economic and financial restructuring programme announced in 1987 might finally "get off the ground". In a **mini-reshuffle** on 14 June Pres dos Santos appointed new ministers of finance and planning, as well as a new governor and deputy governor of the central bank. No reasons were given for the changes, but political analysts saw the significant restructuring of the government's economic team as confirming the sincerity of the government's efforts to privatize (MSE 10/5; AED 21/5, 25/6; S 21/6; ARB 30/6).

On 19 May Angola and **Namibia** agreed to form a joint commission to maintain security along their border (C 22/5; AED 28/5, 11/6; ARB 15/6).

In mid-June both the government and UN secretary-general, Perez de Cuellar, appealed for **food** and other **humanitarian aid** for more than **2,6 mn people** affected by **drought**. The call came after reports of increasing deaths in the central and southern parts of the country where rainfall had been inadequate for the past four years. An estimated 11 000 people died in Benguela province between September 1989 and July 1990. Despite calls in 1989 for 300 000 tonnes of food aid, the government said that "donor insensitivity and security problems" had resulted in the delivery of only about 30 000 tonnes of aid. National agricultural production was estimated to be down by more than 60 per cent, and cattle losses were thought to exceed 62 000 (DN 25/4; MSE 5/90; AA 25/5; AED 28/5, 25/6; C 26/6; SWB 27/6; WM 29/6; S 29/6; ARB 16/8).

Botswana

Two unarmed **civilians** were **killed** in unrelated incidents by Botswana Defence Force soldiers in April. A public apology was subsequently made by the commander of the defence force for the deaths of the two, a Batswana teenage girl, and a visiting British man who took a wrong turn into the road leading to the State House in Gaborone (S 27/4, 28/4, 7/5; C 30/4).

Following a high court ruling invalidating the results in the Mochudi constituency of the September general elections, the minister of education **Ray Molomo** lost his seat. The closely contested seat was lost when the two opposition parties joined to field one opposing candidate (AA 8/6; AED 18/6; NA 7/90).

Leso4tho

On 30 April the government announced that it would establish a 109-member constituent assembly in preparation for returning the country to **civilian rule** by 1992. Gen Lekhanya said that he expected the civilian government to be a combination of US and UK systems. However, because of the

government's continued prohibition of political party activities, the seven registered political parties announced their refusal to participate.

The **new constituent assembly**, comprising members of the council of ministers, representatives of police, local government and traditional chiefs, was sworn in on 29 June. Under the presidency of an academic, Dr Teloboho Kolane, the assembly was immediately given the task of drafting a new constitution. Lesotho had no constitution for the previous 20 years, following the suspension of the 1966 independence constitution in 1970 (C 2/5; DT 3/5; SWB 5/5, 1/6, 6/6; ARB 15/6; DM 28/6; LT 28/6; WM 29/6).

A civil action against military leader Maj-Gen Lekhanya for damages amounting to R500 000 was filed on 6 June by exiled **King Moshoeshoe II.** Two weeks later he called for the establishment of an interim representative government which would make immediate plans for free and fair elections on the basis of universal suffrage within six months of its formation (SWB 21/5, 11/6, 21/6; C 7/6, 20/6; S 12/6).

China broke off diplomatic and trade relations with Lesotho in April after Maseru announced that it was re-establishing links with Taiwan (C 6/4; SWB 10/4; AED 16/4; MSE 5/90).

On 4 April **university students** resumed an indefinite **boycott** of lectures in protest against the 300 per cent increase in fees announced in March. In early June more than 5 000 university and school teachers joined the strike, demanding salary increases of between 100 and 300 per cent (LT 5/4, 12/4; SWB 10/4; WM 15/6).

Malawi

On 27 April Pres Banda **dissolved** the **cabinet** with immediate effect, for the second time in four months, as well as the three region committees of the Malawi Congress Party. No reason was given, but political commentators believed that the exclusion of veteran minister **Edward Bwanali** from the new cabinet appointed a week later, was a factor. He was also dismissed from his influential post of regional party chairman for Malawi's populous southern region. A cabinet minister for the past 15 years, Bwanali had been mooted as a possible successor to Banda, who officially turned 84 in May (SWB 30/4, 4/5, 6/6; DT 3/5; H 4/5; AED 7/5, 14/5).

The World Bank approved an IDA loan of $38 mn in April for the development of education. Government expenditure on **education** is among the lowest in Africa, affecting the quality and quantity of education. The programme aimed to increase school attendance to 75 per cent of school-age children by 1993, compared with its present rate of under 50 per cent (AED 30/4; ARB 15/6).

At a meeting of the World Bank co-ordinated consultative group on 14-16 May, **donors** confirmed **$508 mn** in development assistance for 1990/91 to support the **economic adjustment programme**, and in particular the government's strategy to reduce poverty.

Total external financing requirements for 1990-95 are estimated at $1,2 bn, if economic growth is to be sustained and the poverty-reduction programme successfully implemented (DT 11/5; WBN 17/5; AED 28/5; ARB 30/6).

A new **trade agreement** between **South Africa** and **Malawi** was signed on 19 June, providing duty-free entry into South Africa for all products of Malawian origin. This would put Malawi in a position to reduce the trade imbalance of about R200 mn a year in South Africa's favour (BD 20/6).

Mozambique

Peace talks scheduled for mid-April where delayed indefinitely after disagreements arose between government and Renamo over the venue for peace talks. Renamo, having strong links with Kenya, preferred Nairobi as a venue, while government forces insisted on Malawi, a venue which Renamo said was unacceptable on "security grounds".

On 7 May government forces launched a **major offensive** against Renamo's headquarters in **Gorongoza** in central Mozambique, killing about 600 people in bombing raids. Renamo estimated that some 3 600 Mozambican and Zimbabwean troops were involved in the offensive, the largest yet against the rebels. In an apparent retaliatory attack, about 18 people were **killed** on a passenger train carrying **mineworkers** from South Africa on 14 May, and a few days later some **3 000 refugees** crossed the border into **South Africa** following a rebel attack on a border town. There was also a marked escalation during May of rebel attacks on roads, railways and power-lines around the capital, Maputo.

Despite the final acceptance by Renamo representatives of the Malawian venue, and the arrival of top officials in **Blantyre** on 15 June, preliminary talks never actually took place. Accompanied by their Kenyan mediators, Renamo representatives cancelled the talks because of the "security risk". However, the reason was thought to be Frelimo's non-acceptance of Renamo's new preconditions which included the withdrawal from Mozambique of Zimbabwe's 10 000 soldiers who are guarding the Beira Corridor. **Zimbabwe**, which was appointed as Frelimo's mediator last year, was seen by Renamo to be biased (SWB 3/5, 5/5, 12/5, 8/6, 13/6, 16/6, 20/6; C 11/5, 14/5, 16/5, 11/6, 13/6, 18/6; ION 12/5, 9/6, 16/6; ARB 15/5; S 17/5, 13/6; WM 18/5, 15/6; AC 1/6; G 15/6; AE 7/90).

A **South African family** of four who had been held by Renamo rebels since the end of April when their yacht ran aground off the southern Mozambique coast, where released unharmed to South African officials on 15 June (C 8/5; SWB 12/5, 16/6; ST 20/5; S 17/6).

At a donor's conference held on 27 April, $106 mn in **emergency aid** for Mozambique was raised, falling $30 mn short of that requested. Most of the money will be spent on basic foodstuffs to the 1,4 mn people worst affected by the civil war (AED 2/4; ARB 30/6).

In a significant step towards Southern African co-operation, Eskom (South Africa's electricity supply commission) won a R2,6 mn training contract from the World Bank, its first ever, in late May. The contract formed part of a multi-million rand project to rehabilitate and upgrade the Maputo thermal power station (ION 31/5; S 31/5; BD 1/6).

On 4 June the IMF approved a $113 mn credit to finance the continuation of the programme for economic and social recovery launched in 1987. The government hoped to double the economic growth rate to 6 per cent in 1990, to cut inflation by half to 9 per cent, and to contain the budget deficit at 30 per cent of GNP (DN 6/6; IMF S 18/6; ION 23/6).

Namibia

Donald Acheson, the 52-year old Irishman accused of assassinating the prominent Namibian nationalist and lawyer, Anton Lubowski, in September 1989, was **released** on 7 May after charges against him had been dropped. The charges were withdrawn after Namibia had tried but failed to procure four crucial witnesses and two co-accused from South Africa (C 8/5; S 8/5).

In May Namibia established **diplomatic relations** with **Libya and Malawi** (SWB 11/5; DT 27/5).

At the first **donors' conference** for Namibia on 21-22 June, donors pledged a disappointing $200 mn towards the first year of the reconstruction and development programme, $70 mn short from that requested. The largest donor, West Germany, pledged $60 mn mainly for agriculture and fisheries. **South Africa** pledged $10 mn in aid for mutually identified projects. Namibia inherited debts of about R500 mn on gaining independence, and expects a R700 mn deficit in 1990 (C 6/6, 23/6; AB 6/90; AED 2/7).

(Angola, Namibia in security pact — see Angola.)

South Africa

Representatives of the **African National Congress** (ANC) and the government held **preliminary talks** on 2-4 May aimed at removing obstacles to future negotiations on a post-apartheid constitution. It was their first formal encounter since the founding of the ANC in 1912. The ANC delegation, which was led by deputy president Nelson Mandela, included two former political prisoners, Walter Sisulu and Ahmed Kathrada, and five senior exiled external leaders who returned to the country on 27 April — Joe Slovo, the secretary-general of the South African Communist Party, Alfred Nzo, Thabo Mbeki, Joe Modise and Ruth Mampati. In a joint statement issued after the historic meeting, it was noted that both sides had agreed "on a common commitment towards the resolution of the existing climate of violence and intimidation from whatever quarter, as well as a commitment to stability and to a peaceful process of negotiations."

On 8 May **Pres de Klerk** embarked on an 18-day nine-country tour of **Western Europe**,

the most extensive undertaken by a South African leader since the National Party came to power in 1948. The tour was seen as an attempt to hasten South Africa's readmittance into the international community following his government's meeting with the ANC. The following day Mandela embarked on a tour of seven African countries which focused on maintaining pressure on the government to dismantle apartheid.

On 4 June **Mandela** departed for a high-level **six-week tour** of 13 countries, which included meetings with **US Pres Bush** and **British Prime Minister Thatcher**. During the tour he renewed his calls for the continuation of **sanctions**. Pres De Klerk announced on 7 June that the four-year old nationwide state of emergency would be lifted in all but the province of Natal. In what was seen to be a genuine attempt at removing stumbling blocks in the way of negotiations, the move followed the announcement on 15 May that the government no longer believed independence for the six **self-governing states** to be an option, thereby formally abandoning the policy of grand apartheid. The government also announced in May a three-month indemnity against prosecution, detention, or arrest for political activists, including exiles, facing criminal or civil charges. On 19 June a bill was passed repealing the **1953 Reservation of Separate Amenities Act**, one of the so-called "pillars" of apartheid. On 26 June in a significant softening of its position, the **European Council** (EC) praised De Klerk for his reforms and said that while sanctions would be maintained, they would be gradually relaxed in response to reforms (AED 23/4, 30/4, 7/5, 14/5, 21/5, 28/5, 11/6, 25/6, 2/7; SAB 25/5, 22/6; K 4/90, 5/90, 6/90).

Intense **fighting** between ANC supporters and the (mainly) Zulu **Inkatha** movement (led by Mangosuthu Buthelezi) in the province of Natal, continued during the period April to June, spilling over into townships in other parts of the country. The heightened unrest in the Natal townships, which claimed on average six to ten lives per day and caused widespread destruction of property, resulted in the deployment of a defence force unit in the area (AED 9/4; K 6/90).

In a significant change of attitude, Madagascar restored economic relations with South Africa at the end of April (AC 1/6).

TBVC States

Transkei - The draft decree on a proposed national referendum to be held on the issue of Transkei's **reincorporation** into South Africa, was published on 24 June. The decree gave citizens of Transkei until September to comment on the referendum proposals, after which a date would be set for the vote (SWB 25/4; S 25/6; C 25/6).

Bophuthatswana - Three senior officers of the army and a member of the local police force were acquitted on charges of **treason** on 18 May, bringing to an end the series of treason trials that began after the abortive coup in February 1988 (C 19/5; SWB 21/5).

Venda - A sit-in at the end of March by **civil servants**, including nurses and policemen, who were demanding salary parity with their South African counterparts, and the resignation of the chief of police on 3 April, preceded a bloodless military **coup** on 5 April. Second in command of the Venda Defence Force, **Lt-Col Gilbert Ramushwana**, forced the resignation of Pres Frank Ravele and his cabinet, as well as the return to South Africa of the head of the defence force, Brig Steenkamp. A state of emergency was enforced and a commission of inquiry appointed to investigate alleged corruption, nepotism and other irregularities attributed to the government of former-Pres Ravele. Schools reopened and civil servants returned to work after Ramushwana scrapped an annual tax, suspended the activities of the Allied Workers' Union and announced a subsidy for electricity. On 5 June the state of emergency was lifted. Along with the new Ciskein government, **South Africa** formally recognized the new government on 7 June (S 4/4, 8-11/4, 20/6; SWB 5/4, 8/6; NA 6/90; C 6/6).

Ciskei - The Commissioner of Police, Gen Madolo, was dismissed in early June in connection with an alleged plot to overthrow the military government (C 5/6; SWB 6/6).

The new military government abolished the death penalty, with immediate effect, in mid June, and commuted the death sentences of 40 prisoners to life imprisonment (SWB 14/6).

Swaziland

Eleven people, alleged to be members of the under-ground People's Democratic Movement (Pudemo), were arrested in June on charges of sedition and **high treason**. Accusations of links with the Federation of Trade Unions were denied by the trade union secretary (C 21/5; TS 6/6, 13/6, 14/6, 19/6, 28/6; DT 8/6; S 21/6; AA 22/6, 6/7; SN 23/6).

The threatened closure of Swaziland's oldest mine, the 50 year-old **Havelock asbestos mine**, was eased following the discovery in April of high quality asbestos deposits valued at about R200 mn. These will prolong the life of the mine by some 8 years, thus saving the jobs of more than 2 000 workers. The main source of mineral earnings in the country, Havelock brought in R25,5 mn in 1989 (C 11/4; S 17/4).

Zambia

At a consultative group meeting held on 9-11 April, **donors** pledged **$450 mn** for the next twelve months, thereby endorsing the government's economic restructuring programme. Of this $250 mn was for balance of payments support, and the remainder for development projects (AED 9/4, 23/4, 21/5; WBN 12/4; DT 18/4; ARB 31/5).

Making his most profound shift in policy direction under the economic recovery programme, Pres Kaunda announced plans on 28 May to partially **privatize** the country's unwieldly state-run enterprises and set up a share market (BD 24/5; AED 4/6; ARB 30/6; AE 7/90).

Under pressure from trade unions and student bodies, Pres Kaunda announced on 28 April that he would recommend to the national council of the ruling United National Independence Party (Unip) that a **referendum** be held on changing to a **multi-party system**, although he reiterated his personal rejection of political pluralism. All campaigning for or against the existing one-party system was banned. A four-member electoral commission was appointed in early June to prepare for the referendum.

On 7 June Pres Kaunda **reshuffled** his cabinet, sacking defence minister Fredrick Hapunda and the mines minister. Their dismissal along with the demotion of secretary of state for defence, Alex Shapi, was linked by political observers to the debate on multi-party politics.

The price of **maize meal** was increased by over 100 per cent on 19 June, provoking **widespread discontent**, which culminated in violence after a demonstration by some 2 000 students in Lusaka on 25 June. About 30 people were killed in the riots. Kaunda, however, insisted that the economic reforms would go ahead, but did respond to the call by rioters for the restoration of the price subsidy, the resignation of the president, and an end to the single-party system, by announcing that the referendum would be held in October.

Early on 30 June a small group of army officers led by Lt Mwamba Luchembe briefly took control of the national radio and television service, announcing a military takeover following the food price rises. In response to the **attempted coup**, Kaunda sacked his army commander Lt-Gen Gary Kalenge, and reshuffled the country's top military leadership (C 30/4, 31/5, 29/6, 2/7, 4/7; DT 1/5; AED 7/5, 28/5, 7/6, 25/6, 2/7, 9/7; SWB 30/5, 27/6, 28/6; AE 6/90; S 1/6, 2/7; AC 1/6; FT 26/6; G 27/6; S 27-30/6; WM 29/6; FM 29/6, 6/7; BD 29/6, 2/7; E 30/6; ST 1/7; TWR 4/7; ARB 15/7).

Zimbabwe

In a **cabinet reshuffle** on 9 April, Pres Mugabe trimmed his cabinet from 50 to 40 members, mostly at the junior ministerial level, and appointed former Zapu leader Joshua Nkomo as co-vice president with veteran Zanu-PF Simon Muzenda. A noteworthy appointment was that of **Dennis Norman** to the troubled transport ministry. Norman was replaced as minister of agriculture in 1985 as a consequence of Mugabe's chagrin with whites in the country. Two other whites were appointed to the cabinet, Timothy Stamps as health minister, and Chris Anderson as minister of mines. Only three of the 30 appointed members were former Zapu members, despite previous assurances by Mugabe that there would be an equitable distribution of portfolios.

On 18 May a draft bill was passed providing for **two vice-presidents**, placating dissatisfied former Zapu members (BD 10/4; S 10/4, 12/4; SWB 11/4, 22/5, 22/6; AED 16/4; ARB 15/5; AC 18/5).

An historic bill was passed on 28 June removing the constraints imposed by Britain 10 years ago on changes to the **constitution**. In future only the approval by a two-thirds majority of the single chamber parliament would be required for a change to the constitution or the Declaration of Rights (S 29/6).

Unrest rocked the country during May and June, after the government raised **prices on basic goods** by up to 15 per cent as part of reforms to liberalize the economy. More than 10 000 teachers and 1 500 civil servants, demanding more pay and better conditions, stopped work in a series of countrywide **strikes** which started on 28 May. However, in the face of the imposition of emergency powers ordering employees back to work, coupled with **unemployment** of some 30 per cent, the strikers reluctantly returned to work. More than 1 000 teachers were dismissed.

On 30 May at the reopening of the **University of Zimbabwe**, which had been closed for several months following student unrest, an estimated 2 000 students vociferously denounced the imposition of a one-party state (C 25/5, 1/6, 2/6, 8/6, 21/6; FG 1/6, 15/6; SWB 2/6, 7/6; H 6/6; TWR 6/6; WM 8/6; AED 11/6; FM 22/6; AA 22/6; MSE 6/90).

References

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

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