Open or covert competition for 'spoils' has often been central to the political process in many countries, not least in Africa. In ROAPE 24, Szeftel found the pursuit of spoils in the case of Zambia to be a fundamental mechanism of surplus transfer, underlying the process of class formation. Roberts, in the same issue, portrayed the Algerian bureaucracy as a structure in which the pursuance of private benefit and traditional obligations are basic elements. Precisely because of the relative weakness of indigenous capital, the state is frequently the main locus of accumulation in African settings. It is therefore not surprising that control of state office should be regarded as an attractive prize for both individuals and groups; nor that politics should often turn on conflict for privileged access to such resources; nor that the state should serve as the primary source for individual enrichment of politicians and bureaucrats. The degree to which any of these occurs varies by time and place. But their importance within the political process cannot be denied.

In this issue, Iyayi argues that the struggles for spoils — corruption — should be recognised as a necessary result of the circumstances of the indigenous capitalist class in a neo-colonial situation. Corruption is the form which primitive accumulation takes in such situations. African capitalists, Iyayi asserts, have no pre-capitalist economies to exploit, as did their counterparts elsewhere. So their initial accumulation of capital must feed upon the society itself, with the enrichment of the few made possible by virtue of their privileged access to state resources.

The use of the state for private gain is also taken up in the articles of both Daniel and Vilane and of Forrest. Daniel and Vilane are concerned to analyse the contours of conflict during the post-Sobhuza era in Swaziland and the reasons underlying that country’s apparent endorsement of the South Africa state. Though trapped by its vulnerable position within the orbit of South Africa, Swaziland reached its post-colonial status with one apparent asset from the point of view of the departing colonial power — a stable constitutional monarchy. However, the extent to which the appearance of stability rested on personal rule was revealed after the death of Sobhuza. Disputes over the royal succession only compounded the bitter competition among the successors to Swazi royal, state and public resources. The result, as Daniel and Vilane show, has been a degrading scramble for land and kickbacks from foreign companies. The victims of this struggle for spoils have been the people of Swaziland and South Africa alike — as the only beneficiary for such a collapse in political legitimacy has been the South African Government.

The dependence of the competing ruling cliques in Swaziland on foreign, and especially South African capital facilitated the signing of a secret security
agreement between the two governments and collaboration in attacks on ANC supporters and refugees in Swaziland, despite the effective withdrawal of the 'sweetener' of the proposed transfer of land by South Africa to Swaziland. South Africa's other neighbours continue to experience more direct and brutal forms of persuasion, including invasion and terrorist attacks by South African forces in Angola and Botswana, support for counter-revolutionary armies in Angola and Mozambique, and the continuation of the illegal occupation of Namibia. South Africa recently blockaded essential supplies to Lesotho and overthrew the government of Chief Jonathan whom, ironically, they had been instrumental in maintaining in power in 1970 when he was on the point of losing the 1970 elections. Such illegal banditry continues to enjoy the tolerance of the governments of the USA and UK in particular, and in the case of Angola, outright American support.

If the pursuit of spoils is a widespread phenomenon in Africa and elsewhere, it has been particularly blatant in Nigeria. References in the Nigerian press to bribes, frauds, kickbacks and 'extravagant expenditure', are used by Iyayi in support of his analysis of primitive accumulation. Mention of corrupt practices are liberally sprinkled through Forrest's account of crisis management in Nigeria over the period 1979-1984. In a comprehensive review, Forrest shows that state policy vacillated between the support of private entrepreneurship and the state direction of the engine of economic growth. The liberal-democratic assumptions of the Gowon period gave way to corporate management strategies in 1975-1979, then to a 'mixed economy' in 1979 and finally to the 'War against Indiscipline' characteristic of Buhari's period. The conspicuous failure of public entrepreneurship led to periodic demands that the role of the public sector should be cut back to the traditional function of providing an infrastructure, and maintaining law and order.

The National Party of Nigeria acted as a transmission belt for the distribution of state revenues and the allocation of patronage based on political considerations, rather than any sort of economic logic. The 'struggle for spoils' was accelerated by the vast 'rental income' derived from oil revenues. Instead of being able to use this revenue for long-term productive goals, the politicians presided over a consumer boom, a vastly increased import bill and the dissipation of public funds into wasteful projects. The demands of clientelist politics and the management of state/federal relations took precedence over production and development goals. The collapse of oil prices has left Nigeria with massive foreign debts — and an unprecedented level of dependence on imports. Factories are unable to use more than a fraction of their capacity; workers are laid off, public services collapse; prices continue to rise. The mass of ordinary Nigerians are called upon to pay the bills run up in the struggle for spoils by their exploiters — some of whom are free to enjoy those spoils abroad. Self appointed spokesmen for linguistic, state or ethnic groups continue to complain about their lack of an adequate share of the spoils. Lack of resources may intensify the struggle to divide up the reduced 'national cake'.

On a very different subject, Pittin examines the extent of women's subordination in Nigeria with respect to contraception, abortion and child custody. While she finds some hints of change and a variation of practice following lines of education and income, the overall situation is one in which women's choices are severely restricted. This is perhaps most starkly illustrated by the requirement that women have their husband's written authorisation prior to receiving the services of the Planned Parenthood Federation of Nigeria. Women's rights in the sphere of child
custody are mediated by the marital relationship as well. Law and “custom” frequently dictate that children are the possessions of their fathers and a breakup of a marriage can deny a woman access to her children. Control of women’s fertility through abortion legislation often pushes women into the sphere of criminality and exposes them to considerable physical harm. Pittin argues that with respect to these and other matters which so directly affect the quality of their lives, there is an urgent need for the active participation and influence of women.

Our Briefings present important documents arising from developments of critical significance for the future of Africa. One concerns differences between the European and Tigray People’s Liberation Fronts on their interpretation of the rights of ‘nationalities’ to self-determination and their respective political strategies and alliances. Documents from both movements are presented here.

Thanks to the editors of the South African Labour Bulletin, we are able to include in this issue documents from the founding conference of the Congress of South African Trade Unions, which unites the major independent industrial, mining, general and community-based trade unions in South Africa. The new Congress draws together different traditions of union organisation, and unions who differed over their political strategies, in particular over the issue of affiliation to political movements such as the United Democratic Front (UDF). Two groups of independent unions, CUSA and AZACTU, remain outside the new federation because of their commitment to a policy of black leadership of black unions. The unity achieved by COSATU is not complete. Nevertheless, the founding of COSATU marks a great step forward in the industrial and political organisation of workers and, as the Congress statements declare, the struggle to abolish apartheid and create a democratic South Africa.

Carolyn Baylies
Robin Cohen
Gavin Williams
The Political Economy of Civil Rule and the Economic Crisis in Nigeria (1979-84)

Tom Forrest

This paper examines the dynamic interaction of economic policy and state action with political, social and market forces during the civilian regime of President Shagari (Oct 1979 — Jan 1984). It investigates why democratic politics, or more accurately, the rule of politicians, had disastrous economic consequences. The National Party of Nigeria, which gained power as a party of national patronage, was weak and largely devoid of policies. Political competition and economic debate were constituted around the distribution of state patronage and federal state relations. The public economy and processes of policy formulation were fully exposed to the distributive demands of state patronage and electoral politics. Throughout the period, trends that were identifiable in the economic expansion of the 1970s intensified, including the loss of financial control and discipline in the public economy, the privatisation of public funds and the expansion of state employment.

In Nigeria, as elsewhere, political and social processes and the institutional structure of the state have profoundly conditioned economic activity, state policies and forms of intervention. In this way they affect the allocation and use of resources, patterns of accumulation and the growth and development of the economy. At the risk of oversimplification, it is to some of these structural features that define the economic environment that this analysis will turn first. Spectacular as changes in regime and the ups and downs of the oil economy may be, it is the continuities and cumulative impact of structural features that stand out.

The financial and administrative centralisation of the federal system that followed the creation of new states and the arrival of large oil revenues has not, on the whole, resulted in a central authority with strong political and administrative capacity. One reason for this is the strength of an economic and political dynamic which involves political competition by communities, regions and individuals for a share of federal resources and representation at the centre. These distributive pressures on the centre have been strong. Their effects take many forms including revenue allocation, state creation and the location of federal expenditure. They have placed constraints on economic management and the use of resources with adverse consequences for economic growth. A further related dynamic involves political relations between the centre and the states.

The federal structure, which gives the states considerable autonomy, is combined with a fiscal structure in which the states raise very little revenue of their own (over 1980-83 the states excluding Lagos state received more than 80% of their revenues
from Federal sources). They rely on statutory and non-statutory transfers from the centre. This gives the states every incentive to get more funds from this source, encourages financial irresponsibility and sets up strong forces for the creation of new states. Only a strong political authority at the centre can resist these pressures.

Strong class identities and alignments around agricultural or industrial production have not materialised in Nigeria where there is a weak development of capitalism. Local capital is largely commercial and financial in orientation and is fragmented. Accumulation is often dependent on state resources and favours. The organisation and aggregation of local capital is weak at the national level and not strongly aligned. Only a few of the largest local enterprises have strong links with foreign capital which dominates corporate enterprise and the business lobbies. Historically, Nigerian businessmen have had an uneasy relationship with state officials who have generally favoured foreign capital. With the exception of the indigenisation decrees, economic nationalism has not generally found strong collective expression. The political and economic weakness of local capital engaged in production affects the character of the dominant classes, giving prominence to merchant capital and to managerial groups who promote a developmental statism rather than capitalist oriented growth policies. The proprietary classes (the bureaucracy, the business class, the military and professionals with marketable skills) are fragmented by political divisions and conflicts of interest. The relative power of these groups has fluctuated.

Since the 1950s, when nationalist politicians gained control over state institutions at the regional level and state resources were centralised through the marketing board system, the exercise of state power has been closely linked to the economic advancement of individuals and communities. The growth of state patronage has followed the expansion of the public economy and institutions. Patronage has been distributed through employment, contracts, loans, party funds, the privatisation of state resources and opportunities for profit from state regulation. State patronage has also been channelled to the proprietary classes through a variety of state subsidies for industry, agriculture, housing, energy and education. The first major expansion of the public economy occurred in the fifties and a second took place in the 1970s with oil. On both occasions, state investment extended into the private sector. Much of the rationale for the spread of state regulation, investment and public agencies is to be found in the power and control over state resources they give, rather than in state accumulation or support for private enterprise.

A consequence of the centrality of state power and resources has been intense political competition for access to the state and over the distribution of state resources. Individuals in positions of power within the public sector are subject to great pressures over the distribution of state patronage. Access to the state is secured through clientilist patterns of politics with support often mobilised on an ethnic basis. Personal ties are essential to the development of horizontal networks, and to vertical ones, which link village and region to the centre through a hierarchy of communities.

Large oil revenues have had a number of largely unforeseen and unintended consequences. First, the rentier nature of the state income has meant that there are strong pressures to maximize current oil revenues and increase state expenditures (Public expenditure as a proportion of GDP rose from 9% in 1962 to 55% in 1979). The political and economic importance of taxpayers in Nigeria's fiscal sociology has declined. Political pressures arising from the taxation of personal incomes,
farm incomes or private property, which would check the increases in state expenditures demanded by politicians and bureaucrats are largely absent. This has consequences for the expansion of the public economy, the use and accountability of public funds and attitudes towards the state.

Second, oil has had an impact on the structure of incentives in the economy by changing relative prices. Domestic inflation led by food prices, together with the appreciation of the naira, has made imports more competitive and exports less attractive. The expansion of imports put the domestic production of manufactures and food under pressure. The expansion of state expenditure was concentrated in the urban areas and increased the share of commerce, construction and service industries in the national product. As labour was attracted from the rural areas, rural wages increased. Some have argued that the oil boom was responsible for, or, simply masked, an agricultural crisis of Ghanaian proportions with stagnant or declining output, the collapse of commodity exports and rising food imports. The impact of oil on agricultural output has been exaggerated and is more complicated than this view suggests. Demand outstripped supply. But supply has performed better and been more variable by crop and locality than unreliable aggregate official statistics would imply. The growth of agricultural output had slowed down before the onset of the oil boom, and without oil the pressure to maintain heavy taxation of agricultural producers would have been stronger. Large state expenditures shifted the domestic terms of trade in favour of food crops and increased the flow of state resources to the rural sector, much of it admittedly wasteful and unproductive.

Third, the dominance of oil meant that economic expansion became dependent on an increase in real oil earnings. Unless measures are taken to counter the fluctuations in oil revenues, through a stabilisation fund or other means, oil becomes a source of economic instability. Nigeria has recently experienced one minor (1978/79) and one major oil-induced recession (mid-1981 — to date).

Fourth, large oil revenues have integrated Nigeria more thoroughly into the international economy, with consequences for Nigeria's geopolitical position and place within the international division of labour.

The features we have considered so far collectively weaken the economic and administrative capacities of the state. There is a large bureaucratic presence with a high capacity for obstruction and delay. Office in the public sector tends to be personalised with little delegation of authority. There is heavy privatisation of state funds through various forms of bureaucratic corruption. Budgeting and planning capacities are weak. Accounting and audit within the public sector are often non-existent, and statistical services and reporting are extremely deficient.

Nigeria's development strategy is broadly capitalist, but it is not clearly defined or articulated. The state has played an ambiguous role, neither supporting private enterprise effectively nor playing a key role in the promotion of economic growth and technological advance. Economic growth through private enterprise is not well understood as the dominant goal by the ruling classes. Discretionary controls are administered by the state in such a way as to seriously impede the progress of business. The pursuit of industrialisation through import substitution is at the heart of the national strategy. Here the key terms are self reliance and self sufficiency. Until the 1970s, Japan was generally viewed as the exemplar. Latterly Brazil has been held up as a desirable model.

Civil servants have played a central role in propagating economic ideas and in
CIVIL RULE AND THE ECONOMIC CRISIS IN NIGERIA 1979-84

policy formation. Beyond this there has been a tendency towards the bureaucratisation of intellectual life. In the 1970s many civil servants joined the Nigerian Economic Society. The universities were incorporated into a unified public salary and grade structure. University staff were seconded to government. Shortage of executive capacity and policy relevant inquiry were constant themes on the 70s.

There has until recently been a marked absence of debate over economic policy. No attempts have been made to restructure international relations or redistribute wealth in ways that would threaten any class or section of society. The absence of an explicit state ideology has led to attempts to fill the vacuum from above — liberal democratic principles in the Second Plan (1970-74) under General Gowon, corporate management principles in the (1975) Udoji report, the ‘Mixed Economy’ of the 1979 constitution, and more recently the intense nationalism of the ‘War Against Indiscipline’ under General Buhari.

The Military Inheritance
During the civil war, the power of a small group of federal civil servants increased and centralised decision making became a reality for the first time after years of virtual regional autonomy. This experience provided the momentum for greater state involvement in the economy. This was aimed at more central regulation and control, greater Nigerian ownership and structural change in industry. It also brought, following the Dina Commission, important changes in the fiscal system of the Federation. These ensured the absolute dominance of federal expenditure over that by the states, greater responsibilities for the federal government and greater equality of access to federal funds by the newly created states.

In the Second Plan period (1970-1974), a number of large scale state projects were started. With the indigenisation decree, Nigerian ownership in the oil, finance, commercial and manufacturing sectors advanced. The extension of the public sector was not, planned; there has never been a planning mechanism in Nigeria. The plan consisted of a list of public sector projects loosely linked to macro-economic projections. These projections went awry as oil revenues increased dramatically.

The state managers and the military government totally failed to control state expenditure, or impose any sense of direction or priority upon it. The euphoria of oil led to expansion in all directions, and public sector projects were rushed through without adequate appraisal and preparation. In agriculture, the marketing board system was reorganised, the provision of subsidised inputs was increased, and a number of projects were begun, notably the irrigation projects and the World Bank schemes. There were large investments in infrastructure and communications which created a national integrated network. Education and housing expenditure increased dramatically.

From the start of the oil boom, financial discipline and control in the public sector deteriorated. This trend was reinforced by the inability of the centre to control the states where governors exercised their personal powers. As oil revenues increased, so federal transfers to the states accelerated. Economic policy was passive, or took the line of least resistance. The explosion of purchasing power ignited an enormous consumption boom. Some of this income flowed down, no matter how successful the elites were in bringing about a one sided division of the spoils. As the economy spun out of control, tariffs crumbled and non-oil sources of revenue were neglected. Large public sector pay awards, which spread to the private sector, fuelled the
monetary expansion and inflation. Subsidies and grants to parastatals and public services increased. It was state policy to try to moderate inflation by exchange rate appreciation. This policy was endorsed by the Anti-Inflation Task Force. The result of these policies was that balance of payments constraints became effective far earlier than anyone foresaw.

The seeming paralysis of the Gowon regime, its inability to control the economy or discipline state governors and its postponement of the return to civil rule, all contributed to its downfall. There was, too, a perception on the part of the northern intelligentsia that too much power rested in the south with the permanent secretaries in Lagos. Together with its military allies, it worked to overthrow General Gowon. Some of these elements were to reappear in the politics of the military coup that overthrew President Shagari.

With popular support the new regime embarked on a burst of activity. It set up a time-table for return to civil rule. New states were created, local government reforms introduced, trade unions reformed, and an incomes policy introduced. There was a second round of indigenisation, unforeseen by its original promoters, in response to dissatisfaction with the first round which had favoured a few wealthy individuals and had been biased toward Lagos and the Western states. The civil service was purged and executive power shifted to the Cabinet Office and Army Chief of Staff. This speeded up the movement of senior civil servants and technocrats from the public sector to more lucrative, higher status positions in the private sector. Attempts to shore up the public sector by a ban on private practice were ineffective. These factors contributed to a decline in administrative efficiency which had started with the rapid expansion of the state and its increased responsibilities.

When oil revenue fell in 1977 and 1978 (due partly to the government’s oil price policy), the government failed to cut back state expenditure and imports quickly enough to prevent a sharp decline in reserves. External loans worth public borrowing from international banks based on the security of N1.7bn were secured for balance of payments support. This marked the beginning of substantial public borrowing from international banks based on the security of publicly owned oil reserves.

The National Party of Nigeria

The immediate origin of the ruling National Party of Nigeria (NPN) lay in the National Movement within the Constituent Assembly. It was made up of old and new politicians, professionals and businessmen. Power within the party lay in the north and southern elements were co-opted via negotiation into the party. Within the northern group, there was a division between the intelligentsia and the older feudal and commercial elements that were close to President Shagari. The political fragmentation of the north was further complicated by the fact that after the elections of 1979, four states and the governorship of Kaduna state were in opposition hands.

The party was not held together by a clear and distinct ideology, but by a careful distribution of office and rewards to regions, groups and individuals. A more appropriate name for the party would have been the Party of National Patronage (PNP). The principle of zoning which the party adopted promised the equitable distribution of offices amongst the various constituencies in return for the mobilisation of support for the party. It was understood that the Presidency would
rotate amongst the three major ethno-linguistic groups. Zoning had its counterpart in the constitutional principle of federal character which was an important addition to the political vocabulary. This was an attempt to secure the even, though not necessarily equitable, distribution of federal office and resources throughout the nation. The aim was to moderate the struggle for control at the centre, prevent domination by any particular group, and thus promote political stability. Among the areas to which the principle was to be applied were the election of the President, the formation of political parties, the composition of the cabinet, the recruitment of the armed forces and the establishment of Federal Commissions and Councils.

National patronage as a form of representation and a means of distribution had important consequences. First it gave the party greater national support than any of the old regional parties of the First Republic. Though the elections did not give the party an absolute majority in the National Assembly, it did manage to secure the votes of important minority groups in Benue, Rivers and Cross River states and elsewhere. Second, it meant that distributive issues dominated over policy issues and ensured that the party never developed any distinctive programme. Third, the presence of powerful political patrons and wealthy individuals had serious consequences for party discipline, political unity and presidential power. The president was constrained by the requirements of party patronage in making ministerial selections. This led to poor appointments. At mid-term only two ministers were replaced and the cabinet was enlarged to 45 ministers with at least two from each state. The system also spawned powerful individuals who as ministers, senators and party financiers began to monopolise areas of state patronage.

An important feature of the NPN was the support it received from many of the most wealthy businessmen in the country. They were active as members of the national executive of the party, as trustees, as officers of the state executive councils and as financiers. What was the character of this business class, why was it involved in politics and what were the consequences for the party?

It is hazardous to generalise about a group with such diverse origins, sources of capital and identities. They tended to be involved in commerce, finance, real estate and construction rather than in production. Many were dependent on state patronage and favours for accumulation and lacked independent sources of wealth. Enterprises were often diversified, in sole ownership, and employed kin or clients with little corporate structure or management. This was an acquisitive class struggling for wealth and status through the maintenance of large personal networks, consumption, title taking, and educational and religious philanthropy.

Members of such a class have a strong propensity to engage in politics or even to enter it on a full time basis. This is explained by their need to promote their interests at all levels of the state and party apparatus. Much time and energy is spent in building up personal networks. This is partly a drive to secure state contracts and administrative favours. It is also a defensive operation to guard property and business interests against rival predators and the whims of those who exercise state power in an economy where private property is not legally secure, state intervention is rife and a state governor can ruin a business overnight.

The nationwide support given by businessmen to the NPN is explained by the pattern of state patronage that evolved in the 1970s. First, there was an enormous increase in federal resources to be dispensed from the centre and an expansion of
federal activities within each state. Second, the scale of many business operations had expanded beyond the confines of the old regions. Businessmen could not therefore afford to rely solely on local patronage. They often gave support to more than one party in order to minimize the risk to their operations. Among the important businessmen who supported NPN and who were resident in opposition states were Sir Joseph Nwankwo and Mathias Ugochukwu in Anambra state, Nnana Kalu in Imo state, Chiefs Ashamu and Abiola in Ogun state and Isiyaku Rabiu and Garba Inuwa in Kano state.

Such national support does not mean that local capital was somehow organisationally aggregated at the national level, or that the party represented a national bourgeoisie. The latter term suggests a coherent, productive class of capital and a continuity in property ownership that did not exist.

As Dudley noted, the distinctive feature of the NPN manifesto was the party’s promise of more of the same. When pressed on the absence of an explicit ideology, party spokesmen would turn to the constitution where there was provision for a mixed economy. This meant in effect support for the status quo. The state was to own and manage the major sectors of the economy exclusively. Any change in the existing composition of the major sectors required legislative approval. Although no well defined economic programme or philosophy emerged, the party had a business orientation that stopped well short of being a market oriented, free enterprise strategy. This is not surprising in a society where the limits to individual business success are commonly seen to depend not on the forces of market competition or government regulation, but on political connections and state patronage. The extent to which the constitution guaranteed freedom of private enterprise as a legally enforceable right was much less than in the United States. The stress was on the duties of the state towards the individual, rather than on the rights of the individual. The NPN manifesto stated that:

Nigerians should be encouraged by themselves and in cooperation with foreign enterprise and finance to take the leading role in the manufacturing sector of the economy. To further this objective it will be the fundamental policy of the party if voted into power to encourage, protect and induce foreign capital into Nigeria so that it may contribute to the sound development of the national economy, the improvement of the balance of payments and the introduction of advanced technology into the country.

As we shall see, the conditions for new investment by foreign capital did not become more favourable. A concerted policy in this direction was beyond the capacity of the party. So too was any consistent line with respect to state involvement in the economy.

The control of eleven states in the Federation by opposition parties did not fundamentally alter the pattern of patronage and distributive policy outlined above. Most of the differences between the centre and the states concerned not policy, but questions of authority and the division of financial responsibilities. The main exceptions were in Kaduna and Kano states held by the Peoples Redemption Party (PRP) and in Lagos state controlled by the UPN. Here class politics brought a number of issues into the open. The PRP had mass support from the petit bourgeois and farmers. If Governor Balarabe Musa had not been stymied by a hostile legislature that finally succeeded in impeaching him, a more radical redistributive programme would have been implemented. Kaduna state led the early moves to abolish the poll and cattle taxes. The allocation of plots in Kaduna was revoked and a host of VIPs were affected. Similar moves to right abuses in the allocation of rural
land were blocked by the House of Assembly and by local councils controlled by the opposition. A move to prohibit the hoarding of essential foodstuffs was also blocked. The government held up plans to extend the World Bank Funtua agricultural scheme to the whole state on the grounds that it was under the control of foreign personnel who were paid enormous salaries. This was the only direct challenge to these projects by a state government.

In Lagos state, Governor Jakande was widely acknowledged as a successful governor who had popular support. His capacity to deliver the goods, together with improved financial management, were no doubt related to the fact that Lagos was the only state able to generate more than half its revenues internally. The state housing scheme was manifestly superior and less costly than the federal one. A determined drive to extend state schooling amongst poorer sections of the population succeeded. Education policy led to conflict with the Catholic Archbishop of Lagos who defended the right of the propertied classes to private schooling, a right that was later upheld in the courts.

**Macro-Economic Management**

*Expansion:* By the end of 1980, foreign exchange reserves stood at ₦5.1bn. This was due in part to the import control measures taken in 1978 and the import inspection scheme. It was also the result of a rise in the price of oil. Revenue collected by the Federal government rose from ₦12.2bn. (79/80) to ₦15.2 bn in 1980.

The build up of surpluses in the external and internal accounts set in motion pressures to expand state expenditures and liberalise imports. The slow recovery of domestic demand stemmed from the fact that the new regime wished to make its own contract awards as well as from protracted discussion of the budget appropriations in the legislature. By the end of 1980, the expansion was well underway. The 1981 budget was expansionary and contributed to large scale deficit financing (₦3.1bn from the Central Bank). Officially, the rate of inflation increased from 10% in 1980 to 21% in 1981. At the very moment when the expenditure expansion gathered momentum, however, oil revenues were checked and started to decline. This coincidence quickly turned the surpluses on internal and external accounts into deficits.

President Shagari and his advisers were clearly aware of the earlier oil boom and its disastrous economic consequences. The President stated in the 1980 budget speech that ‘the mere fact that we are currently experiencing rising crude oil prices should not be taken as a signal for the kind of import liberalisation of 1975-77’. Yet the liberalisation of imports began with the 1980 budget. The external account moved sharply into deficit in 1981 with a record level of imports ₦12.9bn) and a reserve loss of ₦3.1bn for that year.

Where did the pressures to expand state expenditures come from? First, there were the general pressures associated with a centralised, rental form of income. Second, political payoffs and rewards contributed to the expansion of state employment at all levels. Third, there were additional costs associated with the Presidential system, the legislature and the police. One of the first actions of the legislators was to vote themselves salary increases and large fringe benefits. As a result, any legitimacy gained from the electoral process was rapidly eroded. Law and order was a priority for the administration. The police force was expanded and new
equipment and para-military training introduced. Close links between the police and the ruling party developed and the party later came to rely on the police for information and help in the rigging of elections. The priority given to the police was resented in the army and its political role made it unpopular with the population at large. Fourth, there were large project expenditures that were often grossly inflated. Large expenditures were incurred by the geopolitical decision to build a new Federal capital at Abuja. Finally, there were wage pressures to which we will return.

The 1982 budget was a travesty and totally irresponsible. It effectively masked an extremely serious economic situation which could be foreseen by mid-1981 in the loss of reserves and the deficit financing of state expenditure. The level of government indebtedness to the financial sector rose from N2.3bn in June 1981 to N6.8bn by February 1982. Current expenditure estimates in the budget were almost double their 1981 level. One consequence was that the government failed to keep its own target of a 30% ceiling on credit expansion by the banks. The expansion of public sector borrowing had the effect of squeezing out private borrowers.

The government was apparently hoping that the oil market would turn up for the better. However, slack conditions in the international oil market put pressure on the authorities to reduce the price of oil or lose customers. (Nigerian oil sales were particularly sensitive to price because of the high quality of Nigerian crude and the presence of many third party buyers on short term contracts). A price reduction was resisted in favour of solidarity with OPEC and there was a rapid fall in oil sales from 1.8m b/d in January 1982 to 0.7m b/d in March. At one point Saudi Arabia and Kuwait successfully applied pressure on Mobil and Texaco to keep lifting Nigerian oil.

Externally, the failure to control the current account led to reserve loss and a build up of international debt through syndicated loans for specific projects. External public debt rose steadily from N3.3bn in 1978 to N14.7bn at the end of 1982. This latter figure included N2bn of debt incurred by state governments which had started to borrow abroad in 1980. Under the constitution, the federal government had a responsibility to monitor and control this debt, but there is no indication that it had done so. When the foreign exchange crisis came to a head in April 1982, the states were given a ceiling of N200m and a ban on new loans was imposed for two years. During 1982, Nigeria withdrew its final entitlement from the IMF. By the end of the year borrowing on the syndicated loan market had dwindled to a trickle. The exhaustion of Nigeria’s credit worthiness stemmed from the failure to control the current account deficit, the build up of short term trade debts, administrative problems and the tightening of the international market that followed the Mexican debt crisis. The new stringency was signalled by the failure to raise loans for the rail project from Port Harcourt to Makurdi.

Stabilisation Measures April 1982-January 1984: The loss of reserves prompted emergency stabilisation measures in April 1982. Advance deposits for imports, increases in import duties, and a review of import licenses were introduced. There was also reorganisation of the customs service and closure of private jetties in an attempt to reduce smuggling. Planned cuts in public expenditure amounted to 40%. These cuts were across the board without priorities. In addition there were increases in excise duties, interest rates and petrol prices.

These measures were not successful in controlling the level of imports or the
pressures on foreign exchange reserves. This was partly because there was a large volume of goods on open general licence under short term trade credit. There was also speculation against the naira with heavy over-invoicing of imports as a means of capital flight. The Central Bank resorted to holding foreign exchange reserves constant as the volume of trade arrears rose from ₦2.2bn at the end of 1982 to ₦4.4bn at the end of 1983.

In January 1983 a further round of stabilisation measures was introduced aimed at cutting imports and government expenditure. Tariffs were raised and over 250 goods placed on licence. In April, negotiations were opened with IMF. This helped Nigeria secure refinancing agreements in July and September which converted a total of about ₦1.5bn of arrears on letters of credit into medium term loans. A small unpublicised loan was also secured from Saudi Arabia. Agreement with the IMF was not reached because of disagreement over devaluation. Devaluation had little support in Nigeria though Alison Ayida and Professor Aboyade publicly argued in its favour.

Inflation accelerated to over 50% in 1983. This was due to shortages of goods as imports declined and industrial output fell, and to deficit financing. Bank credit to the public sector expanded by 50% in 1983. This was the major influence behind the high rate of monetary expansion in 1983. But for the compulsory advance deposit scheme for imports (which froze bank assets) monetary expansion would have been very much higher. A further contributory factor to inflation was the inflationary expectations that developed prior to the elections in August 1983. To counter inflationary pressures the President set up a pre-election task force under Adamu Ciroma to import essential commodities. ₦476m was spent by the task force but many supplies did not get through by election time and some goods were still arriving when the government fell.

The basic failure to control imports and relieve pressure on the balance of payments in 1982 was repeated in 1983, despite attempts to control trade and payments more vigorously. At the root of the economic incompetence of the Shagari regime was a political failure that made the administration of a tighter economic regime impossible. To quote a Central Bank report,

even in the face of mounting short term trade debts the Central Bank was put under increased pressure throughout the year to open letters of credit at very short notice for such Federal government agencies as the Nigeria Police Force, Federal Electoral Commission and the Presidential Task Force on Rice.

As a result of these pressures, the foreign exchange budget for 1983 which was ₦7.2bn was exceeded by 50%. Similar pressures made the administration of import licenses impossible. Import licenses were an important source of funds for party political patronage. On occasions they appear to have been distributed to the states and then sold by governors to wealthy businessmen who supported the ruling party. The total value of import licenses issued in 1983 without reference to the licence committee was ₦682m.

One result of the political incompetence and economic mismanagement was the hostility of large corporate business interests. Originally big business had favoured civil rule as it was thought that it would bring easier access to government and more consultation over policy. The Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN) became highly critical of the government, campaigning against the Stabilisation Act and
attacking the allocation of foreign exchange and the management of import licenses.

Illegal transactions flourished and the energies of state officials were increasingly taken up with policing real or imagined abuses of the trade and payments controls. Movement of goods and currency over the borders was encouraged by the overvaluation of currency, the protective regime, the acceleration of inflation and the absence of effective administrative control. Large profits were made by smugglers who could get access to foreign exchange by currency smuggling, by the export of smuggled goods like refined petroleum products, fertilisers and food, by commissions paid abroad, or by exchange at the official rate at the Central Bank. Such activities depressed local industry, cut government revenue and foreign exchange earnings and made the economies of neighbouring countries like Benin and Cameroun dependent on the level of illegal transactions. The large scale recycling of the naira also contributed to a loss of monetary control by the Central Bank.

How far did the second term of president Shagari promise any more effective administration or change of policy now that the NPN had a majority in The National Assembly and controlled twelve states? Belatedly, a Project Review Committee to establish priorities among public sector projects was set up on the advice of the World Bank. The 1984 budget gave priority to the Liquefied Natural Gas and Petrochemical projects. If the President's economic advisers, Mr Onosode and Mr Asiodu, were more impressive than their predecessors, the new ministerial appointments inspired no confidence. There is no reason to suppose that the institutional and administrative capacity for economic management and decision making would have improved radically, or corruption curtailed, given the nature of the NPN as a party of national patronage and spoils. The 1984 budget, announced just prior to the coup, contained more expenditure cuts and imports controls and a commitment to a cut in subsidies and privatisation, measures that were in line with IMF policies. Nothing was said about devaluation.

Policy Making: Policy making exhibited a high level of incoherence and lack of co-ordination between different power centres and interests under President Shagari (Ministries of Finance, Industries, and Commerce, Central Bank, Budget Bureau, the Economic Advisers). When stabilisation became essential, there was some improvement and an economic stabilisation and implementation committee was set up in the Office of the President which included the Governor of the Central Bank. The economic advisers had no perceptible impact on policy making other than a defence of the government's record. The Central Bank became bogged down in detailed regulation and control and could not play an effective policy or monitoring role. The Legislature did not initiate any economic legislation, nor did it reform or rationalise existing legislation. Decisions on the budgets and other issues were delayed by the insistence that the two houses consider everything separately before arriving at a consensus. In general, senators appeared to be much more interested in promoting their personal interests and lobbying for them in the ministries than on national priorities. Much time was taken up by their love of theatre and rhetoric. The various committees of the houses could call for evidence and so promote consultation and debate over economic issues. Thus considerable publicity was given to the views of Ayida on devaluation and Daginone on the steel industry. In general, however, committee work was not reflected in subsequent discussion in the House of Representatives and the Senate.
In 1983, a Committee of Experts was set up by the National Economic Council to advise on economic policy. Like its predecessor, the Anti-Inflation Task Force of 1975, it made a multitude of recommendations with no clear priorities. The key issue of devaluation was avoided, just as the earlier Task Force had avoided confronting the growth of state expenditures. The impression conveyed by both reports is that they were commissioned to give the impression that something was being done, and that it was never intended that they should provide a serious critique of government economic policy.

The Public Sector

Opposition to the continued expansion of the public economy began to develop towards the end of the military period. It was argued that the state should concentrate on the essential functions of providing infrastructure and law and order, functions that it manifestly failed to perform. This view was fuelled by the inefficiency and waste associated with public bodies, by some conspicuous failures of public entrepreneurship and by private sector experience of state involvement in joint enterprises. There was also a fear that state participation in some enterprises like banks could lead to politicisation under civil rule. In addition, large companies resented a decree that obliged them to provide housing for their employees.

Under President Shagari, no consistent policies on public ownership, state regulation or public agencies emerged. New public agencies were set up to promote Presidential initiatives through by-passing existing ministries (e.g. the Federal Housing Authority, Green Revolution Committee, Rice Task Force etc.). The expansion of state enterprises and state investment was checked. This resulted, however, more from a loss of bureaucratic power and a shortage of funds, than from any deliberate policy. Commercial and merchant banks were set up without state participation. Price control was abolished, but the Nigerian National Supply Company retained. Federal holdings in newspapers were not sold off. Petro-chemicals were opened to Nigerian private capital. The federal government took no equity in the proposed light commercial vehicle assembly plants though it did dictate their location. Earlier investment in assembly plants had been expected to yield a profit and speed up the transfer of technology. Experience now showed that the profits of the Volkswagen and Peugeot plants were realised abroad through transfer pricing, and that the presence of federal officials on the boards did not increase federal control or ensure the transfer of technology.

The Onosode commission on parastatals was a response to dissatisfaction with the performance of public bodies and their lack of autonomy. The latter had been further eroded by the Udoji commission which created a unified salary and grading structure for the whole public sector. The report aimed to break the pattern of large state subsidies and tight ministerial control by giving the enterprises more autonomy in their recruitment, pricing and salary structures, and by insisting on commercial operation for some. It also recommended privatisation starting with the partial sale of Nigeria Airways equity to the public. Privatisation did not go ahead, and a private members bill in the National Assembly that sought to break up the Nigeria Airways monopoly was defeated. The Onosode report did lead to the revision of salaries and wages to more competitive levels in some corporations and the appointment of non-civil servants as board members. It also put privatisation on the agenda. It was, however, not until 1985 under the Buhari government that plans for state divestment in agriculture were announced.
Most of the problems with public bodies and projects remained with poor management, low productivity and the absence of accountability. Corporations were surrounded by webs of patronage involving directors, distributors, landlords and retainers, which were sufficient to choke off efficiency. Board members were appointed in compensation for the loss of elective political office. A further constraint on the operation of federal agencies was the principle of federal character which adversely affected location, recruitment and quantity.

Another area where state control and regulation proved controversial was the operation of the Land Use Decree. The Decree abolished private ownership of land by transferring it to the state. A ceiling was imposed on holdings of undeveloped urban land of one-half hectare. The decree was intended to promote access to land by the state and individuals by clarifying and protecting rights in the use of land. Under the decree, the state was not obliged to pay compensation for the acquisition of land. The decree was opposed by traditional rulers, and the Oba of Lagos described it as the final blow to the chieftancy institution in Lagos. Opposition to the decree also came from banks. The main problem was that it placed great power in the hands of state governors who could award and revoke certificates of occupancy, set rents and approve mortgages. This power was frequently abused. More generally, the operation of the decree created uncertainty and delay over the recognition of land rights.

The Centre and the States
Under President Shagari there was a further decline in financial discipline and budgeting at the state level, a trend that had been encouraged in the 70s by easy access to federal funds. The states consistently budgeted for large deficits and the deficits increased as their economic plight deepened. Current expenditures quickly accelerated out of control as governors inflated state employment and legislatures increased their salaries and perks. Some states budgeted for free medical services and free education at all levels, as well as for the proliferation of polytechnics and universities. Financial abuses were common. In a number of states, governors set aside security votes for their personal use outside the scrutiny of state legislatures. In Kwara state, Governor Attah made payments of N100,000 each to 42 legislators and N2m to himself. In Imo state, Governor Mbakwe innovated with a budget procedure that included loans under current revenues and still managed to budget for large deficits. The result was bankruptcy and dept.

From mid-1981, large arrears in the payment of state employees had built up. By the end of 1981, seven states could not pay teachers. The result was strikes, absenteeism and the closure of entire teaching services for prolonged periods. Civil services were severely affected and public services were disrupted or completely paralysed. In some states, salaries payable from consolidated funds were stopped. Projects were halted and there was a serious decay of the physical infrastructure in some states.

Large internal and external debts built up. After the government fell, the following figures for state government debt were announced.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Nm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internal Loans</td>
<td>4729.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contractual Obligations</td>
<td>6597.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Debt (Drawn)</td>
<td>1968.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>13295.38</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
These figures were later revised upwards as individual states announced their debt. Rivers state, which under Governor Okilo was one of the most profligate and mismanaged of states, announced a debt of ₦1.3bn. Although under the constitution, the federal government had a responsibility to monitor and control the level and structure of public debt, its power and leverage over the states had not been used. There was of course little prospect of cooperation from opposition governors who were intensely jealous of their powers and struggled to resist federal control. The nine opposition governors, who were joined by the three NPP governors after the breakdown of the NPN/NPP accord, tried to coordinate their position. Apart from conflict over financial responsibilities and revenue allocation, the main areas of conflict were the role of the Presidential Liaison Officers, the powers of the police, the establishment and use of TV and radio stations, and education where federal agencies struggled to maintain control. After the states had become bankrupt, the President found them easier to control.

At the local government level, councils remained firmly under the political and financial control of the state governments. No new elections were held, and elected bodies were replaced by appointed ones. Some states withheld funds that were due from the Federation Account and from state revenues. There was a dramatic increase in the number of local government authorities under civil rule, and this increase in employment absorbed any revenues that were received. This multiplication is explained by the pressures of political patronage, the demands for sharing on the basis of "federal character", and the fact that local governments, like states, are funded directly from federal statutory sources.

As we have argued, the current fiscal structure and system of revenue allocation are an excellent recipe for strong movements for state creation. Until the first months of 1983, the President and the ruling party openly encouraged state creation movements to gain support for the NPN in the forthcoming elections. This also helped to divert attention from pressing national policy issues. President Shagari stated that state creation was "the single most important desire of most Nigerians today... it had created more popular interest than in Government external or economic policies". The Senate authorised 30 requests for new states as valid. It was only an impossible timetable prior to the elections, and the total bankruptcy of the nation, that put paid to the movements and prevented a further capitulation to distributive politics and economic disaster.

**Labour and Wage Policy**

The Shagari government had much trouble controlling trade unions. Its labour policies were often confused, and it procrastinated and refused to take the initiative on wage demands that were outstanding from the time it came to power. Unions managed to exert considerable upward pressure on wages and fringe benefits. These gains, however, were quickly eroded in real terms by inflation and unemployment as the recession mounted.

The reorganisation of the trade unions under the military was intended to provide greater state control and a more responsible leadership. In the event, the leadership that emerged was more radical and left inclined. Another objective, with the introduction of a Productivity, Prices and Incomes Board in 1977, was to avoid the previous pattern of large periodic wage and salary awards in the public sector, which had brought such chaos with the Udoji awards. The old pattern was broken but this did not bring industrial peace.
From the outset, the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) argued for a ₦300 a month minimum wage which was a 300% increase for the lower paid. This demand was fuelled by a long period of inflation and wage freeze under the military. According to the President in his 1980 budget speech, 'the existing policy of wage freeze was to be replaced by guidelines for a return to free collective bargaining within certain limits... in order that this does not give rise to another round of inflationary pressures increases will be related to increases in productivity within a given industry.' However, just prior to the budget, the government had entered into bilateral talks with union leaders and agreed upon a ₦100 a month minimum national wage. This alarmed employers' who had already restructured employers' organisations on an industry wide basis to match the new NLC structure. In some industries, agreements on fringe benefits had already been negotiated through collective bargaining. There followed a series of inconclusive tripartite meetings that led eventually to a general strike lasting two days. The strike ended on the understanding that the National Assembly would vote on the issue. Both manufacturers and state governors lobbied strongly against the NLC demand. The Assembly voted for a ₦125 minimum wage. This was in addition to increases in pensions, rent and transport allowances that had already been secured. The award comfortably exceeded the government's own guidelines and led it to make payments to the states to cover additional wage costs as had happened in the aftermath of the Udoji award.

Later the NLC managed to resist attempts by the government to establish a rival trade union movement and a move to abolish the automatic check off system which provided the NLC with funds. It also succeeded in speeding up the payments of arrears to state and local government employees by threatening a strike at the time of the 1983 election. The period saw many strikes and protests over the implementation of the Onosode Report, payment of arrears and retrenchment. The major response of the government to the recession was the expulsion of alien workers which was a popular move for an election year. The expulsions in January and February 1983 amounted to two million persons, perhaps a half of them Ghanaians. The government accused them of criminality and threatening internal security. The alien workers had been drawn into Nigeria by the oil boom and pushed from their countries of origin by economic conditions and drought. The majority were unregistered and many were members of a menial underclass in petty trading, small scale industry, construction, prostitution and agricultural labour. This group undercut Nigerian workers and were the objects of hostility. The expulsion order was directed at this group rather than the professionals and teachers who were legal immigrants. The expulsion, which was contrary to the spirit of the ECOWAS protocol damaged Nigeria's reputation in West Africa.

**Industry and Foreign Investment**

The recession brought a severe decline in industrial output and employment. It underlined the high cost, import dependent nature of Nigerian industrialisation which had been encouraged by the pattern of incentives prevailing in the 1970s. The decline in the aggregate index for manufacturing began in mid-1982. Some industries like textiles, where protection had proved inadequate in the face of large scale smuggling, had already experienced declines with plant closures. In 1983, the aggregate index fell by 20.7% with declines ranging from 13% in paints to 54% in electronics assembly. In the construction industry, employment fell from 300,233 in 1980 to 112,579 in April 1984. The inability effectively to control the allocation of
import licenses and foreign exchange as the volume of imports declined contributed to industrial decline.

The NPN favoured foreign investment, but the net inflow of foreign capital remained at a low level throughout the four year period. International capital has been reluctant to invest in the Nigerian market rather than sell to it. A joint committee was set up by the Nigerian and American governments in 1978 to encourage American investment in Nigerian agriculture. Six years later, very little investment had materialised from the committee’s activities. Repeated relaxation of the indigenisation decree, to allow increased foreign equity participation, has also met with little response. In 1983 the chairman of the Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Board complained publicly that the Board had been rendered impotent by lack of support from the government. Among the reasons for the reluctance of foreign investors are the high infrastructure costs (electricity, water, roads) a heavy bureaucratic presence with a high capacity for obstruction and delay, and the inconsistent and unpredictable nature of government policy. These factors certainly operated in the period under review. In addition there was the difficulty of realising profits in foreign currency because of exchange controls, and the problem of finding Nigerian partners for joint ventures without attracting participation by the Nigerian state. Interpretation of the indigenisation decree was also important in creating uncertainty and delays. Were the companies that had sold equity to Nigerians under the decree to be treated as foreign or Nigerian companies for purposes of fresh investment? To treat them as foreign companies would involve a dilution of the foreign equity. This uncertainty held up a major investment between the UAC and the Matsushita electronics company of Japan.

**Agriculture**

Official aggregate production figures, which are extremely unreliable, indicate some improvement in the output performance of agriculture over 1980-82 (2.5% p.a. av.). In 1983 output declined sharply by 9.4%. Overall this suggests further declines in per capita food consumption, its incidence depending on the distribution of purchasing power. Purchases of cocoa, palm kernels and cotton by the commodity boards continued to fall. Food imports took 17% of total imports by value (1980-82 av.) compared with 8.4% a decade earlier (1970-72 av.) and had become a heavy burden on the balance of payments.

Overall, large state expenditure on agriculture has shown a high capacity to generate institutions and projects with large, wasteful and corrupt bureaucracies, and a correspondingly low capacity to develop effective delivery of appropriate inputs to a sector where price movements have been favourable. Much of the rationale for public expenditure and intervention lies not in its capacity to increase output, or control markets or farmers, but in the bureaucracy it employs, and the power over state resources that it gives. The enormous publicity given to the Green Revolution strategy by the Shagari government did not involve any change in the policies inherited from the military. It coincided with a rise in share of federal capital expenditure for both agriculture and water resources, with the latter maintaining its dominant position. In 1980, input subsidies for agriculture were estimated at ₦500m, or 10% of current federal expenditure. Market intervention by the Commodity Boards has been limited, yet by June 1984 the Boards owed the Central Bank ₦637m. In 1982, the Grains Board undertook its first substantial purchase of maize (40,000 tons) involving a producer subsidy of ₦40m. The River Basin Development Authorities (RBDAs) which promoted large scale irrigation
schemes received a larger share of federal resources than did the World Bank schemes which concentrated on input delivery. The RBDAs were plagued by gross financial mismanagement, low output, and high subsidies and foreign exchange costs. More efficient projects with potential foreign exchange savings, like the Risonpalm oil palm estate in Rivers State, faced severe financial constraints. It is unclear how far the World Bank projects have succeeded in achieving a sustained increase in foodcrop production through the more intensive use of land.

Rice imports were the subject of much controversy and came to epitomise in the public mind the corruption of the regime. From less than 50,000 tons in 1976, rice imports rose to 830,000 tons in 1982. Imports are subject to cycles of expansion and contraction as a result of conflicting pressures from rice merchants, rice farmers, consumers and state officials. The result is frequent tariff and quota changes with sharp price movements. In 1979, the military restricted the rice quota to protect farmers, and the next year there were substantial price increases and pressures for liberalisation. Attention focused on the license holders, many of whom were senate members. The President responded by setting up a rice Task Force under Umaru Dikko. This provided an effective means of giving party political patronage, and the need for party funds led to a rise in imports above the level needed to cover the domestic deficit.

**Corruption**

Bureaucratic corruption and the large scale privatisation of public funds intensified under civil rule. Corruption was an important aspect of political life and came to dominate discussion of public affairs. It was also a central mechanism in resource allocation. It was not a new phenomenon and it was widely held that the military taught the politicians how to do it. There was a rich, unbroken line of opportunities for corruption that stretched from the war time army contracts, through the cement scandal, Universal Primary Education contracts, FESTAC, to the Abuja contracts. Contract inflation was propelled by a process in which state officials exacted a toll for their cooperation, intermediaries provided information and access, and companies competed to influence state decisions. A relatively free press and official inquiries ensured that some of this was documented and publicised. When General Gowon fell from power, governors, commissioners and bureaucrats forfeited some of their ill-gotten properties and monies. Inquiries did not, however, extend to the accumulation of assets overseas where a significant proportion of the fruits of corruption are held.

The behaviour of the venal legislators set the moral tone for the regime. Their priorities on taking office were to move their accommodation from Badagry Road to expensive, more central apartments on Victoria Island and increase their salaries and perquisites of office. Later, senators were involved in a scandal over the allocation of licenses to import rice. Though the constitution made the declaration of assets by public officers mandatory, the enabling bill was never passed through the legislature. Moral exhortation and admonition by the President had no effect, neither did the National Reorientation Committee set up in 1982. If the President managed to give the appearance of standing above corruption, he also seemed to condone it by his inaction and the appointments he made.

The need to fund party political patronage, especially as the elections approached in August 1983, intensified corruption, and made it more visible at a time when the economy was in sharp decline. Under party influence, corruption became more systematic in areas like import licensing, the importation of rice, and inflated public
contracts. Over invoicing of imports, illegal foreign exchange dealing, smuggling and fictitious payrolls were commonplace.

Within federal agencies, corruption was rife. The following list is far from complete. An audit examination at Nigerian External Telecommunications traced financial abuses back to 1978 with N53m unaccounted for. Maladministration of the Federal housing scheme grew into a major scandal with N43m missing. According to the chairmen of the investigating panels, the board members of the Federal Mortgage Bank 'acted in concert to render the bank impotent by systematic plundering and looting of its treasury', and at the Delta Steel Company there was 'stupendous fraud'. Officials of the National Youth Service Corps were found to have siphoned off over N16m. Widespread corruption was discovered at the Abuja Capital Development Authority. Those responsible were detained but never prosecuted. The illegal export of refined petroleum products cost the country over one million dollars a day. Renegotiation of the Jaguar jet contract with British Aerospace saved N30m in kickbacks.

The adverse impact of corruption and lack of public accountability on budget deficits and balance of payments cannot be measured. But there can be no doubt that it was substantial. Other things being equal, such levels of corruption under a civilian government would not have been tolerated had state revenues been derived from internal sources rather than from an external source like oil.

Some Conclusions on Civil Rule
The combination of a high degree of administrative and financial centralisation within a federal framework that emerged in the 1970s, the rental nature of income from oil with the freedom from responsibility it gives, and strong distributive pressure on the centre required a strong and purposeful government to maintain stability. This was not to be. Under these structural conditions and universal suffrage there emerged a clientilist politics in which the constitution of political dispute centred on the distribution of state patronage and on relations between the centre and the states. The NPN came to power through a loose coalition of patrons and political brokers who could mobilise votes through vertical political alliances. It was a weak and undisciplined party incapable of providing leadership or a sense of direction. Its major concern was the distribution of state patronage on a national basis. This, together with the political power of commercial elements ensured that no clear issues or policies emerged from political competition.

Tendencies that were apparent in the economic expansion of the 1970s intensified under civil rule. They included the lack of financial discipline and control in the public economy, the privatisation of public funds and the expansion of state employment. The power of the executive and the authority of the state were weakened. Economic management, policy making and implementation were exposed to the political processes of distributive demands, rental competition and state patronage. Such pressures overwhelmed any tendency for government to get closer to corporate business interests. These forces were also pervasive under military rule, but the military did generally manage to insulate executive authority more effectively against the intense drive for individual power and wealth that was directed at the state. The conclusion seems inescapable that democracy, or 'the rule of the politician', as Schumpeter aptly put it, contributed to a loss of political and economic control and hence retarded economic progress.

As we have seen, the regime failed completely to stabilise the economy when oil
revenues declined. State expenditure was not cut back sufficiently to prevent recourse to large scale deficit financing. Externally, equilibrium was not restored and international debt increased. The failure to exercise leverage over the state governments and the political pressure to ensure electoral victory in 1983 contributed disastrously to economic instability.

The costs of civil rule were very high. They included the costs of the presidency, an expensive legislature at federal and state levels, the cost of FEDECO, and the costly arithmetic of 'federal character'. There was, too, the cost of a politics, where large funds had to be mobilised by any serious contender for political office, leading to waste and unproductive forms of expenditure.

Keen electoral competition, the more representative character of the ruling party that largely removed the threat of sectional dominance which had plagued the politics of the First Republic, the constitutional provisions, and a free press did not protect the citizen against economic ruin, corruption on a grand scale and the abuse of police and judicial powers. Those commentators and analysts who from their geopolitical and cultural vantage points are quick to prescribe civil rule for Nigeria must inquire closely into the workings of the political system, its impact on the power of the state and its economic consequences.

The loss of economic control was the prime reason for the downfall of the regime. Heavy rigging in the elections contributed to its unpopularity, and there was particular resentment at the role of the police. After the re-election of President Shagari, the struggle for the presidential succession began in earnest and left the party badly divided.

The political dynamic for the coup came from the Kaduna Mafia and its military allies. The Mafia is an informal network of northern technocrats and professionals linked through ties of kinship, marriage, school and religion, many of whom have had experience in the northern public service. It came into being after the break up of the Northern Region and the demise of the politicians in order to promote northern interests at the regional and federal levels. It has functioned mainly through the power and patronage provided by control of a number of institutions like the New Nigerian Development Corporation, the New Nigerian, Radio and TV Kaduna and the Bank of the North. With the failure of its candidates to secure the Presidential nomination and the political fragmentation of the north, the Mafia had steadily lost power under President Shagari. The prospect of a President from the south alarmed them, and the mismangement of the economy directly affected their managerial interest in corporate business and state patronage. They were concerned to restore northern power, and with it, order and discipline to the economy.

The Buhari Regime and the Prospects for National Accumulation
The new regime was conservative and corrective in its orientation. The composition of the Supreme Military Council (SMC), and control of important ministries, was heavily weighted in favour of the northern states. Officers in retirement, many of whom had gone into business and who retained considerable influence in the army and beyond, openly supported the regime and a few took public appointments.

The military introduced a more authoritarian style of government with the War Against Indiscipline (WAI), press intimidation and military tribunals. The WAI
extolled the virtues of queueing, cleanliness and patriotism. One observer saw it as an attempt to turn Nigeria into a vast military parade ground. The military did not develop any ideological weapons to mobilise support, nor did they have an economic strategy of their own. The military elite that took power, and their allies in the Kaduna Mafia, were supporters of the National Party of Nigeria for most of its life. The stated aims of the regime were identical with those of the second Shagari administration. The quarrel with the politicians was not with their policies but with their failure to control the economy and the absence of public accountability. The objective was to improve the economy substantially and win the confidence of trading partners so that international credit would be restored. Until that time, political discussion and debate would have to wait.

The regime went some way to restoring financial discipline and the authority of the executive. There was greater cohesion and decisiveness in public policy. Greater control over the states was exercised by the military governors and the Cabinet Office under the Chief of Staff, Supreme Headquarters could oversee the ministries.

The regime, however, soon ran into opposition that went beyond the usual antagonism of elites to a military that indulges in promotions and salary awards once it takes power. A number of measures were taken to reduce the overall level of dissent. But this repression did not ensure stability. Indeed it contributed to serious divisions within the SMC that ultimately provoked a successful coup attempt which restored military unity and reduced the level of coercion and suspicion that had built up.

Under Decree two (State Security), persons could be arrested and detained without trial. Under this umbrella, the National Security Organisation (NSO) expanded its activities. Later the NSO came to be seen as an arm of the military, more specifically a pro-Buhari faction headed by the powerful Chief of Staff Supreme Headquarters, Major General Idiagbon and Internal Affairs Minister Magoro. Military officers were themselves put under surveillance by the NSO. The NSO was widely held to be behind the bungled kidnapping of Umaru Dikko from London. Among those held were Haroun Adamu and Rufai Ibrahim, both journalists associated with the Kano-based Sunday Triumph which had been in the forefront of the opposition to the NPN under President Shagari. Others detained without interrogation or trial included Balarabe Musa, the former PRP governor of Kaduna State, and the social critic Tai Solarin.

The manner in which the regime handled the detention and sentences of politicians who were held after the coup provoked hostility. Many resented the fact that former President Shagari was not tried and sentenced. Sentences were widely perceived to discriminate in favour of the northern states. The regime also took a great length of time to start investigations at the federal level. It was only well into 1985 that inquiries began into government ministries and FEDECO.

Professional groups were alienated by the regime. The military clashed with the Nigerian Bar Association and the Nigerian Medical Association. Academics were also alienated by threats to the universities. The National Association of Nigerian Students was banned. Trade unions were forced into submission by a strike ban, a freeze on wages and massive retrenchments in the public and private sectors. The only group, who appeared to flourish, and from whom the military mobilised support, were the traditional rulers.

Perhaps the measure that was most widely resented, and had the most serious
consequences in eroding goodwill for the regime, was Decree 4 (Protection Against False Information). Two Guardian (Lagos) journalists were held under the decree. Though the press was effectively muzzled, bitter criticism of the decree continued. The decree heightened the feeling that power had been arrogated by a small group of men who were deaf to currents of public opinion. The apparent bias of the regime to Northern interests, heightened ethnic, regional and religious differences. This led to accusations that 'federal character' was not being respected and intensified debate over the merits of confederation and dyarchy in the political future of the country. A number of ex-army officers were prominent in this debate. This alarmed the regime and it attempted to clamp down on all political discussion.

The immediate economic objective of the regime was to establish control over Nigeria's insatiable demand for imports and to further reduce state expenditure. Protection was rationalised with a reduction in nominal import duties and a pledge that the new rates would be maintained for three years. All items were placed under specific import licenses. The regime relied on the major trading houses for direct sales of essential commodities and tried to reduce margins by government-to-government purchase abroad.

Priority in the use of foreign exchange was given to servicing the external debt. The allocation of the residual amount implied priority for industry and a more protective stance towards domestic food production. Though the level of imports was reduced substantially, the distribution of import licenses remained very controversial.

Current and capital expenditures were reduced and education subsidies cut. There were severe cuts in public sector employment and redundancies in the private sector. A wage freeze was imposed, strikes banned and trade union influence much reduced. Real wages plummeted with inflation officially estimated at 40%, the highest figure on record.

The regime held out against a deal with the IMF. The idea was that if Nigeria could hold out for three hard years of domestic austerity, its short term liquidity problem would be solved, leaving it with a medium and long term debt profile that was less burdensome than that of the major Latin American debtors. Part of the strategy was to relieve the pressure on imports by a series of counter trade deals with Brazil, Austria, France and Italy, valued at about N2bn. These proved difficult to negotiate because the price of oil was falling. They were also open to the objections that oil was being bartered at a discount, and that large importers were favoured. When the regime fell in August 1985, only slow progress had been made with counter trade and with the refinancing of short term trade arrears. Official credit agencies, led by Britian's EGCD, rejected Nigerian proposals to reschedule officially insured debt in the absence of any agreement with the IMF.

The main stumbling block to agreement with the IMF was over the question of devaluation. Yet the argument for devaluation is really quite distinct from the desirability or otherwise of an IMF agreement. The main opposition to devaluation has come from the urban middle classes and commercial interests, precisely those groups who gained so much from the appreciation of the naira in the 1970s. They feared the erosion of their purchasing power, loss of subsidies, and less profitable commercial opportunities.

Among the common reasons advanced for not pursuing devaluation in Nigeria is the fact that the price of oil is fixed in dollar terms, so that export revenues would not
benefit from devaluation. This is correct, but it ignores the point that devaluation would encourage other exports in the long run.

It is on the import side that the main advantages of a gradual devaluation lie. Here it can make a contribution to reducing the pressure on the balance of payments in the long run. Devaluation provides a more effective means of controlling imports and capital flight than do direct controls over trade and capital movements. Devaluation would encourage industries to shift to a less import intensive pattern of investment and production. In addition, agriculture, which suffered adversely from exchange rate movements throughout the 1970s, would be better protected.

Underlying the oil economy are adverse long term trends in the non-oil economy that require attention. They have created a large deficit on the non-oil trade account which has increased Nigeria's dependence on external capital flows and led to a build up of external debt. There is an urgent need to counter these trends through exports and more effective import substitution in agriculture, manufactures and services. Unfortunately some major state investment projects like the steel and irrigation projects appear to be inefficient high cost producers that are likely to remain a drain on foreign exchange.

In manufactures it appears that the initial progress that was made in import substitution has been reversed. The enormous expansion of the market in the 1970s was accompanied by import liberalisation, currency appreciation and import penetration. There is little immediate prospect of manufactured exports apart from petro-chemicals and fertilisers which should be internationally competitive. The slow growth of agricultural output has contributed to high costs in the industrial sector through its impact on wage and raw material costs.

For food and raw materials, a deficit has also developed due to a rise in imports and a fall in the volume of exports that traditionally provided the surplus. Demand for food has increased rapidly with population growth and increases in income which raised per capita consumption of calories. There has also been a shift in diet away from starchy foods towards temperate foodstuffs and animal protein. The increase in local food production has not matched the growth of demand so a gap has developed. There are a number of areas where import substitution is feasible. These include sugar, rice, palm oil, maize, tea, fish, cotton and dairy products. Currently, under the pressure of acute foreign exchange shortages and a drastic decline in raw material imports, industrial capital had begun to acquire land in and invest in agro-based industries including plantations.

There is also a need to shift the fiscal base of the economy way from oil, raise tax pressure and increase savings. Increased non-oil tax revenues would improve government finances, and reduce the strong expenditure pressures associated with a centralised rental income. The incomes of Nigeria's richer citizens are scarcely taxed, and property taxes have hardly begun to be used. Sales taxes that are easier to collect have only been introduced in a minor way. The political question remains unanswered. Will taxation of the wealthy be possible?

At the state level, fiscal autonomy and savings could be improved by use of the provision for states to raise money on the Lagos market without federal government guarantee. Only one state has so far done this. Such market pressure is a far cry from the federal grants and the writing off of federal loans that has occurred in the past.

Whatever strategies emerge in the medium and long term — a more statist populist
path under military rule, a more determined strategy of growth through private enterprise, or continuity in economic policies, their success will depend on a far greater commitment by Nigerian governments to the productive allocation of private and public resources than has hitherto been the case. The frittering away of the investible surplus is at the heart of the present crises. This is essentially a political matter that cannot be solved simply by the ‘choice’ of the ‘right’ policies and prices. And it is likely to prove an intractable one given the character of the dominant classes, the historical experience of the state role in the economy, the relations of power and authority that inform it and the moral assumptions and expectations that surround it.


Bibliographic note


The relevance of the primitive accumulation of capital to the experience of the neo-colonies is explored by iyai for the case of Nigeria. He concludes that the classic understanding of this process requires expansion if it is to take account of situations where indigenous capital remains weak and lacks possibilities for accumulation through exploitation of external, less developed markets. Iyai contends that while an attempt was made in Nigeria to foster indigenisation through legislative means, in practice the fundamental method of approaching this goal has been corruption. Indeed he suggests that corruption in such circumstances becomes the logical, if not the only, means through which primitive accumulation proceeds.

Studies of the accumulation of capital are of fundamental importance for understanding the characteristic development of social formations. Indeed, Frank (1978:238) has asserted that, 'the process of capital accumulation is a, if not the, principal motor of modern history'. Marx was the first to offer the most systematic and adequate explanation of the general laws of capitalist accumulation and hence, also, of the development of capitalism. Most contributions since Marx have, however, continued to deal either with the general capitalist laws of development or with the dialectical relationship between development and under-development. In both cases, and except in a few instances, the result has been a glaring neglect of the characteristic application of the laws of capitalist accumulation in specific contexts and hence also of their characteristic developments. Yet, Marx (1867:670) specifically acknowledged that in different countries primitive accumulation 'assumes different aspects and runs through its various phases in different orders of succession, and at different periods'. Even more importantly, an understanding of the characteristic development of capitalism in specific contexts is fundamental to an explication of the kinds of action that will be required to transform these contexts.

This paper attempts to deal with what may be considered to be both a precondition and an essential element of capitalist development — primitive accumulation. An examination of its relevance to the experience of the neo-colonies suggests the need for expansion of the classic understanding of this concept.

**Primitive Accumulation of Capital (PAC): The Concept**

In conventional, classic Marxist theory, primitive accumulation of capital (PAC) refers both to the considerable masses of capital and labour power which form the starting point for the capitalist mode of production and to the methods by which these masses of capital and labour power are obtained. In both cases, the direct consequence is, on the one hand, the separation of the direct producer from the
means of production and his/her transformation into alienable wage labour and, on
the other hand, the emergence of the capitalist as the integrator of the worker's
labour power with the effects of his/her past labour and as the appropriator of
surplus value. Following Marx (1867), and Taylor (1979), it can be suggested that an
analysis primitive accumulation of capital involves examination of three separate
but highly interdependent phenomena:
a) How monetary capital comes to be accumulated in the hands of that section of
society which later and precisely because of this accumulation converts itself
into capitalists;
b) How the 'accumulated capital' comes to be converted into industrial,
commercial and other capital, in short how the process of accumulation leads to
the emergence and development of capitalists as both integrators of the labour
process and expropriators of the surplus value created thereafter; and
c) How direct producers come to be transformed into alienable wage labourers.

Elaborating on the first of these, Marx concluded that in the case of England the
sources of the monetary capital came principally from state deficit financing of the
'national debt', the theft and expropriation of crown, communal and church lands,
usury, the creation of a home market, the destruction of rural domestic and cottage
industry, the lowering of wages by acts of parliament, the intensive use of child
labour, the progressive fall in the value of precious metals, and finally, as well as
most importantly, the plunder and most callous, cruel and shameless exploitation of
the colonies. As Marx (1867:703) put it, 'the discovery of gold and silver in America,
the extirpation, enslavement and entombment in mines of the aboriginal
population, the beginning of the conquest and looting of the East Indies, the turning
of Africa into a warren for the commercial hunting of black-skins signalled the rosy
dawn of the era of capitalist production. These idyllic proceedings are the chief
moments of primitive accumulation'.

The conversion of accumulated monetary capital into capitalist relations of
production is closely associated with the rise, first of the system of manufactures
and later the factory system. However, the major prerequisite of this conversion
was the creation of an alienable wage labour force.

The separation of the producer from the means of production was achieved through
brutal and inhuman expropriation of the land worked by peasant farmers and
enactment of odious and cruel laws to cement the conditions of the expropriated as
alienated wage labourers utterly dependent upon the whims and caprices of the
expropriators. Marx (1867:681) refers to 3,511,770 acres of common land having
been stolen from farmers in England between 1801 and 1831 'by parliamentary
devices presented to the landlords by the landlords'. These same parliamentary
devices were used to prevent the expropriated from emigrating or, where they were
'forcibly' employed in factories, from combining into trade unions. The barbarism
and sheer brutality of the methods of capitalist primitive accumulation led Marx
(1867:711-712) to the conclusion that, 'if money comes into the world with a
congenital blood-stain, capital comes dripping from head to foot, from every pore
with blood and dirt'.

Problems With the Conventional Statement of PAC
Frank has suggested that the conventional formulation of PAC raises more
questions than it answers. If the process of PAC occurs, as Marx says, in the pre-
history of capital, then one is faced with 'the problem of the relation and
contribution of primary accumulation to capitalist accumulation' Frank (1978:244),
since to qualify as the latter, the former has to take place under capitalist relations of production. The question then is whether we can call accumulation capitalist, even if it occurs under a mode of production and, hence, production relations, that preceded capitalism itself.

A second question arises from the simple observation that if PAC occured in the pre-history of capital, then it has continued even in the most modern history of capitalism. Thus PAC has not been a once and for all process that ended with the emergence of industrial capitalism.

One way of resolving this second issue is to recognise that while PAC represents the primary method of capitalist accumulation, fully developed capitalism does not eliminate the method — it merely develops others in addition to it. Which method is predominately used depends upon the prevailing stage of capitalism’s development and whether, at that particular stage, the system is in a state of crisis or not. If this is accepted, the present history of capitalism also includes its pre-history. Additionally, the distinction that Frank draws between capitalist and non-capitalist accumulation becomes relevant only within the context of distinct social formations. Accumulation would be non-capitalist not because it occurs in the so-called pre-history of capital but because it corresponds to a mode of production that is definitely and radically different from that of capitalism as for example under feudalism and socialism.

Apart from the questions raised by Frank, a far more fundamental problem relates to whether the classical statement of PAC enables us to understand its specific character and occurrence in the neo-colonies. For example, does the process occur in basically the same way in the neo-colony as in the metropolitan capitalist countries or does it acquire a dynamic of its own? To answer this question, it is important to understand not only the historical role of the neo-colonies in the evolution and development of capitalist primitive accumulation but also the impact of this role upon the subsequent development in the neo-colonies.

The Historical Role of the Neo-Colonies in Primitive Accumulation

We have already cited Marx’s reference to the colonial system as a chief moment in the dynamics of capitalist development. For the neo-colonies of Africa, this ‘moment’ spans the period from their earliest penetration by merchant capital to the present day. The entire ‘moment’ may thus be further periodized into the pre-colonial, colonial and neo-colonial.

The pre-colonial period is that of the ‘informal empire’ when many parts of Africa, mainly on the coast, ‘came to be incorporated into the capitalist world-economy as peripheral zones’ but retained for the most part their local sovereign political institutions (Wallerstein, 1976:39). This period ends formally with the partitioning of Africa by nascent imperialist powers at the 1880 Berlin conference. For the penetrating capitalist mode of production, the major economic effect was an unparalleled rise in the rate of primitive accumulation. Even Keynes concluded in 1930 that modern capitalism was born out of the profits from the exploitation of the colonies during this period: ‘Indeed’, he writes.

the booty brought back by Drake in the Golden Hind may fairly be considered the fountain and origin of British foreign investment. Elizabeth paid off out of the proceeds the whole of her foreign debt and invested a part of the balance (about £42,000) in the Levant Company: largely out of the profits of the Levant Company there was formed the East India company, the profits of which during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were the main foundations of
England's foreign connections; and so on ... this is quite sufficient to illustrate our argument that the greater part of the fruits of the economic progress and capital accumulation of the Elizabethan and Jacobean age accrued to the profiteer rather than to the wage-earner ... Never in the annals of the modern world has there existed so prolonged and so rich an opportunity for the businessman, the speculator and the profiteer. In these golden years modern capitalism was born ... thus the rate at which the world's wealth has accumulated has been far more variable than habits of thrift have been.

Rodney (1981:94-98) confirms this view on the basis of specifically African data: throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, and for most part of the 19th century the exploitation of Africa and African labour (particularly in the form of slaves) continued to be a source for the accumulation of capital to be reinvested in Western Europe ... The connections between slavery and capitalism in the growth of England is adequately documented. Outstanding examples are provided in the persons of David and Alexander Barclay who (used their loot from slave trade) to set up Barclays Bank (now Union Bank in Nigeria). There was a similar progression in the case of Lloyds from being a small London coffee house to being one the world's largest banking and insurance houses, after dipping into profits from the slave trade and slavery ... Slavery is useful for early accumulation of capital.

The initial penetration left non-capitalist modes of production in Africa mostly intact and in fact reinforced 'the existing forms of extra-economic coercion in agricultural production' (Taylor, 1979:187). However, with the displacement of merchant capital by commodity export capital and the corollary need to develop export markets in the periphery, came the first separation of direct producers from their means of production. In Egypt for example, the British disrupted peasant food production by reserving vast amounts of land for cotton. In India, on the other hand the indigenous cotton industry was destroyed. The British also induced a famine in India by large scale purchase of rice (Marx 1977). In West Africa, the introduction of British and French manufactures effectively crippled rural domestic industry and crafts. The overall effect was the creation of a class of alienable wage labourers who had nothing to sell but their labour power.

The colonial period spans the period of the 'formal empire' from about 1880 to around 1960. This period witnessed the development of commodity export and monopoly capital into what Lenin was to call the last stage of capitalist development — imperialism.

The objective of imperialist penetration was to render the colonies even more effective as a principal source of primitive accumulation. However, if earlier stages of capitalist development did not require the carrying on of a double process of primitive accumulation, one in the town (metropolitan Europe) the other in the country (the colonies), the very success of mature capitalism (imperialism) was 'predicated upon one factor — the development of capitalist forms of production in non-capitalist social formations' (Taylor 1979:207). Such a development called for the separation of African direct producers from their means of production without a corresponding development of an African capitalist class since the metropolitan capitalists were on the spot to perform the latter's role. As Rodney (1981:180) puts it, the 'major problem in Africa from a capitalist viewpoint was how to induce Africans to become labourers or cash-crop farmers'. Many writers, notably Rodney, Wallerstein, Nzula et al. and Amin, have documented in great detail how the African peasantry and craftsmen were 'induced' to change their independent status for that of alienable wage labourers. The 'inducements' included the expropriation of large sections of the agricultural population through the theft and seizure of their lands, the use of forced labour, the introduction of crushing taxes, conscription of
Africans into the colonial armies for subsequent use as unpaid labour, the 'convenient' conscription of the rural population for the construction of public works, the use of brutal legislation, the redistribution of land and the deliberate underdevelopment of the rural areas in order to force their populations to the urban areas for factory work.

Although the agents of imperialist penetration in the colonial period did not attempt to create and establish an indigenous capitalist class, they nevertheless attempted to create a ruling indigenous political class. The logic of this is dictated by the fact that

unless imperialism can establish the political dominance of a class or alliance of classes which can gain ideological support among sectors of the population and intervene, via the state, in the combination of modes of production to promote the dominance of the capitalist mode, the reproduction of the capitalist social relations necessary for enlarged reproduction of the capitalist mode cannot be guaranteed (Taylor 1979:236-237).

It is this necessity more than anything else which explains why towards the end of the colonial period, and even more particularly during the neo-colonial period, imperialism entailed some decided attempts to create a ruling indigenous political class in the colonies.

Some of the recruits for this indigenous ruling class are drawn from the ranks of the dominant classes within previously existing non-capitalist modes of production. Others are recruited via the very dynamic of capitalist penetration. This dynamic generates both the petty-bourgeoisie and the stratum of state functionaries and politicians (many of whom are sent or send themselves to the 'mother countries' for education and training).

The logic of PAC in the neo-colonial period (that is, the period dating from about 1960 until the present) is that the transfer of political power to the spokes-people for the colonised takes place without a corresponding transfer of the economic means necessary to actualize that political power. Indeed, the ascribed status of the neo-colony as the major source of PAC undermines the very process which would otherwise necessitate the creation of an indigenous capitalist class. This 'proletarianisation' of the aspiring indigenous capitalist class creates an effective dislocation between what Taylor (1979) has called the 'political' and the 'economic instances', for the emergent ruling class is granted the right but not then power to govern. This dislocation constitutes a basic contradiction and its resolution largely explains the subsequent dynamic of PAC in the neo-colonies as a specifically indigenous process. The specificity of this process is underlined by the fact that, as distinct from metropolitan Europe where the genesis of the capitalist precedes but continues apace alongside the proletarianisation of the peasantry, artisans and craftsmen, the genesis of the indigenous capitalist in the neo-colonies takes place quite some time after the creation of an alienable wage labour force. While freed from the task of transforming direct producers into wage labourers, the indigenous capitalist class in the neo-colonies therefore faces a working class with a history much longer than its own. Its problem is one of realising itself as the ruling class in the neo-colonial situation. Finally, the indigenous capitalists in the neo-colonial situation have to depend upon exclusively internal sources for the accumulation of monetary capital since being located in neo-colonies themselves they have no colonies to loot and plunder.

For the neo-colonies therefore, the central problem of PAC differs from what the
classic formulation of PAC suggests. Here the primitive accumulation of capital occurs within a context dominated by an imperialism which directs the formation of classes in line with its overall interests. The process of primitive accumulation of capital is therefore two-fold in nature: on the one hand, it must continue to feed expanded accumulation in the metropole; on the other hand, it must take on an increasing responsibility for producing a class of indigenous capitalists. However, to the extent that the dislocation between the political and economic instances seriously blocks the realisation of the latter role, the crucial and central problem of PAC in the neo-colony becomes one of resolving this dilemma. Such a resolution requires the separation and independence of indigenous capitalists from their counterparts in the metropole through the acquisition by the former of those same considerable masses of monetary capital which were and are still prerequisite to the development and consolidation of capitalists and capitalism. How this contradiction is resolved and with what consequences is ultimately dependent upon the actual degree of dislocation between the economic and political instances. It is also dependent upon the origins, composition, orientation, relative development and internal coherence of the indigenous capitalist class, the extent of capitalist penetration of previously existing non-capitalist modes of production, the relative development of counter-practices and counter-ideologies in the form of trade unions and working class revolutionary movements, the economic options available to the indigenous capitalist class for exploitation in the neo-colony and the level of rupture and hence dislocation in the capitalist world system itself. We shall now specifically look at the resolution of the contradiction on the basis of the experience of the Nigerian neo-colony.

PAC in A Neo-Colony: The Example of Nigeria
So far we have argued that the colonial system produces a distorted PAC in the colonies through which the creation of alienable wage labour occurs without the complementary development of an indigenous capitalist class. We have further suggested that this distortion creates a disjuncture between the economic and political instances so that the indigenous capitalist class in the neo-colonial period fundamentally lacks the monetary capital necessary for it to consolidate and reproduce itself as an economic as well as a political class. We therefore concluded that in the neo-colony the primitive accumulation of capital is directed primarily towards the resolution of this contradiction and only secondarily towards the separation of labourers from their means of production.

In Nigeria, as elsewhere, realising PAC as an indigenous process is dependent upon a number of prior conditions, some of which we have already identified. The importance of each of these for the determination of the specific character of PAC varies between periods. For Nigeria, the determinant condition was the degree of dislocation that existed between the political and economic instances at independence. But other factors are also of importance. For example, the indigenous capitalist class in Nigeria not only lacks internal coherence but has always (except for brief intervals) incorporated differing approaches as to the management of relations with imperialism. These differences, typically based on and attenuated by the differences in their ethnic and economic origins, often lead to conflict between members of the indigenous capitalist class. This conflict feeds into and characterises the entire process of primitive accumulation and is reinforced by the fact that the opportunities available for amassing monetary capital are limited in the main to public revenue derived from oil. These and other factors such as the
PRIMITIVE ACCUMULATION IN A NEO-COLONY: NIGERIA

absence of a militant labour movement or of a well organised left opposition give the process of PAC in the Nigerian neo-colony its specific dynamic. This dynamic expresses itself in the boldness and daring with which particular means are employed for amassing monetary capital by the indigenous capitalist class whether in competition or collusion with the ever present agents of imperialist countries. In general, however, it is the dislocation between the economic and political supports of the Nigerian indigenous capitalist class that has tended to determine, more than any other single factor, the overall direction of PAC in the country.

Enuenwosu and Nemedia (1980:5) note, for example, how at independence, economic power was concentrated in large expatriate enterprises, the biggest of which was the United African Company Limited (UAC), itself a subsidiary of the giant Unilever Company with headquarters in the United Kingdom. Expatriate dominance was also evident in the fields of banking (by Barclays Bank), shipping and mining.

Helleiner (1966:322) also shows that by 1960, all the manufacturing enterprises were set up 'with private foreign capital under private foreign initiative'. In a much more detailed analysis, Kilby (1969:20) records that of the paid-up share capital of 321 (largest) limited companies (surveyed in 1964), 68% was of foreign investment. Of the remainder, 22% was Nigerian public and 10% Nigerian private. Investment by Nigerian public authorities is both participation with foreign investors and in wholly government-owned projects.

The implication is that at independence the indigenous capitalist class was more or less completely divorced from control of the means of production. That the situation did not change even in the decade following independence was attested to in 1969 by the Second National Development Plan which seriously regretted the situation that ‘Nigerian ownership and control of industrial investments is extremely low’. The Third National Development Plan admits that, ‘before 1972, the Nigerian economy was dominated by foreign capital’ (p.146). Given such a situation, the question increasingly faced by the indigenous capitalist class after independence has been how to convert the right it had won to govern to the power to govern. The Second National Development Plan (p.289) succinctly summarized this dilemma: ‘experience has shown through history that political independence without economic independence is but an empty shell’.

The conversion of political to economic independence within the continuing rubric of capitalist production relations simultaneously involved the primitive accumulation of capital for the indigenous capitalist class. Government was to play a central role in this process, and became the nucleus and breeding ground of indigenous capitalists. Since independence, the conversion of the political power to govern into economic power for members of the indigenous capitalist class has been attempted at the legislative level primarily through the strategy of indigenisation.

Indigenisation fundamentally involves attempts to create a class of indigenous capitalist on the basis of a forced transfer of the ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange from foreign to indigenous or local capitalists. From its very inception, the Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Act of 1972 declared that its cardinal objective was securing for Nigerians, ‘a definite and effective stake in the ownership and management of each venture’. However, since this requires the direct transfer of capital from its previous foreign owners to a sponsored class of indigenous capitalists, its very success is predicated upon the
success of attempts by members of the indigenous capitalist class to accumulate monetary capital. The crucial question for indigenisation therefore is how the problem of accumulation of monetary capital by indigenous capitalists is to be solved. For example, government explicitly lamented the fact 'private Nigerians with accumulated capital and know-how required to sponsor industrial projects are hard to come by'. To resolve this problem two methods have been widely employed by the Nigerian political and administrative class. The first is the setting up of a number of government financial institutions whose declared objective is 'to facilitate better financing of indigenous businessmen'. The second and much more important method is corruption.

Successive development plans have continued to emphasise the relationship between the success of indigenisation and the capacity of 'private Nigerians to accumulate capital'. The Second National Development plan envisaged increasing the local currency resources of the Nigerian Industrial Development Bank (NIDB) by about £3m to enable the latter 'make more meaningful investments in various industries controlled by Nigerians or with at least 55 per cent Nigerian ownership'. The Third National Development Plan indicated that government's key objective would be to encourage indigenous entrepreneurs to establish new firms by ensuring that the various financial institutions 'help capable indigenes to acquire existing industries'. Specifically and in concrete terms,

A total of more than N219.45m will be made available to Government Financial Institutions and this excludes the sum of N348.00m which government will channel to NIDB . . . these funds will enable the institutions to increase their investment in industry and commerce and to make loans to indigenous and other enterprises (p.155).

Although by 1980 the Fourth National Development Plan could assert that the indigenisation policy had achieved the objective of 'transfering ownership of certain industries to Nigerians', it was clear not only that such success was limited given that major industries remained outside the scope of indigenisation, but also that the initial as well as the continued success of the programme depended upon sources of private accumulation additional to those available from either government or private financial institutions. Initially, these additional sources included surpluses derived from the exploitation of Nigerian and other migrant labour, incomes realised from petty bourgeois economic relations and ownership of landed property. Increasingly, however, corruption became and has remained the major source of accumulating monetary capital for the indigenous capitalists in Nigeria.

The relationship between corruption and the primitive accumulation of capital is summarily treated in Marx. Even then, Marx (1977:704) was quite specific about the relationship. He wrote that in colonial India, the favourites of the Governor-General received contracts under conditions whereby they (and the Governor-General) cleverer than the alchemists. made gold out of nothing. Great fortunes sprang up like mushrooms in a day; primitive accumulation went on without the advance of a shilling.

Earlier, Marx (1977:704) noted that 'the history of the colonial administration of Holland — and Holland was the head capitalistic nation of the 17th century — is one of the most extraordinary relations of treachery, bribery . . .'. More recently Gouldner (1976:234) has observed that characteristically 'the administrative and political classes capitalize their strategic social positions' and through bribes and favour 'acquire advantages which unlike their political and administrative status
Table I: Reports of Corruption (1978-1982)*

Types of corruption practices reported

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>IN GOVERNMENT</th>
<th>IN GOVERNMENT ORGANISATIONS</th>
<th>IN PRIVATE SECTOR ORGANISATIONS</th>
<th>TOTAL**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FRAUD</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bribes &amp; Kickbacks</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>418</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct Stealing</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scandals About Extravagant Expenditure (d)</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(a) Number of Cases Reported
(b) Number of People Involved
(c) Amount of money Involved

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of Cases Reported</th>
<th>Number of People Involved</th>
<th>Amount of money Involved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FRAUD</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>N63.0m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bribes &amp; Kickbacks</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>N7.400m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct Stealing</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>N7.510m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scandals About Extravagant Expenditure (d)</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>N93.870m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL AMOUNT OF MONEY INVOLVED (a+b+c+d) = N6.60b

This excludes the notorious N2.8 billion scandal of 1978.

Table II: Contract Awards by Government (1978-1982)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATE GOVERNMENTS</th>
<th>FEDERAL GOVERNMENT</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Contracts</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of Contracts</td>
<td>N2.898.645m</td>
<td>N1.875.855m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Obtained from a content analysis of The Sketch (1978-1982)
are bequeathable to their children, and constitute economic advantages that can be transmitted along generational lines.'

Like the colonial Governor-Generals of India, it is the administrative and political elites in Nigeria who award all the major contracts in the country. Although data is scanty about how much 'gold' or accumulated monetary capital has directly resulted from the system of contracts, it is instructive to note that a major reason advanced for the 1966 January coup was that the government was corrupt. In 1975 after the Murtala Mohammed coup, the government set up a number of probes which uncovered large scale fraud and bribery among the administrative, political and military elite. To obtain more factual data on the sums capitalised from corruption, we undertook a detailed examination of newspaper reports of bribes, frauds, kickbacks, and extravagant expenditure from 1978 to 1982. Table I summarises the data. The data shows, for example, that a total N6.6bn was involved, with government and government organizations accounting for about N5.98bn. During the same period (1978-1982) contracts awarded amounted to N4.8bn (Table II). If we assume as is generally believed that each contract attracts a ten per cent 'kickback' for the awarding government agents and another ten per cent for the recipient contractor, then the total amount of bribes and kickbacks from this source is N96.00m.

Numerous other stories and reports of corruption abound. For example, the Sunday Concord 6 March, 1983 reports that a Federal Government Agency 'could have saved about N3.9m in foreign exchange if it had shopped more widely among British manufacturers' for ballot boxes. The Sunday Triumph of the same date reports that the 'fraud bandwagon swells' as 'another fraud of monumental proportions (involving N55.00m) is uncovered'. The burning down of the Audit Department of the Abuja Development Authority and the buildings of the Nigerian External Telecommunications early in 1983 were connected with the discovery of frauds respectively of N15.00m and N800.00m. These figures and reports are highly conservative but the fact that corruption has become commonplace prompted Dr. M. I. Okpara (1983:3), a prominent member of the political class to declare that

many things that are happening in the country give cause for serious concern — reports of embezzlement and misappropriation of public funds, laxity, selfishness and lack of integrity, disloyal activities and gross indiscipline in the body politic. It appears that we have now reached a stage when wrongdoers in our midst are resorting to arson and burning down buildings and their occupants in their attempt to wipe out every evidence of their fraud and wrong-doing.

The situation also prompted the widely publicised and major programme of the Federal Government called, The Ethical Revolution. These statements and programmes, however, only describe the scale rather than explain corruption as the principal method by which the Nigerian indigenous capitalist class has attempted to accumulate the large sums of monetary capital needed to establish itself as both an economic and political class.

**Primitive Accumulation and Capitalist Development in Nigeria**

The method by which the primitive accumulation of capital is being realised has had a number of profound consequences for the process of capitalist development in Nigeria. It has become increasingly clear, for example, that the expectation that indigenisation would lead to changes in the ownership structure of the economy in favour of indigenous Nigerian capitalists has not fully materialised. Teriba et al


(1981:89) have provided lucid data which reveal a predominance of expatriate shareholding as well as the greater concentration of shares among the expatriates as opposed to the fragmentation among Nigerians. Expatriates constitute over 60 per cent of the shareholders (in industry). The same conclusion has been reached by Rimlinger and Stremlau (1973), Nwankwo (1981) and Beckman (1982). Indigenisation has therefore resulted in the further consolidation of expatriate, international capital in Nigeria and in the further subordination of the indigenous capitalist class, and indeed of the entire domestic economy, to the interests of metropolitan capital.

In addition, and in contrast to the economies of Western Europe and America where the looting of the colonial economies resulted in huge investments and hence rapid development in these economies, the process of realising PAC through corruption has resulted in a huge flight of capital from Nigeria. General Buhari, Nigeria's former head of state, reported in February 1985 for example, that Nigerian politicians had stated away an estimated staggering sum of over $6bn in British banks alone. This figure does not include the sums of money salted away by Nigerian politicians in other West European and American Banks nor the other direct investments in the economies of these countries during the period. Neither does it include incomes repatriated by foreign (mostly multinational companies) in excess of their direct investments in Nigeria. For example, this excess rose from N398.8 in 1971 to N960.9 in 1975 and, 206.6 in 1977. Given the overall trend, it is expected that such repatriated incomes would have exceeded N2.0bn by 1983. The Managing Director of the International Bank for West Africa has observed, for example, that of the over N11.9bn taken out of Nigeria in 1981 to pay for imports, the real value of the actual imports amounted to only N2.97bn (Alkassum Abba et al, 1985:58). This represents a loss of N8.93bn to the economy from one source and in one year alone.

The major consequence of the massive flight of capital from the Nigerian economy has been to reinforce the dependent and neo-colonial nature of the economy, since in order to meet the further needs of the overall rate and process of the capitalist accumulation of capital, the Nigerian state has had to engage in huge external borrowings from imperialist financial institutions. By 1985, for example, Nigeria's external debt was estimated at over N20bn. Negotiations with IMF for another loan of N2.6bn were underway and as a result, a number of harsh anti-working class measures dictated by the IMF were already in force.

To say that there have been problems in realising PAC in the Nigerian neo-colony is not to suggest that the expansion of capitalist production relations has not led to the development of an indigenous capitalist class. In 1962, for example, there were an estimated 514 companies engaged in manufacturing in Nigeria. By 1972, this figure had increased to 1052 and in 1978 to 1075. Although the larger proportion of these companies was foreign owned and dominated, indigenous capital nevertheless had begun to make some impact. The importance of this observation can be implied from changes in development strategies, especially in the area of state owned industries and monopolies, during the period 1980 — 1985 as against those of a decade earlier.

In 1970, the Second National Development Plan (1970-74,p.289) rejected the view 'that the interests acquired by government in industry should be handed over to indigenous businessmen if and when they have the capital and business know-how
for operating these particular industries'. Such a course, it was argued, flowed 'from the narrow conception of the role of Government in national development which is not tenable under Nigerian circumstances'. By 1980, however, a change had occurred. As Alile noted, 'economic necessity is likely to induce government to make drastic changes in its policy of ownership and equity participation in corporations (in favour of privatisation). But such change would be for the better, since Nigeria would stand to reap many benefits' (1984:15). Indeed, by the end of 1984, privatisation of state-owned companies had been given practical effect with the sale of a number of firms, mostly to indigenous capital. After some time the state monopoly in key service industries such as the airways was broken. Even if still few in number a new class of powerful indigenous Nigerian capitalists had at last arrived.

Conclusions
The major feature of primitive accumulation in the Nigerian neo-colony is the amassing of monetary capital by the indigenous capitalist class principally through means of corruption. Although limited by the methods through which PAC is realised, the process nevertheless results in the further expansion of capitalist production relations. A distinct new class of powerful indigenous capitalists is produced. However, the overall process of capitalist development in Nigeria ensures that the new class is still subject to the overall control, direction, and domination by international capital. A section of the new class of indigenous Nigerian capitalists is, however, sufficiently conscious and well located to want to compete with representatives of international capital for the control, direction and use of the political machinery of the Nigerian state to advance its specifically recognised economic interests. It is this competition for control, direction and use of the state machinery that largely accounts for recent instances of political instability of the Nigerian state.

At the same time, the complementary process of separation of independent producers from their means of production, begun in the colonial period, is deepened still further in the neo-colonial period. The methods through which this is accelerated include the underdevelopment of the rural areas, repressive taxation of the peasantry, the depression of farmers' incomes through the deliberate underpricing of their products, the destruction of food crop farming through cheap imports, seizure of the land of the peasants and the establishment of large scale private farms serviced by state river basin development programmes, commercialisation of education, destruction of the independent status of a large section of the urban and rural commercial petty bourgeoisie, etc. However, this general process, for reasons advanced earlier, is subordinated to the overall need to develop the economic base of the indigenous and foreign capitalists. Part of this need is, indeed, also reflected in the wages and conditions of the expropriated peasantry as wage labourers. While the relative and absolute exploitation of wage labourers constitutes an important source of both primitive and expanded accumulation for both the indigenous capitalist class and metropolitan capitalists, it also provides a powerful lever for the workers' further class development and organisation for self-liberating action.

For this last reason, there is a need to explore the relationship between the conditions for revolutionary action and the process of the general accumulation of capital in the neo-colonies. When, for example, would the conditions be most favourable for revolutionary action and change? Historical evidence would tend to
suggest that revolutionary conditions are more easily ripened during primitive accumulation than at any other period (Russia, China, Cuba, Angola, Mozambique, Vietnam, Nicaragua, El Salvador, etc are illustrative examples). The implication for the Nigerian neo-colony are clear. The present period which is coincidental with the period of primitive accumulation offers the greatest opportunities for organised revolutionary action. The question is whether the revolutionary forces in the country can harness the historical possibilities provided by present contradictions and realise the socialist revolution.

Bibliographic Note

The Control of Reproduction: Principle and Practice in Nigeria

Renée Pittin

Policies and practice relating to the availability of contraception, the accessibility of abortion and the custody of children are measures of the legal and political status of women in any given society. They bear directly on domination of women in the spheres of reproduction and control over the fruits of reproduction, children. Pittin explores how these matters reflect women's rights and opportunities in the case of Nigeria. She is particularly concerned with the manner in which the law impinges upon women, restricting choice and reaffirming an unquestioned subordination of married women to their husbands. She suggests that there is a need for both changes in the law and of policy.

Traditional Methods of Contraception

The practice of contraception is not new to Nigerians. From time immemorial women have sought for and utilised means to limit their fertility when compelling reasons made conception at a particular time or for a particular period unfeasible. The most commonly recognised reason for limiting fertility has been, and remains, the need to protect the health of the mother and her child, especially during the period when the mother is breast feeding. Concern is primarily centred on the child, and traditional beliefs that sexual intercourse will contaminate the mother's milk or otherwise weaken the child have reinforced use of the most widespread and certainly the most effective contraceptive technique of all — abstinence.

In both Yoruba and Hausa cultures, sanctions are taken against the woman who transgresses against the rule of abstinence, although in Hausa society, the sanctions are mild, usually no more than mockery and some loss of respect. For the Yoruba women, on the other hand, sanctions may be far more severe. According to P. and J. C. Caldwell (1981) 'there is a feeling of widespread horror that any parents, especially mothers, could be so irresponsible as to endanger their children's lives and so indecent as to have premature sex or to crave it'. If the child dies, the women 'will . . . be accused of gross carelessness [or] wanton killing [and] she is only too likely to be torn apart by her own . . . self-accusations'. If the mother is believed to be contravening the abstinence rule, the child may even be taken from her. It is thereby in keeping with the double standard which permits sexual freedom to men and enforces sexual constraint on women that the mother is punished, and punishes herself, for a mutual marital act.

Abstinence is often a matter not of months, but of years. It is a contraceptive technique which clearly demands the concurrence of both husband and wife and which has the weight of tradition behind it. But is also demands very different
responses from husband and wife. The practice of abstinence basically means that the woman must abstain altogether, while the husband is expected to abstain from that wife. If he has other wives (who are not themselves abstaining), he is expected to sleep with them. If he does not have other wives, he may still not abstain; the burden of constraint is on his wife.

The recognition of an individual's sexuality, and the control exercised over that sexuality is closely bound not only to the issue of power relationships within the family, but also to the question of social status and social control in the wider society.

The Caldwells note that it is precisely because so little importance is attached to female sexuality that abstinence is possible. The maintenance of long periods of abstinence, they argue, is associated both with strong views about female propriety and considerable male dominance. Fortunately for women this pattern is changing, most rapidly among educated men and women who are turning to modern contraceptive techniques (often surreptitiously) in place of traditional abstinence. Ironically, however, modern contraception in this instance results in an increase in fertility, given the zero failure rate of abstinence.

A second major traditional contraceptive technique, although not always perceived as such, is breast feeding, which in altering a woman's hormonal balance, makes conception less likely. When the period of breast feeding is shorter than the period of abstinence, the contraceptive value of breast feeding is of course negated. However, it is important among certain groups of women, especially where abstinence has decreased. Thus Makinwa found that almost one-third of her Lagos respondents had practised prolonged breast feeding specifically as a means of avoiding pregnancy. A difficulty that has recently arisen with regard to the use of lactation for contraception, however, is the spreading practice of combining breast-feeding with tinned (and far less nutritious) milk or food supplements. Since the contraceptive effect of lactation depends largely on its intensity, this greatly reduces its effectiveness in this regard.

Among other traditional techniques, withdrawal and rhythm are relied on by only small numbers of women. Ilori (1977) is doubtful, moreover, about even categorising rhythm as a traditional method, given the limited knowledge of ovulation and related phenomena at all levels of society. Yet other methods of contraception include such practices as the wearing of charms or a belt around the waist to protect the wearer from conceiving and the drinking of special medicines. Thus, there is a range of traditional contraceptive techniques available in Nigeria, most of which demand the concurrence of the male partner. The arsenal of modern contraceptive methods has been added to this traditional base.

**Modern Contraception: the Principle**

Modern contraception in Nigeria is often associated with the family planning clinics which have been instrumental in disseminating information and materials in most of the country's major cities, if not in many of the rural areas. The main organisation associated with family planning at present is the Planned Parenthood Federation of Nigeria (P.P.F.N.), which was established by the National Council of Women's Societies in 1964 as an advisory committee to educate the public regarding the health benefits of family planning. According to the association the major rationale for its creation was to combat the rising rate of criminal abortion in Nigeria, through increased knowledge and practice of family planning.
The P.P.F.N. has always attempted to be low-profile, and 'all things to all men' (although not to all women) with limited, though growing, success. Little has changed since a 1973 report stated:

...the uncontroversial platform on which the family planning programme is based has... softened opposition to it... Opposition from religious groups has never been a major obstacle, but great difficulties have arisen in gaining acceptance of the programme among males. In a male-dominated society, there is seldom any communication between husbands and wives of family size aspirations... men often express the fear that it will encourage their wives to indulge in illicit affairs... (D Lucas and G Williams).

Studies have indicated that while the majority of Nigerian women are interested in family planning, the same is true of few of the men. Yet the Federation routinely requires consent forms to be signed by the husband prior to giving its services. From the outset this was politically virtually a foregone conclusion, given that Nigerian husbands are seen, and intend to continue, to control their wives' reproduction. The need for written consent raises no challenge to existing power relations and inequalities in the family.

Modern contraception recognises a woman's sexuality, and may even enhance it, inasmuch as the woman need not fear constant pregnancy. This very fact may well be behind many men's rejection of family planning. It is perhaps a sign of the lack of communication between husbands and wives, the low esteem in which women are held, the threat to men's control over women in general, and ultimately, a fear of women's independence and eventual exercise of other rights, which causes so many men to posit a wife's likely infidelity or promiscuity as a consequence of the use of modern contraceptive techniques.

 Sometimes a woman shares her husband's negative attitudes towards contraception. This may be so, for example, when she sees no alternative vocation or source of worth available to her or when she sees her children as a source of labour and social and economic security, as is particularly the case where women lack access to resources such as land. Odutan (1976) points out that Nigerian women are socialised to expect no other interest than their home and their reproductive achievements and to regard procreation as the chief goal of marriage.

However, even if a woman wants many children (as most Nigerian women do) she may want a break between births or the time to pursue other interests. If she can discuss such a topic with her husband and can propose the idea of birth control, he may or may not agree. Husband's and wife's wishes may not coincide.

Who then should decide the matter? According to a U.N. publication the ultimate right of control over her own body and reproductive capacity should reside with the woman:

...bearing in mind the principle that one person does not have the right to exploit another person's body or labour against his or her will; that pregnancy and childbirth may severely endanger a woman's health, or even her life; and that... the greatest responsibility for nurturing, protecting, and caring for young children usually lies with the woman; it then follows that where parties disagree, the woman should ultimately bear the final right and responsibility for determining the number and spacing of the children she bears.

(UN, 1975 p.13)

And while discussing the rights of women to control their fertility, the question of providing birth control information and materials to the unmarried woman may also be addressed. The theory that by refusing such services, the woman will be prevented from sexual experimentation is an exercise in pretence, delusion, and
wishful thinking. Refusal to provide information concerning contraception will not in itself deter sexual relations, although it may well promote the likelihood of an unwanted pregnancy. Efforts may be made to educate and motivate young people to adhere to social values, but the rejection of these values should not then be 'punished' by pregnancy. Overly protective legislation harms the very women it is intended to protect by denying them access to effective means of birth control and forcing them to rely on less effective traditional methods, or even reducing them to seeking illegal abortion with the tremendous hazards that implies.

... and the Practice
The practice of modern contraception, whether by design or default or both, differs vastly from the principle, largely to the benefit of women. The diffusion of knowledge does not require literacy, nor is it confined to the elite, although the extent of this knowledge varies greatly from place to place. Information is obtained primarily through friends of one's own gender, especially in the urban areas, and secondarily through relatives.

In the case of Zaria, several family planning clinics are operating, the main one being that of the A.B.U. Teaching Hospital. The services of the A.B.U. clinic, which opened in the early 70s with a tiny complement of staff, were originally available only to former A.B.U. anti-natal patients. At present, however, with several nurses trained at the special family planning programme in Ibadan, the services have been expanded and are available to all married women provided they return, signed, the husband's consent form. The number of patients has risen each year since the clinic's inception; the 1982 figure was 2,311. Most of the women are fairly well educated.

Registration at the clinic costs ₤1, and problems of both fertility and infertility are treated. Contraceptive supplies are subsidised and are extremely inexpensive. Pills, which cost from ₤3/90 at any chemist, cost ₤1; the Copper-T and Copper-7 IUD's, which each cost ₤100 privately, are ₤15 each at A.B.U. Also available is the controversial and dubious Depo-Provera injection, which prevents pregnancy for three months (₤6.50 at A.B.U.; ₤15 at local chemists). Although it has been approved by the World Health Organisation Depo is banned in the United States because of doubts concerning its long-term safety, in particular because tests have shown that in large doses the drug causes cancer in some laboratory animals. Some private clinics in Zaria also decline to stock Depo because of other possible side-effects such as amenorrhoea, excessive bleeding, or continuing infertility after the injections have been stopped. The A.B.U. clinic generally does not prescribe it for women who wish to have additional children in the not-too-distant future or to women who have small families.

While the clinic prefers women to come with their husbands when they register, and most women probably do, this is not required. Nor is there any guarantee that if the woman comes with a man he is actually her husband, or that her husband actually signed the form, although women are warned not to attempt to hoodwink the clinic. The clinic has neither the time nor the staff to pursue such investigations. Apparently, however, so common is it for married women to seek contraceptive advice or help without the husband's knowledge that this has been described as the 'husband problem' and has made the P.P.F.N. wary of permitting researchers to interview its clients in their matrimonial homes (J. Ottong, 1975).

Despite the laxness of their enforcement, the rules under which the clinics operate,
and particularly the requirement of husbands’ written consent with its implication that only married women are eligible for treatment, discourages or prevents the attendance of many women. In consequence many, especially in the urban areas, obtain modern contraceptive devices merely by walking into a chemist and asking for them. But this has its hazards. In one shop in Zaria, nineteen different birth control pills were displayed, including the family-planning clinic’s three-month packet. However, many of these are extremely high in various hormonal agents, may have negative side-effects, and, like any drug, should be prescribed only after taking into consideration the user’s medical condition and history. No form of modern contraception, moreover, should ever be prescribed without a thorough examination to check for contra-indications to use.

Abortion: The Principle
Nigeria’s abortion law is extremely restrictive, permitting abortion only to save the life of the mother. As archaic as it is restrictive, the law is based on the English Offenses against the Person Act of 1861 and is the legacy of a decade which saw the first criminalisation of abortion in a number of countries. At that time, abortion procedures were dangerous and crude, often carried out in poor conditions, and characterised by a high rate of mortality. Thus, legislation was ostensibly introduced to protect the woman, although with respect to the subsequent use of this law as with other forms of gender-related protective legislation, the ‘protection’ has often been more deleterious to women than the dangers women were purportedly being protected against. Other reasons were less humanitarian, such as the need of the state for increased population to support its industry, agriculture and territorial expansion, and the input of campaigners who saw the prohibition of abortion as a fitting punishment for ‘sinful’ women who indulged in sex for pleasure rather than procreation, outside or inside marriage. The law was introduced at a time when male doctors were taking over the practice of medicine from the female midwives and healers who traditionally had helped women control their fertility. By severely limiting abortion, the legislation further weakened women’s role in medical practice.

Two versions of the law are in use in Nigeria, one for the southern states, and the other based on the Northern Penal Code. They vary in breadth and in the penalties incurred, but the intent of both is the same. The law in the south is found in Sections 228-30 of the Criminal code, enacted in 1916, which reads as follows:

228. Any person who, with intent to procure miscarriage of a woman whether she is or is not with child, unlawfully administers to her or causes her to take any poison or other noxious thing, or uses any force of any kind, or uses any other means whatever, is guilty of a felony, and is liable to imprisonment for fourteen years.

229. Any woman who, with intent to procure her own miscarriage whether she is or is not with child, unlawfully administers to herself any poison or any noxious thing, or uses any force of any kind, or uses any other means whatever, or permits any such thing or means to be administered or used to her, is guilty of a felony, and is liable to imprisonment for seven years.

230. Any person who unlawfully* supplies to or procures for any person anything whatsoever, knowing that it is intended to be unlawfully used to procure the miscarriage of a woman,

*Following a decision in the English courts in 1938, the West African Court of Appeal in the same year defined ‘unlawfully’ as meaning for any reason ‘except for the purpose of preserving the life of the mother’ (F. Solanke, 1975B).
whether she is or is not with child, is guilty of a felony, and is liable to imprisonment for three years.

(C.C. Madakarin & T.A. Aguda, eds, 1974)

Solanke notes that this last section is so vague (as compared to the relevant passages in Sections 228 and 229) that even a person bringing water during the operation may be imprisoned for three years. One wonders if it could not also be construed to extend to anyone who passes on the name and address of a person or clinic which will perform the abortion, or even to anyone who helps the desperate women with some money to help pay for the operation.

In Section 228, the person performing the abortion is subject to fourteen years in prison. In Section 229, the unfortunate woman who attempts to induce her own abortion is subject to incarceration for seven years, while in Section 230, other persons involved are subject to three years in prison.

The law in the North is largely contained in Section 232 of the Penal Code Law, which states that:

Whoever voluntarily causes a woman with child to miscarry shall, if such miscarriage be not caused in good faith for the purpose of saving the life of the women, be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to fourteen years or with fine or with both.

(S. S. Richardson, 1967)

This law is somewhat less severe than that of the South, inasmuch as the woman has at least to have been pregnant for the penalty to apply. Moreover, there appears to be no equivalent to Section 230 of the Southern law, whereby any accessory is also subject to arrest and imprisonment. It is more severe in its penalty, for the woman who induces her own abortion is equally subject as any other person performing the operation to fourteen years imprisonment!

This, then, is Nigeria's inheritance. However, we are not interested only in the law concerning abortion, but also in its practice.

... and the Practice
Commonly restricted and in some countries wholly banned, abortion has been described as being the most widespread crime committed by women in many countries. Throughout history, women and couples have sought the solution of abortion for unintended pregnancy. It is the oldest method of birth control, and even as late as 1965, was estimated to be the chief method of birth control worldwide. Today, with the introduction of modern contraception and sterilization, induced abortion is probably the third leading method of controlling fertility in the world and is estimated to terminate forty million pregnancies yearly; half of these abortions are illegal.

In Nigeria, as elsewhere in the world, the knowledge of abortion is part of traditional culture and has been available as a last resort to untold generations of people. At present, both traditional and modern methods of abortion are practised, illegality notwithstanding. Thus, for example, in a 1973 Ibadan study, Caldwell and Ware estimated that 5% of contraception was via the use of abortion. In the Lagos study of Makinwa et al, 5% of the 2,352 married women actually reported having terminated a pregnancy through induced abortion. Given the illegality of the procedure, it is very likely that the actual number of women who resorted to abortion was far higher.
However, the procedures and practices of abortion vary greatly, and perhaps the most invidious aspect of the present abortion law is its devastating effect upon the poor and the ignorant. Where abortion is illegal, it is expensive, particularly if modern techniques and conditions are sought. The rich, the educated, the elite will get their abortions in the most hygienic conditions. Generally labelled as a D & C (dilation and curettage) or masquerading under the guise of other reproductive operations, an early abortion in a private clinic in Kaduna or Zaria costs ₦100 to ₦150 at present. Abortion at an advanced stage of pregnancy can cost ₦700 or more.

Illiterate women, poor women, many young women, and rural women, however, do not have access to or knowledge of this type of abortion, and with increasing desperation resort instead to traditional, home, or patent remedies and even to direct self-induced physical means to end an unwanted pregnancy. The results are often horrendous. Using one method after another, often of increasing severity (e.g. beginning with tablets and later turning to application of caustic substances to the vagina and uterus, or to instrumentation), the woman loses precious time and abortion becomes more and more dangerous. The abortion is frequently carried out in unclean surroundings, with unsterile equipment, often by people of dubious competence. The result may be infection, medical complications, permanent sterility, or all too often, death. Because of the illegal nature of the operation, a woman who has undergone it and who is suffering complications will be loath to report to the hospital because of fear of prosecution, of being discovered to have been pregnant, and/or, of having had an abortion. More time passes and the woman's chances of regaining her health dwindle.

On study done in the Lagos University Teaching Hospital (LUTH) illustrates the problem. Akingba and Gbajumo (1970) collected abortion data concerning women of 12 to 20 years of age admitted to LUTH between 1963 and 1967. Of the 700 abortion admissions for the period, 155 (22.1%) involved complications of illegal attempts at abortion. Of this 155, 108 (69.7%) were established to be cases of procured abortion. Most women denied the charge, but thirty-one of them admitted to induced abortion and described the methods used. Of these, twelve (more than a third) had been aborted through instrumentation with or without additional techniques; this was the primary method of procuring abortions. Another seven had taken oral medication, eight had swallowed purgatives, two had used vaginal tablets or applications, and two had swallowed Dettol and illicit gin respectively. In Zaria, women have resorted to swallowing anything bitter or caustic, such as blueing, soda, starch or vast quantities of laxatives.

The use of intra-uterine instrumentation, effective and relatively problem-free in hygienic surroundings with sterilized and appropriate equipment, is fraught with danger under other conditions. In villages in the North, instrumentation is used to produce heavy bleeding and abortion. Traditional methods of instrumentation in Nigeria probably include the use of plant stems and sticks. The stems cannot be boiled beforehand, and so they may easily introduce tetanus and other bacilli into the operation site. And if the abortionist does not have the tools to measure the uterus, it may be perforated in the process of performing the abortion. In the LUTH study, twelve of the 108 cases of procured abortion were complicated by tetanus. Eight of these women died, while others died from perforation of the uterus.

In a similar, but non-age-specific study in LUTH over part of the same period (in this
case, 1963 - 1966) Akinla and Adadevoh (1969) concentrated on 158 particularly well-documented cases out of the 486 abortion admissions to the gynae ward. Of these, 23 were cases of septic abortion, which implies interference and subsequent infection, here requiring hospitalisation and in one case resulting in death. Twenty-one additional cases of abortion complicated by tetanus over this period are not included in their study as these were treated not in the gynaecological ward, but in the intensive care unit.

It is impossible to know how many women die from illegal abortions, just as it is impossible to ascertain accurately how many women procure illegal abortions. If the operation is successful, and there are no complications, then, optimally, no one will hear of it. If it is not successful, it is all too likely that the victim of the operation may die at home, either because she will not or cannot seek hospital care. But even for women who reach the hospital, the prognosis is often bleak. A review of maternal mortality in U.C.H. Ibadan, for the period from January 1962 to December 1971, ranked abortion as the fourth most important cause of maternal deaths.

Nigerian studies have reinforced statistically the already recognised fact that the women who have been subject to procured abortions with complications (which would bring them to the hospital) are often young, frequently in their teens, and often unmarried. The reasons that they sought abortion are well-known. Even now, unmarried female students at the secondary school level are expelled when their pregnancy is discovered.

The 'partner in crime' suffers no such constraints or penalties. Akinla and Adadevoh note that: 'even among married women the incidence of criminal abortion is not negligible. Many such women are faced with housing and other economic problems, and an extra pregnancy may stretch the already slim financial resources to the breaking point'. Other reasons include the pregnancy following too closely upon the previous birth, or the women being regarded as too old to give birth, especially, in some Nigerian cultures, when the woman already has grandchildren.

Anti-abortion legislation does not end abortion; it drives it underground. When abortion laws are restricted and punitive, women who wish to terminate pregnancy will, perforce, resort to illegality, and whatever arrangements they can make, with the high rate of complications, possible sterility and death already described. The cost of illegal abortion in unnecessary suffering, physical and mental, is incalculable. The cost to the hospital is somewhat more calculable. Akinla and Adadevoh estimated that even in 1969, the hospital cost of maintaining 96 patients with procured abortions was between two to three thousand pounds. Whereas patients with spontaneous abortions averaged 3-4 days in hospital, those with procured abortion averaged 9.1 days, excluding tetanus admissions, which averaged 56 days of hospital care. The cost to the state in the waste of human lives and careers is again incalculable. So what is to be done?

Many people have noted the need for proper sex education and widespread dissemination of information of contraception in Nigeria. One study (Akingba, cited in Makinwa, 1981) suggested that only about a third of women procuring abortions knew about contraception. There is at present a wide discrepancy between abortion law and practice. However, illegal services and practice cannot substitute safely and adequately for legal sources. As a U.N. document states:

Defining behaviour as illegal which is essential for the preservation of human rights and dignity must lead to the development of individual cynicism, if not despair. And in matters so
intimate and emotional as sexuality and childbirth, unjustified state interference is likely to be not only socially repressive and discriminatory but personally traumatising in its effects. This is especially true as it affects women's attempts to gain autonomy and control over their own bodies. (U.N., 1975, p.93)

According to the same report:

If the state is to take seriously its role of expanding human freedoms, among them the right of persons to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children, then its infringement on the right to terminate an unwanted pregnancy safely and quickly must also be deemed unwarranted and unnecessarily punitive. Similarly, if the State is to protect the health of its citizens, then it (should) repeal all laws impeding access to medical termination of pregnancy leaving abortion subject only to these regulations surrounding other medical procedures of a similar nature. In this way, a safe, legal abortion would become part of the general medical case to which all persons are entitled. (U.N., 1975, p.89)

As Solanke (1975a) has argued 'a woman has the exclusive right in respect of the functioning of her own body and therefore, can legitimately question the assumed right of man-made (her emphasis) law to interfere... when she is to decide whether to terminate a pregnancy'. It is, indeed, this very assumption of the law which we are questioning here, for no women should be forced to bear a child against her will. Nor should children be brought into the world as a punishment, or unwanted burden to their parents. Every child should have the right to be wanted, loved, and nurtured by its parents.

With regard to the morality or ethics of abortion, it must be noted that there are differences of opinion even among religious scholars and church leaders concerning the permissibility of abortion or concerning the conditions wherein abortion is permissible. In a series of five articles entitled 'Sharia's View on Abortion' in the New Nigerian, Ustaz A. A. Abdallah (1982) discussed the provisions concerning abortion among the various schools of Islamic law. While some Islamic jurists have accepted abortion prior to the infusion of the soul into a foetus (at 120 days), especially if the mutual consent of the spouses is obtained, others have absolutely prohibited it, considering that a seed (nufala) once conceived has become a potential human life. And while some jurists legalize abortion within the first forty days, others legalize it up to eighty days. Another group has made abortion conditional on justifiable causes. Finally Muslim jurists appeared to be lenient in permitting abortion if pregnancy has been caused by illicit sexual relations. Other social factors were taken into consideration as well. Ibn Wahban, for example, has held that sufficient need to warrant an abortion exists if a pregnancy occurs while a woman is suckling a child and the couple cannot afford an alternative supply of food.

As with Islam, there is also a range of opinions characterising other religions. The exception is the Catholic Church, which opposes abortion on most grounds. Three separate but related points are at issue here. First, as there is disagreement even within religions concerning the legality and morality of abortion, it is not logical for the state to oppose abortion on the basis of religion. Second, the religious beliefs and values of any Nigerian, or group of Nigerians, should not be forced upon other Nigerians. Indeed, this would be unconstitutional. Third, the integrity of the individual must be recognised and respected. Nigerian women are not weeds, and they are not half-wits. They do not grow up, untended and untrained, in a cultural vacuum. Each woman has her own moral and religious education and she makes her decisions within the context of her training. By attempting to legislate morality,
the state is suggesting that women are not capable or competent to make such judgements themselves. Morality should be inculcated, not imposed.

Some of the other objections to the legalisation of abortion may be touched on here briefly. The women’s societies, for example, were concerned about its safety. It is true that with abortion, as with any operation, there is a risk. However, it is also true as Sloane (1980) contends that ‘legal abortion... performed by a skillful practitioner, and done before the sixteenth week of pregnancy, is safer than pregnancy and delivery’. The earlier the abortion, the less risk it carries. Thus, according to statistics in Britain and the U.S.A., a woman who has an abortion performed in the appropriate conditions by a skilled practitioner within ten weeks of conception has only one chance in 100,000 of dying as a result; this is twenty times less than the deaths associated with childbirth. But the safety of legal abortion must be viewed in relation to the safety of illegal abortions. In the U.S., it has been established that since 1973, when abortion was legalised, abortion-related deaths have decreased by 73%.

Should abortion be legalised, it would of course exacerbate a situation of already overcrowded medical facilities and overworked staff. But again, this must be considered in relation to the present problem of illegal abortion, and the complications and medical costs arising therefrom, both in terms of the length of such admissions and the costs in hospital labour and facilities expended. And it must be emphasised that abortion is not an equal alternative to contraception. A widespread family planning programme is a necessary corollary to a less rigid abortion policy.

The Road to Reform

It is now almost ten years since Nigerians first officially trod the road to abortion reform. Significantly, it was gynaecologists who led the way, with a memorandum to the Federal Government in August, 1974.

Nothing happened immediately, but in October, 1975, at the annual Conference of the Society of Gynaecology and Obstetrics in Nigeria (S.G.O.N.), the Federal Commissioner for Health, Colonel Dan Suleiman, announced that the government was considering revising the law on abortion, a statement which was of course construed to mean the legalising of abortion on a variety of grounds. The move was supported by the S.G.O.N. Again, nothing happened until the introduction of the Termination of Pregnancy law, 1980, to the National Assembly. This bill, less liberal than its opponents might admit, and again introduced by a medical doctor, has suffered the fate of its predecessors.

Abortion is not legalised and illegal abortion continues. Abortions are performed on women, but men make the abortion laws. Solanke has stated that ‘it is the inherent right of women to play a prominent role in directing the course of legal reforms on abortion’, and ‘it is a special obligation for women to become more vocal on (the abortion) issue’. But though women should be at the forefront of this struggle, it is Nigerian men who on three occasions so far have actually attempted to reform the abortion laws. Women and men should, and must, work together in order to secure, ultimately, the reforms in the abortion laws which are so desperately needed.

The Custody of Children

This paper has concentrated mainly on the control and limitation of women’s fertility and has not yet touched on the question of the control of the fruits of
fertility, the children which women bear. It is well-known that most Nigerian women desire a large family and derive great joy from raising their children and watching them grow. But a mother is not always permitted to watch her children grow. Divorce and separation are common and with these comes the awful wrench as a woman is separated from her children, often leaving them to the unterender ministrations of co-wives or affines not particularly committed to their welfare. Indeed women often force themselves to remain in an oppressive and unhappy marriage rather than leaving the children behind. This brings us, then, to the very important issue of child custody.

In the three major ethnic groups of Nigeria, and probably in most, but not all, of the others, 'ownership' of children is vested in their fathers, through the men's control over their wives. As a Yoruba proverb states, 'the man who owns the tree owns the kola nut'; a similar Igbo proverb observes that 'the man who owns the goat owns the kid'. A Hausa woman has poignantly expressed the reality of the Hausa situation in the statement that 'ba mu da ya-ya, ko daya' (we [women] have no children, none at all). It is not for nothing that a Nigerian woman is said to have had a baby for her husband.

The likelihood of a woman retaining custody of the children after divorce varies with the particular system of law applied. The likelihood is greatest with recourse to statutory law, which insists that in granting custody the interests of the children must be the paramount consideration. Adesanya points out that in deciding custody, the court will consider factors such as the ages of the children and arrangements for their accommodation, education, welfare and general upbringing, as well as the conduct of the claimants. The children will be given into the custody of the parent who, in the court's opinion, will best ensure the children's welfare. This clearly gives the mother at least a fighting chance, if not better, to gain custody over the children of the marriage.

Statutory law contrasts greatly with customary law according to which, as the proverbs imply, and as Amechi (1979) demonstrates, the father generally has an absolute right to the children of the marriage. And though some cities have bye-laws which reserve to mothers the right to retain custody of their children until the age of five, such provisions are usually disregarded.

It is impossible to consider the question of custody in Islamic law in Northern Nigeria without reference to the culture of the people who practise it, for the practice of Islamic law here is a blend of Islamic jurisprudence and local custom.

We have noted that in Hausa society, rights over children are vested in the husband. In the event of divorce women are rarely permitted to retain custody of the children by their husbands or the courts. This is actually contrary to orthodox Maliki law, which states that 'the child should be under the care and custody of its mother until the boy becomes mature and the girl marries and consummates the marriage' provided the mother does not marry outside her former husband's kin group. If the mother remarries elsewhere, according to the law, the child should still not be given to the father. Rather, custody should remain with the mother and her female relatives. These include the mother's mother, grandmother, etc., maternal aunt, and the mother's maternal aunt. Following these, custody should fall to the child's father's mother and only after this to the father.

J.N.D. Anderson (1954) found that in some of the courts in Northern Nigeria, however, a variant Maliki view corresponding to local custom applied, whereby a
boy could be claimed by his father or other guardian at between five and seven years of age. In some cases, children were taken from their mothers as soon as they were weaned. This latter point is reconfirmed by Yahaya Mohammed (1967), who notes that custom always prevails over custody law in the Northern States:

Under the custom, where the couple are divorced, the Alkali . . . tells the mother to return the child to his or her father after he has been weaned.

And if the alkali hasn't mentioned it, the mother of the children still knows what is in store. If the husband hasn't taken the children today, he will take them tomorrow. If not at 2 years old, then maybe at 3. So certain are women of the disposition of the children, that in some divorce cases, they themselves advise the husband to come and collect 'his' children.

Better a clean break than the slow torture of looking after the children and raising them, only to see them suddenly whisked away to their father's house at his convenience. Given the strength of custom, women accept, perforce, the loss of their children. They do not bring custody cases, for they have had no reason to believe they would win. But the situation may be changing, if a recent case in Kaduna is any indication. After the divorce of a well educated Hausa couple, the husband was astounded by his wife's refusal to give up their three year old daughter. He took the case to the Sharia court and explained to the alkali that he wished all his children to be raised together, so that they would know each other well, and by himself, so that he could be certain of their receiving proper care and guidance. He argued, moreover, that because his former wife travelled frequently, his daughter would be continually dragged back and forth. His former wife countered that only she had suffered the pangs of her daughter's birth. Having already lost her son to her former husband, she wanted at the least the chance of raising her only other child. The decision of the alkali was in the favour of the woman, who was granted custody until her daughter married. Should the woman herself remarry, custody was to pass to her mother, in accord with the Sharia.

In this case, the mother had stood her ground, the Alkali interpreted the law more strictly then is commonly the case, and the mother kept the custody of her daughter. Thus, with regard to Muslim law, it appears that there is hope for women who want the custody of their children, provided the women are prepared to fight for their rights.

But then what can we say of traditional law, which almost always returns children to their father, and even of Muslim law as it is usually applied? Women should not be compelled to remain in an unhappy marriage because of the fear of losing their children. This is an issue which a woman cannot fight on her own, but which women, organised, can certainly grapple with, both in order to alter the climate of opinion in Nigeria, and in order to change the law. It is an issue which concerned women can and should address, for their children's sake as well as their own.

**Conclusion**

With all these issues — contraception, abortion, and child custody — which affect women so intimately and so profoundly, women must speak out, and they must act, in order to spare their sisters the indignity, the agonies, the hazards, and the sorrow which are the legacy of present law and practice.

Equally important, women must become involved in the planning, policy-making, and legislation in areas which touch so directly on their lives, choices and opportunities. Indeed, when discussions centre on the morality of issues such as
contraception and abortion, we may also question the morality of programmes and laws which presume to act on women's behalf, without ever consulting women or incorporating them into the decision-making process. We must ensure that it should no longer be true that 'men take the decisions, while women take the consequences'.

Bibliographic Note


An earlier version of this paper was presented at the second annual *Women in Nigeria* Conference, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria, April 1983.
SWAZILAND: Political Crisis, Regional Dilemma

John Daniel and Johnson Vilane

Daniel and Vilane portray squabbles following the death of King Sobhuza as competition for control of the state apparatus by factions of the same class. The outcome will in no way displace the broader influence of this class over state policy. Indeed the relationship of Swaziland to South Africa, argue the authors, is not due to geopolitical factors or structural features, but precisely to the compradorial nature of Swaziland’s ruling class.

The 1980s have been traumatic years for the Swazi people. The death of the long-reigning King Sobhuza in August 1982 ended 14 years of post-independence stability and initiated a prolonged period of factional strife within royalist circles which has brought into question the very legitimacy of the popular traditions and political institutions which Sobhuza strove so hard to preserve. Simultaneously the Swazi state has created for itself a derisive image with its alignment against those forces seeking a democratic and non-racial alternative in South Africa. This paper analyses these two dimensions of the Swazi state’s political crisis. It seeks to explain both the seemingly never-ending series of ‘palace coups’ as well as the more baffling spectacle of a member state of the OAU engaging guerrillas of the African National Congress of South Africa in hostile combat while simultaneously extending nearly full diplomatic recognition to the apartheid government of South Africa.

The most common explanation focuses on Swaziland’s structural subordination to the South African economy emphasing its landlocked condition and the transportation and trade consequences that flow therefrom: its energy, fuel and other forms of dependence; the vital nature of the revenue earned from membership in the Southern African Customs Union (SACU); and the importance of the South African labour market. These are used to justify a conclusion that Swaziland has no choice but to ‘play Pretoria’s game’. It is the price South Africa exacts for Swaziland’s economic dependence.

This argument is incomplete. If it constituted the whole explanation, then Botswana and Lesotho would have the same intimate dealings with South Africa for both exist in a structurally similar subordinate relationship to South Africa and are equally, probably even more so, vulnerable to economic manipulation. Yet they do not and there is a qualitative difference between them and Swaziland in both their attitudes to, and dealings with, the apartheid government. Neither has signed security agreements nor have they exchanged trade missions. Both have expressed support for the imposition of mandatory economic sanctions while Swaziland has taken the opposite position. Their relations are, in diplomatic terms, ‘cool’. Where they have been required to co-operate with the government in Pretoria, they have done so reluctantly and only to the minimal extent necessary.
This was well illustrated by Lesotho’s removal from its territory of ANC cadres. This action was taken only after South Africa had virtually starved the country into submission. Even so, South Africa’s demand that these ANC operatives be handed over to its security forces was refused. Instead they were moved out to Zambia under the safe jurisdiction of the United Nations without the ideological broadside of anti-ANC rhetoric which accompanied the Swazi expulsion of ANC in 1984. Botswana and Lesotho appear therefore as reluctant ‘bedfellows’ of South Africa while Swaziland seems more of a ‘consenting adult’.

These differences illustrate that, even in the imperialist context of southern Africa there are options and degrees of submissiveness and collaboration, and that economic domination and coercion, as well as the use or threat of military power, should not be seen as the sole determinants of the region’s relations with both the government of South Africa and the liberation movements opposing it. South African coercion only establishes the parameters within which the states of the region can safely offer sanctuary, and even some assistance, to anti-apartheid liberation movements. Deviation beyond these limits sets up the possibility of Pretoria taking retaliatory measures. However, Pretoria’s power does not create the situation where these states have of necessity to side actively with it against forces of liberation. Botswana, Lesotho and Mozambique have all experienced intense South African military and economic pressure but have not ‘declared war’ on the ANC nor expressed an ideological hostility to its goals. Yet Swaziland, which by comparison has been subjected to minimal pressure and towards whom the incentives offered by South Africa have never been realised, has done so. Obviously therefore its stance is prompted by other factors and in our view these are class and ideology.

This paper therefore locates the explanation for the collaborative behaviour of the Swazi state in an analysis of the specific nature of the power structure in Swaziland, the position and interests of the dominant royalist comprador class within it, their economic links and their ideological world view. We will show that between the Swazi ruling class and South African capital there are strong ties and between the ruling classes of the two countries and a commonality of political perceptions. Finally we will argue that current political developments in the region are deepening those ties so that the relationship has become an embrace of two threatened ruling classes.

Pre-Colonial and Colonial Class Formation
The modern Swazi state emerged in the early nineteenth century as part of a process of regional state formation and dissolution triggered by the Mfècane. By the 1860s it had developed a tributary mode of production with a dominant class of aristocrats and chiefs for whom control over access to land, wives and cattle, as well as their ability to extract surplus labour time, constituted their material base. By that time the Swazi state had also established a tendency to ally itself with powerful imperialist forces in the region as part of a defensive stategy against its then principal adversary, the Zulu state. On four occasions between 1864 and 1876 Swazi soldiers fought with Transvaal Boers in campaigns against indigenous groups, while, in 1879, it was the formidable Swazi army which actually secured victory for the British in their war with the Pedi. Later co-operation with the Pedi.

The Swazi ruling class was likewise somewhat accommodationist in its response to capital’s penetration of Swaziland which began with the discovery of gold deposits
in the region in the 1860s. This brought into Swaziland prospectors, adventurers, hunters and fortune-seekers willing to pay for mineral and trading rights and access to other resources. The result was a selling of the country’s assets and the permeation by capital of the pre-capitalist Swazi formation.

The defeat of the Transvaal in the South African War of 1899-1902 produced the British takeover of Swaziland. Its colonial policy of developing settler agriculture necessitated a wholesale appropriation of land which deprived the Swazi people of rights of residence on two-thirds of their territory. This generated a crisis for the ruling class as the expropriation of land meant an erosion in their basis of power. The colonial state was careful, however, not to allow this process to go too far and took measures to conserve elements of the existing mode of production in those areas reserved for exclusive Swazi occupation. This secured the purpose of reducing labour costs as it enabled the migrant proletariat to derive some of its means of reproduction from the so-called ‘native areas’. Swazi royalty proved adept at adjusting to these new circumstances and it assumed the intermediary role of ensuring a steady supply of labour to South African mining capital. This took the form of labour recruiting with capitation fees fostering the process of capital accumulation begun in the concessionary period. The British abetted this process by permitting the monarchy to impose, as indirect rulers of the colonial state, a range of taxes upon both the Swazi peasantry and the working class. Gradually over time the Swazi aristocracy emerged as a petty-bourgeoisie within the colonial capitalist state — a class with certain comprador characteristics.

This comprador tendency continued into the decolonisation period. The aristocracy’s response to the prospect of independence was to establish the Imbokodvo National Movement, a party formed to ensure ‘the perpetuation of the monarchy, Swazi customs, mineral and land rights and the prerogative of the Ngwenyama (the King)’. Often called ‘the King’s party’, Imbokodvo was actually set up as a necessary adaption to the requirements of the Westminster electoral process to give political expression to the class interests of Swaziland’s aristocrats and chiefs, for whom Sobhuza was the principal spokesperson. But it also enjoyed the support of a wider and formidable coalition of interests — the South African government, the local settler bourgeoisie and foreign capital. Advising Imbokodvo in its formation were prominent Afrikaner politicians like the Broederbonder Van Wyk de Vries and the M.P. and later Prime Minister, B.J. Vorster. Capital provided financial and organisational resources.

At this point we depart from this description of the evolution of the Swazi ruling class’ relationship with capital to discuss the structure of post-independence political power in Swaziland. We will return in the next section to analyse post-colonial relationship with capital.

The Structure of Political Power

The Swazi political system is a complex diarchic on with two distinct but interrelated sets of institutions — those of the ‘Swazi nation’ (the Monarchy, Lqoqo and Libandla) and of the ‘Swazi government’, comprising Parliament and the cabinet. It was in the latter that the instruments of independence vested most constitutional authority but the King, as head of state, was given authority to nominate sufficient members of Parliament as well as to select the Prime Minister to make him more than just a symbolic figurehead. In actuality, Sobhuza dominated the political process, because, at independence, every Parliamentary seat was won by Imbokodvo and he nominated the rest of the membership.
Even so the parliamentary arrangement lasted only five years. In 1973, the independence constitution was abnegated, Parliament dissolved and all political parties, even including Imbokodvo, banned. Power now reverted to the political institutions of the 'Swazi nation'. This meant that Sobhuza exercised, by decree, supreme executive, legislative and judicial power, aided by a circle of advisers. These were his council of ministers (the cabinet) and the members of the Liqoqo, a small predominantly aristocratic body under a prince specially pointed out to the people. This centralisation of absolute power was a response to a number of developments — labour unrest and the loss to the opposition in the 1972 elections of three seats in an area which contained large numbers of estate and plantation workers and the blocking by the Appeal Court of an attempt to deport one of three opposition M.P.s. Sobhuza legitimated his drastic action by reference to the ideological raw materials of the precapitalist social formation so that the constitution was declared incompatible with Swazi tradition. He argued that it had permitted the imposition into our country of highly undesirable political practices, alien and incompatible with the way of life in our society, and designed to disrupt and destroy our own peaceful and constructive and essentially democratic method of political activity. Increasingly this element engenders hostility, bitterness and unrest in our peaceful society. What he was referring to were trade unions, political parties and elections conducted on a universal sufferage basis.

Rule exclusively by decree continued until 1978 when Parliament was reopened but with its membership now determined by an electoral system so designed as to ensure domination by loyalists to traditional custom. Its functions were changed as well. Stripped of independent policy-making authority, it was reduced to enacting into law the decisions of Sobhuza and his advisers. To a certain extent this revamped Parliament can be seen as a modernisation of the Libandla which in pre-colonial Swaziland had offered a limited form of democracy in that all adult males could sit on the body and its sanction was required on all important matters.

The resuscitation of Parliament completed a stage by which the form of the state was reformed to ensure the unchallenged domination of the royalist compradors. Employing the ideology of popular tradition, Sobhuza had devised an institutional format which consolidated both the political power and the material base of this class while also securing the interests of its multinational and local class allies. Indeed, these had been buttressed as the suppression of the labour movement and political parties facilitated the accumulation process.

In June 1982, Sobhuza proclaimed a further change to the form of the state by upgrading the constitutional status of the Liqoqo to that of the Supreme Council of State and expanding its membership to 16 salaried officials, a marked break with the pre-capitalist polity when the Liqoqo was a small, informal and near anonymous body. However, the decree was never fully implemented by Sobhuza for he died within two months of issuing it and without naming the members of this new-look Liqoqo. Nor was the relationship clearly defined between the four poles or centres which had by this time developed inside the Swazi power bloc. These were the Liqoqo, the cabinet (headed by Prime Minister Prince Mabandla), the office of the Regency of the Ndlovukati or Queen Mother Dzeliwe, aided by an 'Authorised Person' (Prince Sozisa), and a royalist-controlled development corporation, the Tibiyo Taka Ngwane Fund. Particularly important and left ambiguous was the relationship between the Liqoqo and the cabinet for, whereas before this proclamation as decrees had been issued in the name of the King-in-Council (the
cabinet), it now seemed that policy-making and policy-issuing authority had passed to the *Liqogo*. In these circumstances factional strife was inevitable.

**The Post-Sobhuza Power Struggles**

Before examining the points at which the various power blocs have confronted each other, the nature or form of these struggles needs to be clarified. To describe them as either class struggle or as a manifestation of conflict between so-called forces of tradition and of modernity is not correct. Such conflicts do, of course, exist in Swaziland today but they have not actually been the subject of the in-fighting which has surfaced since Sobhuza's death. Instead they have centred on filling the power vacuum left by Sobhuza's highly personalised style of rule. Consequently, with supreme political authority the main object of faction formation, the struggles have themselves been highly personalised and on the whole confined to intrigue and cabal within the royal palace.

Two other elements have, however, sharpened and complicated the conflict situation. One is a division within the royal family dating back to the controversial selection in 1899 of Sobhuza as successor to King Bhunu (Mahlokohla). Today this schism centres upon the personage of Prince Mfanasibili who is held in awe by many within the aristocracy as he is a son of Prince Makhosikhosi who, according to Swazi oral tradition (or one interpretation of it), was the true heir to Mahlokohla's throne, and not Sobhuza.

The second relates to the considerable material resources and political springboard potential of the *Tibiyo* Fund, an entity possibly unique in post-independence Africa. Its origins lie in a provision in the independence constitution granting the *Ngwenyama* exclusive control of revenues generated from minerals concessions funds. *Tibiyo* has used in a variety of ways — to purchase back freehold land from non-Swazis, much of which it has developed into its own maize and dairy estates. It has set up a number of business enterprises ranging from butcheries to the national airline and the state television service. It has also acquired equity in practically every important foreign subsidiary in the economy. These include huge agro-industrial multinationals like Lonhro, Cortaulds and the Commonwealth Development Corporation (sugar, timber, citrus and fruit processing), large wholesalers like Frasers, service industries like freight (Rennies), insurance (Hill Samuels) and banking (Bank of Commerce and Credit), as well as mining manufacturing and tourist companies. Normal practice has been to take a 40% holding but, where a majority stake has been acquired, the procedure has been to sign a management contract with the foreign partner. In this way *Tibiyo* has spread its net vertically through every sector of the economy, establishing a solid, albeit junior, partnership with foreign capital. Dividend payments from these joint ventures have become its largest single source of income.

Control rests with a board appointed by the *Ngwenyama* and it has always comprised a majority of princes with a few loyal commoner allies. Business is conducted as a private royalist fiefdom as it is subject to no form of public scrutiny — no annual statement is published, Parliament has no say in its operations and the Swazi government earns no revenue from it as it is exempt from taxation. It is thus a source of exclusive accumulation for the royal family and a material base of considerable social mobility.

More political significance lies, however, in the fact that *Tibiyo* has been the means...
whereby the Swazi aristocracy has consolidated and strengthened its bridgehead to foreign capital and equally significant here is the change since independence in the constellation of capital in Swaziland. The once dominant position of British capital has been eclipsed by South African. Outside of the sugar industry, South African capital has steadily incorporated every area of economic activity — mining, manufacturing, mercantile trade, transportation and the important hotel, timber and citrus industries. What this means, therefore, is that in Swaziland today the material prosperity of the politically hegemonic class rests very largely on a relationship with South African capital — a fact which naturally shapes the class' views of its political options.

This analysis of the role and place of *Tibiyo* in the political economy of Swaziland, and its relationship to the royalist power struggles, would be incomplete without specific mention of Dr. Sishayi Nxumalo, the individual generally believed to have conceived of the idea of putting the King's mineral royalties to work as an investment corporation and, as its general manager for many years, the driving force behind its spectacular growth. There is an irony in Nxumalo's involvement in *Tibiyo* and the giving of his considerable talents to developing a vehicle for royalist comprador accumulation. He is not an aristocrat, but a commoner with only distant ties to the royal family. In reflection of this, he was an active opponent of *Imbokodvo* in the pre-independence political process but later (if possible), joined it and became Minister of Industry, Mines and Tourism. Assuming a high profile, he travelled extensively developing links with several figures in international finance like Lonrho's Tiny Rowlands and the South African Natie Kirsch. In the process he attracted considerable foreign investment into Swaziland and became a close confidante of Sobhuza who, in the late 1970s, put him in charge of *Tibiyo*. In a few short years he transformed a bank account into a corporate empire and the most dynamic domestic force in the economy.

However, his success aroused fears and suspicions. Despite his undoubted loyalty to Sobhuza, there were those within the aristocracy, like Prince Mfanasibili, who doubted the totality of his commitment to the status quo. They suspected, for example, that as a dedicated free-market capitalist, Nxumalo regarded the preservation of the pre-capitalist system of land allocation and control as highly unproductive and one which restricted the full development of the capitalist relation. Unable to rise, as a non-aristocrat, within the ascriptive hierarchy of the Swazi Nation, they feared that at some point he would attempt to use *Tibiyo*'s resources and its ties to international capital to advance his political interests. He was, thus, a rival to conservative royalists and it was inevitable that the securing of their hegemony would require his removal from *Tibiyo*, both to eliminate the threat that he as Swaziland's shrewdest modern politician posed, but also to ensure that *Tibiyo* continued to function as the monopoly corporation of the Swazi crown.

The first serious bout of infighting occurred in early 1983 and involved an abortive attempt by Prime Minister Mabandla to shift the locus of policy-making power into the cabinet and away from the *Liqoqo*. His failure led him into exile in South Africa and replacement by Prince Bhekimpili, a staunch conservative and royalist content to accept the cabinet's subordinate status. The next was even more dramatic and produced the deposition of Queen Regent Dzelwile and her replacement by Nkhosikati LaTFwala, Queen Ntombi, mother of the designated heir Prince Makhosetive. At issue again was the locus of ultimate authority in the post-Sobhuza state but, at another level, the dispute was rooted in the legitimacy/succession
question mentioned earlier. Dzeliwe represented the continuing domination of the royal house by the lineage of Sobhuza. Her deposition and Ntombi's accession meant a shift in the royalist balance of power in favour of Prince Mfanasibili, whose mother was a TFwala. He and a clique of followers now moved rapidly to consolidate control of both the royal house and the Liqoqo by detaining several princes and by the dismissal from both the cabinet and the Liqoqo of Prince Gabheni — a charismatic figure, a direct son of Sobhuza and a popular Minister of Home Affairs.

The stage was now set for the showdown between Mfanasibili and Nxumalo and it began when, after elections for Parliament in November 1983, Nxumalo found himself moved sideways from Tibiyo into the cabinet as Finance Minister — a prestigious but less powerful position. Six months later he lost even that position when he was sacked from the cabinet and then placed under detention. By this time, Mfanasibili's faction controlled the palace, the Liqoqo and Tibiyo. The main figures in the clique around the Prince were Liqoqo members George Msibi, Robert Mabila and A.K. Hlophe, Prime Minister Bhekimpi and Foreign Minister Mahamba Mnisi, while in the background lurked two shadowy expatriates, Yusuf Patel and Chief Antonia Fernandez. The former — a South African lawyer — had fled to Swaziland in the 1970s while on appeal from a 3-year sentence for criminal fraud. Fernandez appeared in Swaziland in 1983, having left his native land, Nigeria, in 1956. In Swaziland, he was installed in the mansion of the by-now suspended Authorised Person. In 1985 he was accorded the status of Roving Ambassador Extraordinary and, for twenty-four hours, Deputy-Minister of Foreign Affairs, an appointment revoked when it was pointed out that the Chief was neither a Swazi nor an M.P.

Despite the appearance of omnipotence, the clique's political grip was shaky. This was due mainly to the widespread perception that the ousting of Queen Dzeliwe was contrary to Swazi tradition and custom and therefore illegitimate. Public feeling was that Queen Ntombi, and those that had manoeuvred to put her on the throne, were usurpers. Adding to this sense of illegitimacy was massive distaste for the manner by which the clique exercised power — their selective regard for custom, statutory law and due process; their frequent sackings and suspensions of senior civil servants and other perceived opponents; their constant threats and exhortations to the public to 'spy' on neighbours and turn-in so-called 'subversives' which created a chilling atmosphere of fear in the country; and the thinly disguised impression that power was being used to 'feather nests' and that the clique was beyond the reach of the law.

These two impressions were created in part by newspaper revelations that seven Liqoqo members — including Mfanasibili, Msibi and Hlophe — had for at least eighteen months been receiving double salaries. Acknowledging this, Msibi blamed it on an accounting error of which the seven were unaware. He attacked the press for creating bad publicity but excluded any mention of any intention to repay the funds. The sense that the clique was beyond the law was reinforced by a decree giving complete immunity to the Liqoqo members from any legal action in respect 'of matters arising from their official activities'. This was seen as a move to immunise Msibi from a massive libel suit filed against him by Nxumalo shortly after his sacking and also to protect Mfanasibili from revelations that a company, of which he and Yusuf Patel were shareholders, was involved in the Customs' Union fraud. It was actions like these that led Minister of Justice, David Matse, to the astounding declaration in June 1985 that 'justice has disappeared in Swaziland'.

This domestic unpopularity was reflected in an unusually frank editorial in the normally docile *Times of Swaziland* (29 June 1984). It struck out against the clique and other intrigues comparing their struggles 'over our country and our property' to 'dogs fighting over a juicy bone'. It described the factional strife as 'more deadly than party politics 'since a privileged few are allowed to enter the arena and the masses become helpless bystanders who watch in awe'. Reflecting a similar theme, the country's other national daily *The Swazi Observer* (4 August, 1984) described the squabbling as 'disturbing and degrading'.

Dissent assumed an organised form in the second half of 1984. The main site of opposition was the University of Swaziland which staged a series of boycotts, strikes and protest marches which led to an enquiry into the causes of student unrest. It 'uncovered' an 'unhealthy preoccupation with the philosophies, aims and objectives of the African National Congress' on campus and, as a result, the *Liqoqo* forced 21 students and two staff members out of the University. Simultaneously graffiti, slogans and secret pamphlets announced the existence of the People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO) and called for unity amongst all groups opposed to the regime. In London an exiled politician, Prince Dumisa Dlamini, announced the formation of the Swaziland Liberation Movement with the objective of protecting the royal family from abuse by Prince Mfanasibili and George Msibi, restoring constitutional legitimacy to the throne and ensuring the accession of Prince Makhosetive — a reference to a view that some *Liqoqo* members had no wish to see a new king installed.

The clique's response was a public relations blitz during which members addressed the *tinkhundla* (district councils) with a combination of dire warning and plaintive appeals for trust. At one such occasion Prince Bhekimpi assured his audience that 'your monarchy is alive and well. It really cares for you, so please disregard all information to the contrary. Please be steadfast, keep faith in your monarchy and help sustain it'. The pleading tone hardly reflected an assured leadership. The offensive culminated in April 1985 in a bizarre 'national fast' called by Queen Ntombi in response 'to a dark cloud of ill-fortune' which she claimed to have seen 'hovering over the country'. During this 24-hour happening, Swazis were supposed neither to eat, nor to breastfeed their babies and not to feed their cattle. Instead they were to engage in prayer.

The cynical and apathetic response to the Queen's call reflected the erosion of faith in the nation's leaders. Only weeks later the hollowness of Prime Ministers Bhekimpki's assertion as to the good health of the monarchy was exposed when the *Emakhosikati* (the late Sobhuza's widows) staged an illegal protest march on Parliament — all unsanctioned gatherings of ten or more people in Swaziland are unlawful. The specific targets of their ire were Prince Mfanasibili and George Msibi whom they accused of corruption and of having distorted custom in their 'hijack' of the *Liqoqo*. Confronting the Prime Minister, they humiliatingly taunted him to arrest them — which he did not.

This unprecedented action by a traditionally voiceless group exposed the depth of the crisis within the monarchy. It also signified a swing in the pendulum of power inside the palace for it emerged that the *Emakhosikati*'s action had the support of both their sons and Makhosetive. The Sobhuza line had regained the ascendancy and it moved decisively to consolidate its position. In October Mfanasibili and Msibi were dismissed by the Queen Regent and action taken against some of their allies —
the fugitive lawyer Patel was detained preparatory to deportation or extradition; Chief Fernandez was relieved of his ambassadorial status and the much-feared chief of police, Majaji Simelane, was sacked and arrested on a perjury charge. On the last day of the year, Nxumalo and other detainees were released and the treason charges dropped.

However, more significant even than all of these developments were two pronouncements by the Queen in December 1985. One reduced the Liqoqo's status by removing the designation 'Supreme', returning it to being a 'Council of State' and with many of its functions and powers transferred to the Regency. The second named 25 April, 1986 as the date of Makhosetive's installation as the Ngwenyama. Given his youth and the fact that he was still at school, the general expectation was that the Coronation would not occur for a few more years.

Taken together, these two events have laid bare the extent of royalty's institutional crisis. Returning the Liqoqo to its traditional place in the institutional hierarchy is clearly an attempt to regain the legitimacy the 'Swazi nation' had enjoyed under Sobhuza while the early assumption of the throne by Makhosetive is an effort to end the internecine squabbling. It will be his task to restore faith in the monarchy but it will not be easy as its image has been tarnished both by the years of infighting and by its role as an accomplice to the apartheid state.

Fundamental is the fact that the political institutions of the 'Swazi nation' are becoming increasingly unsuited to the level of the country's development. They exclude the Swazi people as a whole from effective participation in the body politic and, as long as this is the case, political crisis will be endemic to the Swazi state. The installation of a rightful monarch will make no essential difference. In a region experiencing the currents of revolutionary change, the day is passing when the monarchical institutions can serve to satisfy the Swazi peoples aspirations. In this context we move to an analysis of the Swazi state's drift into the bosom of apartheid.

The Alliance With Apartheid
In 1984 the Swaziland government issued an expulsion order against the African National Congress and agreed with South Africa to an exchange of trade missions. These developments climaxed a process of realignment in Swaziland's foreign policy which dated back to early in the decade when South Africa's relations with the states of southern Africa became openly imperialist and interventionist. This was an effort to regain control of events in a region where the balance of power had swung against it with the independence of Mozambique and Angola and the advances of the Zimbabwean liberation struggle. Responding to these same changes Swaziland had, in the late 1970s, begun a process of bringing its foreign policies more into line with those of the OAU and the so-called 'Frontline' states.

Thus, for example, Swaziland joined SADCC and rejected South African overtures to join its Constellation of Southern African States (CONSAS) while Prime Minister Mabandla improved relations with Mozambique. President Machel visited Swaziland early in 1980 and, shortly thereafter, Swaziland detained a number of MNR members and expelled several of the anti-Frelimo organisation's recruiting agents who had been enlisting Mozambiquans working in Swaziland for military training in South Africa. In April 1981, Mabandla hosted a meeting of Machel, Botswana's President Masire and Lesotho's premier Leabua Jonathon which issued
a communique probably unique in Swazi history by being critical of ‘attempts by South Africa to destablise her neighbouring black-ruled states.’

Equally as important as the above was the change in relations with the ANC. Following negotiations with President Tambo in 1977, Sobhuza allowed the ANC a low-key but official diplomatic presence in Swaziland and often turned a blind-eye to the infiltration through his kingdom of ANC guerillas. By 1979 the eastern front of Mozambique and Swaziland had become the most travelled crossing point for ANC insurgents and it facilitated some of the ANC’s most spectacular armed actions — the attacks on SASOL and the Voortrekkerhoogte military barracks. It was also crucial to the ANC’s building-up of its internal infrastructure. By this time the South African military was complaining that this eastern front was ‘leaking like a sieve’.

In this context South Africa launched its so-called ‘destabilisation’ strategy, a ‘carrot-and-stick’ attempt to bludgeon the region into subordination to its dictates. Mostly this meant the ‘big stick’ of South African economic and military coercion but, for Swaziland, the approach was nearly all ‘carrot’ — primarily in the form of an offer to transfer to its jurisdiction lands long claimed by the Swazi monarchy. It soon became clear that the offer was contingent upon Swaziland signing a security pact with Pretoria and adopting a hostile posture towards the ANC. In making this proposal the South Africans were exploiting an old ambition of Sobhuza’s — to regain territory conceded away in the nineteenth century by his predecessors. A successful consummation of the deal would for Sobhuza reunite the Swazi people and climax a reign which had seen Swaziland regain its political independence and Swazi ownership of its domestic land resources significantly redressed.

For this reason he ‘swallowed the bait’ and in February 1982 — six months before his death — agreed to the pact with South Africa, one which at the time was kept secret. While Sobhuza was alive implementation focused on eliminating the ANC’s top political leadership in Swaziland. This took the form of the expulsion of the official representative, Stanley Mabizela, and the assassination of Petros and Jabu Nzima — spouses and important officials of the South African Congress of Trade Unions. Their killings by presumably South African agents, as well as the later murders in 1983 of Zwelakhe Nyanda and Keith McFadden, can be seen to have been authorised and exonerated by Article One of the Security Agreement which commits both parties to combating ‘terrorism, insurgency and subversion individually and collectively ... (calling) ... upon each other whenever possible for such assistance and taking steps as may be deemed necessary or expedient to eliminate this evil’. It is noteworthy that the shooting of McFadden, a Swazi national, evoked no protest or comment from the Swazi government, something which one would normally expect when a national is killed on his home soil by foreigners (according to eye-witnesses, the attackers were ‘whites with strange-sounding accents’). In a similar vein there is evidence that black and white South African security personnel were involved in the 1984 Swazi military/police operation to flush out cadres as part of the ANC expulsion decree. Again this alleged foreign involvement inside Swaziland is explicable in terms of Article One.

After Sobhuza’s death, pressure on the ANC intensified and, at the end of 1982, the first round-up of members occurred and some 35 were deported to Mozambique. It was the signing of the Nkomati accord in March 1984 which qualitatively changed the situation in Swaziland and led the state to adopt a ‘no holds barred’ position towards the ANC. In the eyes of the Swazi state, Nkomati legitimated its
collaboration with apartheid and the existence of its own security arrangement with South Africa was revealed. A virtue was made for the fact that the Swazi accord predated Mozambique’s by two years — an attempt to curry favour with western governments who were lauding the ‘courage and realism’ of Mozambique’s leaders.

After Nkomati, over 200 alleged ANC members were rounded up in Swaziland and deported but only after periods in detention during which many complained of being routinely assaulted. Certainly some were hospitalised after their apprehension. Others claimed they were hooded and interrogated by ‘whites with foreign accents’. At its height in April 1984 the confrontation assumed the dimensions of a small-scale war with, in all, five ANC supporters and two Swazi security personnel killed. Simultaneously four ANC detainees disappeared from Swazi police cells. The authorities claimed they had been freed by ANC colleagues in an armed raid but this was denied by the ANC in Lusaka who, in turn, alleged they had been kidnapped by South African agents and taken across the border. This view was reinforced when, within days of their disappearance, the South African Minister of Law and Order announced the arrest of four guerillas on the reef. Later in the year the Swaziland government deported to South Africa a former student leader and ANC sympathiser, Bhabalazi Bulunga. His handover took place in flagrant violation of both the UN Convention on Refugees as well as the state’s own legal procedures.

As significant as the above was the accompanying ideological assault upon the ANC. The media denounced ANC fighters as ‘murderous’, ‘bandits’ and ‘armed thugs’ while Prime Minister Bhekimpi branded their presence in Swaziland as ‘a scourge of foreign criminals’ and he called President Tambo ‘a liar’. The public were exhorted ‘to watch their neighbours’ and to ‘turn in suspicious characters’ like ‘unattached young males with foreign accents’ while the commission into student disturbances at the University articulated the state’s view as to who, in the struggle for power in South Africa, was its real enemy by declaring support for the ANC and its goals a ‘security threat’ and tantamount to a crime.

At the height of this vendetta, the Swazi and South African governments agreed to an exchange of trade missions. The South African mission opened in November 1984 with six accredited diplomats. In an interview with a journalist the Commissioner, Sam Sterban, described the mission as ‘an embassy in all but name.’ Many sceptics wondered why, after years of near friction-free trade relations, a new framework beyond the Customs Union should now be required. The Commissioner himself provided the answer:

I see the work of the mission as going a bit further than promoting trade . . . trade between South Africa and Swaziland will look after itself but we can look after other developments.

Given the known presence in the mission of at least one senior officer of the National Intelligence Service, as well as Commissioner Sterban’s description of relations between the Swazi and South African police as ‘good’ and his statement that

The policies of both countries are reflected in the relations between the two police forces . . . I think this is only to be expected between police forces of any neighbouring countries that have a similar policy.

it seems reasonable to assume that anti-ANC intelligence activities will be one of these ‘other developments’. In fact it is not far fetched to describe the mission as a forward base in the war with the ANC.
In 1985 Swaziland’s ruling class tied themselves body and soul to the South African government, moving beyond collaboration in the ANC onslaught to advocating some of apartheid’s most important policy positions. In May, the Swazi Finance Minister criticised the disinvestment campaign and that perspective was carried into SADCC, some of whose members saw positive investment possibilities for themselves in capital’s withdrawal from the Republic. Simultaneously the Swazi Foreign Minister came out against economic sanctions and appealed to the world to:

give South Africa a chance to sort out its problems. We have been really impressed by what South Africa has been doing for the last years trying to improve conditions in this part of the world,... (South Africa is) on the right track as far as we are concerned.

Quite how Minisiter Mnisi saw five years of South African destabilisation as improving the lot of the region was not explained, while his appeal for more time in a context of South Africa’s murderous repression of the black townships was a clear expression of the Swazi state’s indifference to the suffering and struggles of South Africa’s blacks. At the Commonwealth Prime Ministers’ Conference in Nassau in September 1985, Swaziland was the only member state to side publicly with Prime Minister Thatcher’s opposition to sanctions. Not even Malawi went so far as to associate itself with the Swazi position.

Conclusion

It is an obvious truism that in the world community of nations the South African state is a pariah with even its main capitalist allies feeling the need to reduce their identification with it. Swaziland stands out as the exception with its increasingly close association with Pretoria. It is this which constitutes the international dimension of the Swazi state’s political crisis. We will now explain how it is that this situation has come about and how in the present conjuncture of domestic and regional crises it is a logical development for the Swazi ruling class.

At the beginning of this paper, we rejected the fact of Swaziland’s economic dependence upon South Africa as providing a full explanation. No less satisfactory is the attempt to rationalise it as a response to South African inducements like the ‘land deal’. As we noted earlier, there was a qualitative difference in the nature of the Swazi operation against the ANC in the pre-and post-Nkomati periods. The onslaught was at its height at a point in time when the prospects for a successful conclusion of the transaction were receding. In fact Swaziland’s leaders have good grounds for feeling ‘sold out’ by the Botha government. The ‘land deal’ was the catalyst which triggered a head-on confrontation with ANC but, at the point when the Swazi state was most vigorously implementing its side of the bargain, the South African government backed off and informed the Swazi leadership it had now to resolve the issue with the relevant bantustan leaders — an impossibility given their implacable hostility to any loss of sovereignty and territory.

Soon thereafter, and almost coincident with the South African-Swazi agreement on the establishment of trade missions, Pretoria signalled its abandonment of the ‘deal’ by agreeing to upgrade constitutionally the status of the KaNgwane legislature. In terms of the original land proposal, the KaNgwane bantustan was to cease to exist and be incorporated in toto into Swaziland. Rubbing salt into the wound, the South Africans also announced a new economic aid package to KaNgwane which included the designation of Kabokweni as a ‘deconcentration’ growth point with hugely attractive investment incentives — well beyond anything Swaziland could offer.
Located close to the Swazi border, Kabokweni could only increase Swaziland's difficulties in attracting new investment and accelerate the already steady flight of Swazi-based capital to the bantustans. As if this was not enough, Pretoria was simultaneously turning a deaf ear to the increasingly desperate pleas from the Swazi authorities for it to intervene to end the 'conspiracy' by monopoly fertiliser companies in South Africa to bankrupt its Swazi-based competitor, Swaziland Chemical Industries. As of 1983 SCI was Swaziland's most important and lucrative industrial enterprise. In 1984 it was forced into liquidation.

Having established that the relationship with South Africa is not a product of geopolitical factors or structural dependence, nor a response to South African coercion or offers of handouts, we return to the class and ideological factors mentioned earlier.

We believe we have shown how the material interests of the Swazi rulers have been secured through the comprador relationship with capital and how since independence the bridgehead to South African capital has solidified. Obviously this has shaped the class world view so that there is today a remarkable mutuality in its views with those of the apartheid state. These include a shared belief in the superior efficacy of the capitalist mode as well as a view that Africa's indigenous societies should be ruled by its traditional aristocrats. While this may be a self-serving view in Pretoria, in Swazi royalist circles it is an obvious article of faith. Above all in this context, they share a perception about the so-called 'Soviet' or 'marxist' threat. The ANC represents class forces oppressed and exploited in Swaziland today. It advocates a notion of democracy completely at odds with the arcane conception of the Swazi monarchy and promises changes which could threaten its material lifeline.

This brings us then to our concluding assertion. The prospect of fundamental change to the social relations in southern Africa poses critical dangers for the royalist comprador bourgeoisie which comprises the central executive of the Swazi state. Its material base has been secured through a series of alliances with colonial state, local settler, multinational and South African capital. Within Swaziland its hegemony has been secured through the resuscitation of indigenous ideology which is pre-capitalist in origin. It is therefore both conservative in nature and deeply hostile to the revolutionary ideology of the ANC whose politics it fears would unleash processes and forces whose effects would seriously threaten its hegemony. Hence it has been forced to acknowledge for all the world to see that its best interests lie not in change in South Africa but in the survival of the apartheid regime. Hence it was no surprise to hear the Swazi Prime Minister deliver to the Council of Minister's meeting of SADCC in Mbabane in January, 1985 an unabashed defence of his government's co-operation with South Africa. Before a forum dedicated to reducing the region's dependence upon South Africa, he concluded with the words 'today I want to make it clear there is nothing wrong with our policy'.

It would be difficult to find a more explicit expression of a ruling class's interests. It is here that the twin dimensions of the political crisis come together. Apprehensive at the prospect of radical change to the regional environment from which it derives material succour, and beset internally within a political framework increasingly unable to satisfy its subject's needs and wants, the Swazi compradors find there is only one place where they can hope for assistance. Thus, no matter how often the
Botha government breaks its promises, the Swazi state will always be there with ideological support. And it is not an entirely hopeless survival strategy. In the last analysis, South Africa will rescue the Swazi state should there be a prospect of fundamental political change in Swaziland because Pretoria prefers client states on its borders to militant ones.

**Bibliographic Note:**


Briefings

CONGRESS OF SOUTH AFRICAN TRADE UNIONS

The Confederation of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) was launched in November 1985 after five years of negotiation within the independent black union movement. The new confederation brings together 33 unions with a paid-up membership of 450,000, and provides a major focus for black organisation at the workplace and against the apartheid state. Its formation also offers an opportunity to explore the current conditions in which the independent union movement must organise. The *South African Labour Bulletin* has recently published a number of important contributions which both analyse the South African labour relations system and provide an insight into the formation of COSATU.

We publish below two of these contributions. The first is a much abridged version of Jon Lewis and Estelle Randall's *Trade Union Survey*, taken from SALB Vol 11 No 2, October-December 1985. This analysis offers a comprehensive and analytical survey of recent South African labour relations, particularly focussing on the consequences for bargaining and union organisation of the recession.

The second contribution reprints excerpts of documents from SALB Vol 11 No 3, January 1986 relating to the launch of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). The opening speech made by the National Union of Mineworkers' (NUM) Cyril Ramaphosa is complemented by extracts of the COSATU constitution which indicate the range and depth of issues the new confederation intends to confront.

These materials reflect the important contribution SALB in supporting independent black union activity. Further information about SALB may be obtained from The Editor, *South African Labour Bulletin* 4 Melle House, 31 Melle Street, Braamfontein 2017, South Africa.

---

THE STATE OF THE UNIONS

Jon Lewis and Estelle Randall

The last comprehensive surveys of South African trade unionism indicated massive gains: between 1980 and 1983 total union membership rose from 974,977 to
1,545,824 and African membership rose from 223,661 to 741,194. This was despite the onset of recession in 1982. At the heart of this process were the independent unions. Their membership increased from 70,000 in 1979 to 200,000 in 1982 to 400,000 by the end of 1983. Numerical growth was accompanied by increasing organisational depth reflected in the number of shop stewards (6,000); the spread of shop steward councils and locals; the number of agreements, particularly recognition agreements (420); the ability to wage successful strikes (at least until the recession began to bite in mid-1982); and a growing challenge to management prerogatives which substantially shifted the frontier of control on the shopfloor over issues such as arbitrary dismissals. By the end of 1983 Barlow Rand was complaining that emerging unions were challenging management’s very right to manage.

Despite their massive growth the new unions were divided amongst themselves and still overshadowed by the Trades Union Congress of South Africa (TUCSA) which took a reformist stance. At the end of 1983, the Federation of South African Trade Unions (FOSATU) and the Council of Unions of South Africa (CUSA) each had a membership of under 100,000. TUCSA had sharply increased its membership since 1980: from 283,387 to 478,420. This included 139,567 African workers many of whom automatically became members of TUSCA unions by virtue of the closed shop. For their part the new unions had been engaged in ‘unity talks’ since 1981. However, divisions remained over registration and the appropriate relationship to community issues; and around organisational questions: industrial unionism versus regional general unionism.

Also with the formation of national political organisations — the National Forum (NF) and especially the United Democratic Front (UDF) — all trade unions were confronted with the necessity to define their relationship to the wider political struggle. Trade union unity and the formation of the Confederation of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) was to be delayed until the end of 1985 (losing the CUSA unions along the way). The question of the relationship of the trade unions to the political struggle has now become central, although the precise form this should take remains a matter of debate.

I. STRATEGIES AND RESPONSES IN THE PRESENT CRISIS

1. Industrial Relations: the Wiehahn (Commission’s) solution to industrial relations problems was clearly unsatisfactory. The desire to control the emerging unions required giving these unions state recognition, enabling them to win space in their attempt to move beyond the struggle for recognition to direct negotiations at shop floor level.

The union strategy in response to the state’s incorporative strategy was the outcome of considerable debate, particularly around the issues of registration and industrial councils (ICs). The first was resolved in the process of struggle: the unregistered unions survived without official recognition; the registered were not coopted. Today the issue of registration is seen by most as a tactical one. The second issue was resolved when the emergent unions began to realise the advantages of negotiating at an industry-wide level. As a result many emergent unions joined the ICs but also retained shop floor structures and their principles of worker control.

As a result of emergent unions effectively using ICs to their own advantage,
employers and the state are now trying to change the IC system, seeking exemptions from the IC structure, anti-union dispute clauses and compulsory productivity clauses. These attempts to undermine union strength in the system can also be seen in the state’s evolving regional strategy.

2. **Bantustans and Regional Strategy:** traditional territorial apartheid and its associated striving to weaken union activity, promote lower wages and labour intensive industries, and use security legislation to control workers is giving way to a new regional development strategy, designed to open urban labour markets to outside competition, dismantle wage and industrial relations machinery and subject privileged urban workers to fiercer labour market competition. Three major trends are in evidence: new development regions are seen as a single labour market, including people in bantustans; small business and informal sector activity is being promoted as a sector in which industrial relations, minimum wage and health and safety standards should not apply; decentralised industrial relations practices are mooted to break the strength of strong unions and stop their example spreading. In this regard the National Manpower Commission is promoting plant-level bargaining, the dismantling of the industrial council system and the abolition of national wage determination under the Wages Act, all with the ostensible aim of increasing employment.

3. **Recession and Retrenchment:** cyclical employment movements — for example, by the beginning of 1985 the National Automobile and Allied Workers Union (NAAWU) had lost 3000 members through job loss — intensify the effects of growing structural unemployment. Keenan estimates total African unemployment by mid-1984 at between three and four million, compared with total African paid employment (excluding agriculture and domestic service) of 2.8m.

4. **Management Responses to the Recession:** for capital the recession represents a failure of the mechanisms of accumulation, and has given rise to the following management strategies:
   a) union-bashing: using retrenchment, mass dismissals, company unions and, when necessary, detentions and harassment;
   b) ideological control: building on paternalistic tradition, subtle techniques such as Quality Control Circles have been introduced to attempt to foster a 'team spirit' in the workforce. Moves have been made to establish education programmes fostering a 'free enterprise attitude' amongst blacks;
   c) bureaucratic controls: managements have attempted to use the new bargaining machinery and strategies such as job evaluation as means to controlling workers;
   d) introduction of new technology: management sees new technology as one method of imposing discipline upon workers; already 80 robots have been installed in South Africa;
   e) relocation: management is trying to take advantage of supplies of cheap, unorganised labour by relocating plants into 'free trade zones' such as exist in the bantustans. In such zones trade unions are suppressed and conditions of work are relatively poor;
   f) intensification of work: during the recession employers have sought to increase productivity and profits by simply reducing the workforce and making the remaining workers work harder.

5. **Trade union responses:** The deteriorating economic conditions have not prevented continued trade union growth and activity. The militancy of black
workers and the ability of their unions to defend wage levels is reflected by the continued increase in nominal and real earnings during the recession (nominal increase: from R228 to R364 per month between 1981 and 1984; real increase: R111,3 to R126,3 per month compared with the base year 1975). However, Keenan points out that this rise is largely accounted for by increases in medical aid and pension contributions which do not go directly into workers’ pockets; the rising numbers of unemployed have to be supported by those workers in employment.

The recession has caused unions to adopt defensive strategies in certain circumstances. It has also opened up the possibility of a conflict of interests between unionised workers and the unemployed. However, unions not only survived but consolidated and grew stronger during this period. They succeeded, in some cases, in changing or modifying retrenchment practices and in so doing further challenged management prerogatives. In part this was done through the Industrial Court which has established the following guidelines: (i) employers must investigate alternatives to retrenchment; (ii) employers must consult with worker’s representatives; (iii) the criteria for selection of those to be retrenched must be fair and objective (e.g. last in, first out — LIFO); (iv) the employer must give sufficient warning.

In addition, where unions are strong they have forced new rights from employers such as the disclosure of financial information as in the dispute between OK Bazaars and the Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers Union of South Africa (CCAWUSA) and that between Foshini and CCAWUSA during 1985. Unions have also sought to minimise the number of redundancies and to motivate for less onerous alternatives. CUSA’s Food and Beverage Workers Union was successful in getting Coca-Cola to reduce the number of planned retrenchments from 203 to 63. The remaining workforce agreed to a rolling-leave system taking unpaid leave every sixth week. The company also agreed to no new employment, no overtime, no casual labour, early retirement and a limited freeze on capital expenditure. In the case of OK Bazaars, CCAWUSA won an agreement which allowed workers to choose between layoff and retrenchment. With less success CCAWUSA tried to resist the introduction of part-time work for 230 employees of Pages Stores, arguing that short-time for the workforce as a whole was preferable.

In other cases unions have won the right to preferential re-employment for retrenched workers, further challenging management’s right to hire and fire at will. Where unions have been unable to prevent retrenchments they have secured much improved severance packages as in the case of Alpha and the retrenchments arising out of the Ford-Amcar merger. Not surprisingly trade unions have concentrated on fighting retrenchments rather than organising the unemployed. However, the Industrial Aid Society, in co-operation with unions, drew up plans to establish Unemployed Workers Committees. The IAS, advice bureaus and some unions also drew up a memorandum dealing with the problems associated with the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF) and issued a Benefit Charter which included demands for a radical reform of the UIF system. FOSATU also drew up its critique of UIF and concluded that the system was inadequate and that a state-financed comprehensive system of social security was needed. Thus the 1984 May Day Demands were for immediate social security and full employment policies, as well as for fundamental social transformation in the interests of the working class.

So far we have discussed retrenchments and union strategies in an undifferentiated
way. If we look at trade union growth on a sectoral basis very different patterns emerge. What is particularly striking is the continued growth of trade unionism on the mines and in the retail sector during the recession. NUM, established in 1982, had signed up approximately 230,000 members by the end of 1985. CCAWUSA's membership grew from 5,000 to over 50,000 between 1981 and 1985. The gold mines have survived the recession largely unscathed because of the relative buoyancy of the gold price in combination with the more recent fall in the Rand. (Since the gold price is set in US$ the Rand value of gold has soared.) Similarly the large food chains such as OK Bazaars and Pick'n Pay have weathered the recession because people still have to buy food. Even so, the retail sector — especially non-food retailing — is being hit by the recession. One result has been an attempt by some retailers to undermine working conditions by substituting part-time and casual labour.

More seriously affected have been the motor and metal and engineering sectors. According to NAAWU some 11,000 motor workers have lost their jobs in the last 3 years and a further 20,000 in related industries have suffered the same fate. 20,000 jobs were lost in the engineering sector between November 1981 and May 1983. Currently retrenchments are running at about 2,000 a month in the engineering and metal industries. Union organisation has nonetheless survived remarkably well. The fact that nevertheless trade unions have survived and grown is a tribute to sound factory floor organisation. The recession has also provided a powerful impetus to trade union unity talks. 'When the recession lifts, if not earlier, the South African working class will be in stronger position than ever before' (Bonner).

II THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

1. The Strength of the Unions: It is extremely difficult to arrive at a fully reliable figure for the total membership of the independent union movement. ...The figure for paid up membership is important as it gives some indication of consolidated organisation. We would estimate a total paid up membership for the entire emergent trade union movement of the order of 520,000. But signed up membership is also an important indicator of union influence and future trends. Largely on the basis of claims made by the unions themselves we would estimate the total signed up membership of the independent unions to be as follows: the new federation 565,000; CUSA 150,000; AZACTU (Azanian Confederation of Trade Unions) 70,000; and other unions 10,000; giving a total of 795,000 ... (23 unions with a total paid-up membership of 363,000 responded to a survey on union organisation, fourteen of these unions are party to the new federation; the other nine belong to CUSA or AZACTU or have remained unaligned.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table I: Trade Union Organisation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For 23 unions in our sample</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No of shop stewards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No of shop steward councils/committees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No of paid officials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No of agreements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No of workplaces organised</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most importantly, over the last two years the total number of shop stewards (or
equivalents) has nearly tripled. This development has been crucial to the consolidation of union growth, especially in view of the relatively small number of paid full-time union officials. The other survey results require further explanation.

Figures for the number of agreements and organised workplaces are undifferentiated. A handful of agreements in the retail trade cover hundreds of establishments. One agreement with Anglo-American covers 100,000 workers; another agreement may cover a few workers in one small plant. In addition, the content of agreement varies: recognition, discipline and/or grievance procedures, maternity and health and safety agreements — or any combination of these.

2. National Industrial Unions: In 1983, Hindson concluded that it was unlikely that the regional general unions and the industrial unions would be able to combine in the same federation. That debate has now been resolved in favour of the principle of 'one union, one industry'. The industrial unions — concentrating their organisation in strategic sectors — were best able to survive the recession and consolidate their membership. SAAWU particularly was severely hampered in its attempts to consolidate by state repression and continued detentions. Industrial unionism is now one of the pillars of the new federation. The general unions are already defining their areas of operation by industry, and merger talks (among unions) are well advanced. The General Workers Union (GWU) is a case in point. From 1979 it began to set up local committees for each industry. In recent years it has carefully limited its sphere of activity, to mainly stevedoring, engineering and the building materials sector.

Equally important in recent years has been the geographical expansion of unions to constitute themselves as truly national unions. The tendency towards increasing concentration of ownership in the economy meant that unions also needed to organise in all the plants belonging to a particular firm, and indeed throughout the sector, in order to maximise their bargaining strength and to prevent undercutting or relocation to non-unionised areas. The GWU's inability to win the red meat strike — one of the longest and best organised strikes in the history of the South African labour movement — reflected the limitations of its regional base. After the destruction of union's base amongst the Western Cape meatworkers, GWU moved rapidly to organise stevedores throughout the country.

3. Strikes and Disputes As Table II shows, strike action fell during 1983 but picked up again in 1984 surpassing the previous record set in 1982. Nearly all these strikes were "illegal". These official figures do not include political strikes and stay-aways and include only reported strikes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of strikes</th>
<th>Number of employees involved</th>
<th>Man-days lost</th>
<th>African workers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>African workers</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>61,785</td>
<td>56,286</td>
<td>174,614</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>342</td>
<td>92,842</td>
<td>84,706</td>
<td>226,554</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>392</td>
<td>141,571</td>
<td>122,481</td>
<td>365,337</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>336</td>
<td>64,469</td>
<td>61,331</td>
<td>124,596</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>469</td>
<td>181,942</td>
<td>174,897</td>
<td>379,712</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Again, as in 1983, the major cause of strikes in 1984 was wages and conditions, and trade union and disciplinary matters — according to government statistics (Table III). In our survey we asked unions to list the most important disputes and strikes of 1985 and the issues which caused them. Whilst our survey was not comprehensive, the results in table IV do suggest a rather different set of priorities. Basic battles over recognition, dismissals and victimisation are still seen to be very important.

Table III: Reasons for Strikes and Work Stoppages, 1984

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>No of strikes</th>
<th>No of workers involved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>wages</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>83,286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wages &amp; another reason</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>13,729</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>union matters (inc. recognition?)</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>33,004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>disciplinary</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>18,454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>working conditions</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>9,214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other/unknown</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>24,255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>469</strong></td>
<td><strong>181,942</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table IV: Reasons for Strikes and Disputes during 1985

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>No of times mentioned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>recognition</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wages</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dismissals</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>retrenchments</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>victimisation</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>working conditions</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: SALB Survey*

The NMC notes that over half these strikes lasted for one day or less. They also comment that in 1984 the number of dismissals arising out of strikes increased. A far higher proportion of strikes ended in defeat for workers and their unions than in 1983 — reflecting the harsher conditions of the recession.

Strikes tended to be single factory disputes. This has begun to change in the last two years with nationally co-ordinated disputes taking place at Dunlops, AECI, Corobrick, Continental China and on the mines. Also during the second half of 1985 the Metal and Allied Workers Union has been laying the groundwork for a co-ordinated major confrontation with the leading engineering employers.

At the end of 1983 Mike Rosholt of Barlow Rand complained that demands by certain unions for worker control threatened the private enterprise system itself. Certainly unions have continued to push back the 'frontiers of control' demanding access to company figures (successfully in some cases); curbing management's right to hire and fire (especially in the case of retrenchments); and winning new rights around retrenchments, health and safety, maternity, the right to strike without being dismissed (enshrined in some recognition agreements) and May Day as a paid holiday. More recently unions have adopted tactics such as sit-ins and factory occupations which further develop the concept of worker control whilst simultaneously pressurising management over immediate economic demands. In this connection, worker co-operatives should also be mentioned. Thus far they have
been retrenched or dismissed after a strike. These developments — occupations, sit-ins and coops — implicitly raise issues about industrial democracy and workers' control.

4. **Industrial Relations and Collective Bargaining.** There has been a substantial increase in the use of statutory bodies. Most noticeable has been the increase in the number of cases referred to the Industrial Court: 20 in 1981, 170 in 1983, and 400 in 1984. It would seem that unions have used the Court to establish certain rights — eg. over fair procedures for retrenchments — and in order to avoid, where possible, an all out 'trial of strength' at a time when conditions — recession and unemployment — do not favour the unions. The same trend is evident in the number of conciliation board applications: 21 in 1981, 60 in 1982, 119 in 1983, and 279 in 1984. By the end of 1984 staff shortages at the Department of Manpower were leading to delays in processing applications for conciliation boards. More recently IMMSA — an independent mediation and arbitration service has appeared on the scene. Between February 1984 and October 1985 IMMSA completed 91 mediations and 16 arbitrations.

From our sample of 23 unions, interviewed in depth, 10 sit on industrial councils, 14 had used the Industrial Court, 13 had applied for a conciliation board and 12 had used mediation (17 of the 23 unions were registered). However, when asked as to whether they were broadly satisfied with the results, these unions were by no means unanimous. According to our survey: 5 were satisfied with their dealings with the Industrial Court, 7 were dissatisfied and 2 were ambivalent: as far as industrial councils were concerned 3 were satisfied and 7 were dissatisfied; and for conciliation boards 3 were satisfied, 7 were dissatisfied and 3 were ambivalent. Mediation comes off best with 9 expressing satisfaction and only 3 being dissatisfied. This dissatisfaction with statutory bodies is part a result of increasing restrictions placed on the Industrial Court's powers since 1982, particularly the hearing of unfair labour practice cases.

In general terms one result of the recession and the growing power of the emergent unions has been to intensify pressure on national bargaining units. 1985 witnesses a major division in the Chamber of Mines in response to NUM demands (see ROAPE 34); the destruction of the industrial council for the paper industry; and the beginnings of a major campaign by Metal and Allied Workers Union (MAWU) for the right to bargain at plant level outside for the Industrial Council (MAWU has refused to sign an industrial council agreement since it joined the council 3 years ago).

5. **Problem Areas: Small Towns, Border Areas and Bantustans** As the labour movement has expanded outward from the main industrial areas and into new sectors — such as mining — unions have been faced with new organisational problems.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>small towns</th>
<th>border areas</th>
<th>bantustans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>low wages</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>harassment by authorities</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reactionary managements</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lack of legal recognition</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lack of venue</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>racism</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dismissals/unemployment</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: SALB Survey*
6. Unions and Politics: One of the main reasons given by the (1977) Wiehahn Commission for granting trade union rights to Africans was in order to prevent the politicisation of work relations and to maintain a separation between the economic and political spheres. Thus militant wage battles could be tolerated, at least in the short-term, while the new unions became accustomed to industrial relations machinery: registration, industrial councils, conciliation boards, the Industrial court, mediation, arbitration, etc. In the meantime the state would introduce 'reform' in order to pacify black political aspirations. Herein lay the fundamental contradiction at the heart of the reform process: the 'liberalisation' of industrial relations without meaningful political rights for blacks. On the one hand the space now existed for a rapid advance in organising the working class. On the other hand, continued political exclusion of the black masses and the rising tide of resistance in the townships and schools began to impinge directly on the workplace. This was most dramatically demonstrated in the November 1984 stay-away in the Transvaal when up to 800,000 workers — and 400,000 students — stayed away from work for 2 days.

The question of political action has been vigorously debated within the emergent trade union movement since its inception. Significantly, differences over political line, over the correct relationship to community struggles and over affiliation to political bodies, has not prevented unions uniting into the new federation. However, differences over 'non-racialism' versus 'black leadership' prevented CUSA and AZACTU unions from joining the new federation. Moreover, there is now clear evidence that all emergent unions not only accept that they have a political role to play, but are willing to act accordingly. In our survey — out of 23 unions, 20 took action on political or community issues: 13 mentioned that they participated in stay-aways; 15 had supported boycotts; and other forms of political action were pursued by 7 unions.

7. Trade Union Federation and Future Perspectives: The launch of the new federation on November 30 (1985) brings to an end four years of discussions on trade union unity. The federation will have a paid up membership of 400,000 and a signed up membership of many more. It brings together the most organised workers in strategic sectors of the economy. Initially all the emergent unions attended the unity talks. Progress was slow in the early days because of differences over registration and the correct relationship to community struggles. Later divisions were over organisational structure; general versus industrial unionism. However, by 1984 there was agreement, in principle, for unions to demarcate their areas of interest by industry. But there was no agreement on the means or time-scale for achieving industrial demarcation. As a result the March 1984 meeting of the feasibility committee decided to proceed to create the new federation without the general unions (such as SAAWU, and others affiliated to the UDF).

By the end of 1984 three distinct groupings had emerged within the independent labour movement: the core of the 'unity talks unions'; the unions affiliated to the United Democratic Front; and the emerging black consciousness unions in AZACTU, which had never participated in the unity talks, mainly because many had been established only after the unity talks were initiated.

In May 1985 the talks were again thrown open. A partial unity was finally achieved on the basis of five principles: non-racialism; for one union one industry; worker control; representation on the basis of paid-up membership; and co-operation at a
national level in the new federation. Major disagreement emerged over the issue of 'non-racialism' leading to the withdrawal of AZACTU and the CUSA unions (except NUM which disaffiliated from CUSA).

The CUSA-AZACTU grouping will continue to represent approximately 100,000 — 150,000 paid up members. The organisational strength is in CUSA, concentrated mainly in their industrial unions: chemical, food, construction and transport. Relations between the new federation and the CUSA-AZACTU grouping remain cordial: indeed the present political and economic crisis provides the objective conditions for united action by the two groupings. TUCSA's position has declined rapidly since 1983. Its present membership is something over 300,000 and there are rumours of further disaffiliations. Nonetheless, the majority of the members are black workers, many in semi-skilled occupations, including some 100,000 (overwhelmingly female) workers in the textiles and clothing sectors... On the right-wing, the white South African Confederation of Labour has been halved in size over the last 10 years to just 100,000.

The new federation is being established, but the arduous task of integrating the various unions and traditions remains. In the immediate future, at national level, industrial demarcation, mergers and amalgamation will occupy a lot of the time of the federation. Meanwhile developments in the locals and the regional congresses will be crucial. It is here where workers power can be mobilised and developed. These organs will be under the immediate and direct control of rank and file workers and shop stewards. It is here that the ideology of the new federation will be created and popularised, loyalty engendered and consciousness of a wider unity built. The present crisis in the townships, the schools and the economy suggest that even whilst organisational work proceeds the new federation will play an important role in the wider political struggle. The precise form this involvement will take will depend on debate and the course of the struggle itself. The new federation combines two major traditions of opposition: the one class-based, the other linked to the national liberation struggle: the one will ensure that the federation does not withdraw into a narrow economism; the other will guarantee the interests of the working class for immediate economic gains and long-term social transformation.

Bibliographic Note:

* * *

**OPENING SPEECH TO THE INAUGURAL CONGRESS**

Cyril Ramaphosa

The formation of this Congress represents a tremendous victory for the working class. Never before has it been so powerful and so poised to make a mark in society ... Workers' political strength depends upon building strong and militant
national level in the new federation. Major disagreement emerged over the issue of 'non-racialism' leading to the withdrawal of AZACTU and the CUSA unions (except NUM which disaffiliated from CUSA).

The CUSA-AZACTU grouping will continue to represent approximately 100,000 — 150,000 paid up members. The organisational strength is in CUSA, concentrated mainly in their industrial unions: chemical, food, construction and transport. Relations between the new federation and the CUSA-AZACTU grouping remain cordial: indeed the present political and economic crisis provides the objective conditions for united action by the two groupings. TUCSA’s position has declined rapidly since 1983. Its present membership is something over 300,000 and there are rumours of further disaffiliations. Nonetheless, the majority of the members are black workers, many in semi-skilled occupations, including some 100,000 (overwhelmingly female) workers in the textiles and clothing sectors... On the right-wing, the white South African Confederation of Labour has been halved in size over the last 10 years to just 100,000.

The new federation is being established, but the arduous task of integrating the various unions and traditions remains. In the immediate future, at national level, industrial demarcation, mergers and amalgamation will occupy a lot of the time of the federation. Meanwhile developments in the locals and the regional congresses will be crucial. It is here where workers power can be mobilised and developed. These organs will be under the immediate and direct control of rank and file workers and shop stewards. It is here that the ideology of the new federation will be created and popularised, loyalty engendered and consciousness of a wider unity built. The present crisis in the townships, the schools and the economy suggest that even whilst organisational work proceeds the new federation will play an important role in the wider political struggle. The precise form this involvement will take will depend on debate and the course of the struggle itself. The new federation combines two major traditions of opposition: the one class-based, the other linked to the national liberation struggle: the one will ensure that the federation does not withdraw into a narrow economism; the other will guarantee the interests of the working class for immediate economic gains and long-term social transformation.

Bibliographic Note:

OPENING SPEECH TO THE INAUGURAL CONGRESS
Cyril Ramaphosa
The formation of this Congress represents a tremendous victory for the working class. Never before has it been so powerful and so poised to make a mark in society ... Workers’ political strength depends upon building strong and militant
organisation in the workplace. We also have to realise that organised workers are not representative of the working class as a whole but are its most effective weapon. Therefore, for workers it is important that organisation on the shop floor be strengthened and in this way we will be able to contribute to the struggle of the working class as a whole and to the struggle of the oppressed people in this country.

It is also important to draw people into a programme for the restructuring of society in order to make sure that the wealth of our society is democratically controlled and shared by its people. It is important to realise that the political struggle is not only to remove the government. We must also eliminate unemployment, improve education, improve health facilities and the wealth of the society must be shared among all those that work in this country. It is important that the politics of the working class eventually becomes the politics of all the oppressed people of this country . . .

The reforms that have been proposed by the government and employers are not offering any solution. The Rand is continuing to drop, there is high inflation and the cost of living is rising every day. While all this is happening the people in the country are continuing to resist. Confrontation with the police has become a daily thing. Some of the townships have become completely ungovernable. The government has clearly demonstrated that it is not in control of this country and P W Botha has failed to point the direction. It is time that the working class tell him to lay down his powers and let the legitimate leaders of the country take over the seat he now occupies . . .

We all agree that the struggle of workers on the shop floor cannot be separated from the wider struggle for liberation. The important question we have to ask ourselves is how is COSATU going to contribute to the struggle for our liberation. As unions we have sought to develop a consciousness among workers, not only of racial oppression but also of their exploitation as a working class.

As unions we have influenced the wider political struggle. Our struggles on the shop floor have widened the space for struggles in the community. Through interaction with community organisations, we have developed the principle of worker controlled democratic organisation. But our main political task as workers is to develop organisation among workers as well as a strong worker leadership. We have, as unions, to act decisively to ensure that we, as workers, lead the struggle. Our most urgent task is to develop a unity among workers. We would wish COSATU to give firm political direction for workers. If workers are to lead the struggle for liberation we have to win the confidence of other sectors of society. But if we are to get into alliances with other progressive organisations, it must be on terms that are favourable to us as workers.

To make sure we establish alliances which are progressive, we must be strong and united. And it is COSATU that is going to unite us under one banner. When we do plunge into political activity, we must make sure that the unions under COSATU have a strong shop floor base not only to take on the employers but the state as well. Our role in the political struggle will depend on our organisational strength. We must meet with progressive political organisations. We have to work in co-operation with them on realistic campaigns. We must not shy away and pretend they do not exist. We have to pay particular attention to worker education and our role in the political struggle. We must encourage a healthy exchange between our Congress and other progressive organisations.
In the next few days we will be considering resolutions which will point the direction that COSATU will take. We will be putting our heads together not only to make sure that we reach Pretoria but also to make a better life for us workers in this country. What we have to make clear is that a giant has risen and will confront all that stand in its way. COSATU is going to determine the direction of the working class in this country.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF COSATU
The Most Important of These Are:
- To secure social and economic justice for all workers.
- To strive for the building of a united working class movement regardless of "race", colour, creed or sex.
- To encourage all workers to join trade unions and to develop a spirit of solidarity among all workers.
- To understand how the economy of the country affects workers and to formulate clear policies as to how the economy would be restructured in the interests of the working class.
- To work for a restructuring of the economy which will allow the creation of wealth to be democratically controlled and fairly shared.
- To strive for just standards of living, social security and fair conditions of work for all.
- To facilitate and co-ordinate education and training of all workers so as to further the interests of the working class.

DISINVESTMENT
This Congress:
1. believes that all forms of international pressure on the South African government — including disinvestment or the threat of disinvestment — is an essential and effective form of pressure on the South African regime and we support it;
2. further believes that if this government remains intransigent in its racist, anti-democratic and anti-worker practices, then this pressure will have to increase as an act of solidarity with our struggle for liberation from exploitation and oppression.
3. commits itself to ensure that the social wealth of South Africa remains the property of the people of South Africa for the benefit of all, and further commits itself to the principle of international working class solidarity action as the most powerful form of solidarity action with our struggle.

BANTUSTANS
Congress Noting:
1. that the bantustan system was imposed on the African people, against their will, with a view to thwarting the just struggle for One Person One Vote in a unitary South Africa;
2. that various bantustan administrations have practised extreme forms of oppression against the oppressed people — including trade unions;

noting in particular:
the banning of SAAWU in the Ciskei, the banning of all unions in the Bophuthatswana bantustan and killing of trade unionists and other democrats by tribally based organisations;
hereby resolves that:
1. the bantustan system be totally rejected and that the Federation struggle — together with other democratic forces — for the creation of a democratic and unitary South Africa;...

WOMEN
This Federation Noting:
1. that women workers experience both exploitation as workers and oppression as women and that black women are further discriminated against on the basis of race;
2. that women are employed in a limited range of occupations, doing boring and repetitive work with low and often unequal pay;
3. that due to overtime and night work women workers are subjected to many dangers while commuting;
4. that women workers often suffer sexual harassment in recruitment and employment;
5. that most women workers in South Africa lose their jobs when they become pregnant;
6. that pregnant women often have to work under conditions harmful to themselves and their unborn child;

Resolves to Fight:
1. against all unequal and discriminatory treatment of women at work, in society and in the federation;
2. for the equal right of women and men to paid work as an important part of the broader aim to achieve full and freely chosen employment;
3. for equal pay for all work of equal value — the value of work must be determined by organised women and men workers themselves;
4. for the restructuring of employment so as to allow women and men and opportunity of qualifying for jobs of equal value;
5. for childcare and family facilities to meet workers’ needs and make it easier for workers to combine work and family responsibilities;
6. for full maternity rights, including paid maternity and paternity leave and job security;
7. for the protection of women and men from all types of work proved to be harmful to them, including work which interferes with their ability to have children;
8. against sexual harassment in whatever form it occurs;
9. for adequate and safe transport for workers doing overtime and night work.

EDUCATION
This Federation Noting:
1. that the present education system in South Africa is designed to maintain the working class in ideological bondage;
2. that the present education system is designed to continue and reinforce the values, ideas and practices of the ruling classes;
3. that the present education system is aimed at fostering divisions and anti-democratic values within the working class;
4. that education is vital in the liberation struggle of the working class;
5. that education must serve the interests of the vast majority of the people of the country;
Therefore Resolves:
1. to establish a national, regional and local education programme for the Federation
   a) ensure that this education programme politicises, mobilises and organises the working class so that they play the leading role in the liberation of our society and its transformation into an economic, social and political system that will serve the needs of those who are now oppressed and exploited;
   b) develop an understanding and capacity to wage our struggle by democratic means that will allow maximum participation and decision making power for workers both now and in the future society we wish to build; ...

RIGHT TO STRIKE
This Federation Noting:
1. that the strike is a legitimate right and necessary weapon of the working class in their struggle against bad working conditions and low wages;
2. that the strike is internationally accepted as an essential element of collective bargaining;
3. that freedom of association, assembly and picketing for strike action are also fundamental rights, internationally, in industrial struggle;
4. that the infringement or curbing of these rights is detrimental to the social and economic interests of the workers;
5. that the right to strike is severely curtailed in South Africa;
6. that a strike involves a democratic form of struggle;
7. that picketing is an integral part of a strike and of morally persuading fellow workers not to break a strike;
8. that essential service workers are not allowed to take industrial action in pursuing their demands;
 therefore resolves:
1 to continue a relentless campaign which will allow workers full freedom of association, assembly and picketing for strike action. This requires that all forms of security legislation that denies these rights removed; ...

MIGRANT LABOUR
This Federation Noting:
1. that pass laws were legislated by the apartheid regime to control and dehumanise the lives of the working class in South Africa;
2. that pass laws and influx control served to strengthen the hand of capital to exploit and oppress the working class in its endeavour to generate super profits;
3. that the economic and social hardships of the migrant labour system includes the break-up of family life and relationships;
4. that the migrant labour system seeks to further divide the oppressed and exploited workers into permanent residents and migrants;
5. that the apartheid regime persists in threatening to repatriate migrant workers to the homelands and neighbouring countries;
Resolves to:
1. fight for the scrapping of the migrant labour system including pass laws and influx control;
2. fight for the right of workers to seek work wherever they wish and to reside with their families wherever they wish and that proper housing will be provided for them;
3. call for a national strike should the apartheid regime carry out its threat to repatriate any migrant workers.
NATIONAL MINIMUM LIVING WAGE

Seeing That:
1. the majority of workers in South Africa are earning starvation wages because of the present economic system, constantly rising prices (inflation) is making what little money workers have worth less and less every day;
2. employers in South Africa continue to make massive and completely unrealistic profits when compared with employers in other capitalist countries;
3. many millions of workers do not have any minimum wage protection whatsoever;
4. the issue of a living wage is one of the strongest points for organising the unorganised;

We Hereby Resolve:
1. that the Central Executive Committee establish as soon as possible what workers regard as a minimum living wage;
2. to then initiate and conduct — in alliance with other progressive organisations and trade unions in the country — an ongoing national campaign for a legally enforced national minimum living wage for all workers in South Africa; 
5. fight to open all books of every organised company so that workers can see exactly how the wealth they have produced is being wasted and misused by the employers' profit system, and on that basis can demand their full share of the wealth they have produced. Should the wealth not be there, then it will only prove the inefficiency of employer management and strengthen the case for worker control and management of production.

SOUTHERN AFRICAN UNION COOPERATION

This Federation Noting:
1. that foreign and South African multinational corporations (MNC's) have for years exploited workers in Southern Africa by reaping huge profits and exporting them to Europe and America;
2. that workers in Southern Africa are employed by the same MNC's and subjected to similar conditions of control, exploitation and oppression;
3. that many of them are union bashers and have undermined the legitimate right of workers to organise trade unions;
4. that these MNC's, as the major agencies of imperialism, have cooperated with reactionary regimes in pursuit of super-profits
5. that MNC's can only be resisted if there is unity and worker to worker contact in various countries of Southern Africa;
6. that the problems faced by the workers of Southern Africa are integrally linked and that their futures are tied together;

therefore resolves:
1. that unions affiliated to COSATU should actively pursue links with progressive unions in Southern Africa so as to strengthen worker unity;
2. that COSATU should form constructive relationships with fraternal federations in Southern Africa;
3. that every effort be made to unite workers of Southern Africa and improve solidarity work.

UNEMPLOYMENT/NEW TECHNOLOGY/RIGHT TO WORK

Believing: That All Able-Bodied Men and Women Have a Right to Work;
and noting:
1. that under capitalist conditions of exploitation, unemployment is a reality facing every worker at all times;
2. that these unemployed workers are used as a reserve pool of labour by the bosses to keep wages low and to provide a source of scab labour in the event of strikes;
3. that the interests of all workers, whether employed or unemployed, are the same — the right to a job at a decent living wage;
4. that the unity of employed and unemployed workers is essential in the struggle against scabbing and to advance the struggle for the right to work at a living wage;
5. that under capitalist conditions of exploitation, unemployment is a reality facing workers at all times and is a waste of the human resources of this country;...

Congress Therefore Resolves To:
1. fight as one united force to defend all jobs threatened by retrenchments; fight the closing of the factories; and fight for participation in and control over — right from the planning stage — the implementation of any new technology. And fight all attempts by employers to make workers work harder and attempts to rationalise production, because in the present system this always leads to unemployment;
2. campaign for a 40 hour week at full pay and a ban on overtime;
3. fight for free and increased unemployment benefits and that these benefits be paid in South Africa;
4. fight for a subsistence fund, in addition to unemployed benefits, supplemented by rent, transport and medical concessions for all unemployed workers;
5. demand that the state initiate a national programme of public works to provide jobs for the unemployed and to improve services and facilities in working class communities;
6. fight for work-sharing on full pay whenever workers face retrenchments;
7. establish a national unemployed workers union as a full affiliate of the new federation for the realisation of the right of all to work and security;
8. struggle for a fair, democratic and rational political and economic system which can guarantee full employment for all people in Southern Africa at a living wage;
9. to give full support to efforts by retrenched and dismissed workers to establish co-operatives based on the principles of COSATU.

NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL UNIONS
Noting:
1. that all affiliates have previously committed themselves to the establishment of one national union in each sector of industry;
2. that we will be unable to protect worker interests and advance their rights unless we build large broadly based industrial unions capable of dealing with the highly centralised structures of capital;

Therefore Resolves:
1. to confirm its commitment to the establishment of one national affiliate in each industry and to national co-operation between such affiliates as a matter of great urgency;...

*     *     *

NATIONS AND NATIONALITIES IN ETHIOPIA AND ERITREA

Socialists agree that the Ethiopian Revolution was an event of major historical significance, but have been sharply divided in their evaluations of its legacies. ROAPE has published two books, numerous articles and several briefings and book
2. that these unemployed workers are used as a reserve pool of labour by the bosses to keep wages low and to provide a source of scab labour in the event of strikes;
3. that the interests of all workers, whether employed or unemployed, are the same — the right to a job at a decent living wage;
4. that the unity of employed and unemployed workers is essential in the struggle against scabbing and to advance the struggle for the right to work at a living wage;
5. that under capitalist conditions of exploitation, unemployment is a reality facing workers at all times and is a waste of the human resources of this country;...

Congress Therefore Resolves To:
1. fight as one united force to defend all jobs threatened by retrenchments; fight the closing of the factories; and fight for participation in and control over — right from the planning stage — the implementation of any new technology. And fight all attempts by employers to make workers work harder and attempts to rationalise production, because in the present system this always leads to unemployment;
2. campaign for a 40 hour week at full pay and a ban on overtime;
3. fight for free and increased unemployment benefits and that these benefits be paid in South Africa;
4. fight for a subsistence fund, in addition to unemployed benefits, supplemented by rent, transport and medical concessions for all unemployed workers;
5. demand that the state initiate a national programme of public works to provide jobs for the unemployed and to improve services and facilities in working class communities;
6. fight for work-sharing on full pay whenever workers face retrenchments;
7. establish a national unemployed workers union as a full affiliate of the new federation for the realisation of the right of all to work and security;
8. struggle for a fair, democratic and rational political and economic system which can guarantee full employment for all people in Southern Africa at a living wage;
9. to give full support to efforts by retrenched and dismissed workers to establish co-operatives based on the principles of COSATU.

NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL UNIONS
Noting:
1. that all affiliates have previously committed themselves to the establishment of one national union in each sector of industry;
2. that we will be unable to protect worker interests and advance their rights unless we build large broadly based industrial unions capable of dealing with the highly centralised structures of capital;
Therefore Resolves:
1. to confirm its commitment to the establishment of one national affiliate in each industry and to national co-operation between such affiliates as a matter of great urgency;...

* * *

NATIONS AND NATIONALITIES IN ETHIOPIA AND ERITREA

Socialists agree that the Ethiopian Revolution was an event of major historical significance, but have been sharply divided in their evaluations of its legacies. ROAPE has published two books, numerous articles and several briefings and book
reviews, reflecting diverse judgements of the revolution, of the Dergue, of its opponents, of the Eritrean struggle for national liberation and of the resistance among the oppressed nationalities who together make up a majority of the people of Ethiopia (see the index to ROAPE published with this issue).

Since taking power, the Dergue, Ethiopia's ruling military junta, has continued to prosecute the war, now of 25 years duration, against the Eritreans fighting for their national independence. The revolution of 1974 'witnessed a general flowering of nationalist movements' (Hiwet, ROAPE 30, p.44), and to armed struggle for the right to self-determination within a democratic Ethiopia by the people of Tigray, the Oromo and others. Opponents of the Dergue, in both Eritrea and Ethiopia, have been divided amongst themselves, divisions which have at times led to armed conflicts between them (see Pool, ROAPE 19 and Gebre-Medhin, ROAPE 30 on the conflicts between the Eritrean Peoples Liberation Front and the Eritrean Liberation Front; and Bennett, ROAPE 26, Briefings and the EPRP, ROAPE 30, p.47, on conflicts between the Tigray Peoples Liberation Front and the Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Party.)

In 1985, the Eritrean Peoples Liberation Front and the Tigray Peoples Liberation Front made public their differences on the questions concerning the rights of 'nationalities' to self-determination, and their implications for the future of Ethiopia. These differences have been followed by a break in military relations between the EPLF and the TPLF, conflicts on the wisdom of moving the starving out of Tigray to the camps in Sudan and an end to cooperation in moving famine relief across Eritrea to Tigray.

In this Briefing, we publish the EPLF's statement, which sets out its conception of the national question and its meaning in the Horn and the differences it sees between its own claim to statehood and the demands for recognition of the 'nationalities' within Ethiopia. It also states its views on relations with democratic movements in Ethiopia, views now embodied in a call for the setting up of a common front with them. We are sorry not to have secured an English translation of the TPLF's 1985 response to the EPLF statement but we include a more recent document that deals with these issues.

Both EPLF and TPLF are united in support of the claim of the 'nation' of Eritrea made up, like Ethiopia, of several 'nationalities' to national independence within the historic boundaries created by Italian colonial rule. The Tigrayans, while claiming the right to self-determination, and by implication to choose secession, if they wish, a claim questioned by the EPLF, are not fighting for independence. EPLF and TPLF also disagree about the latter's participation within a united front which includes reactionary elements (ironically, an earlier source of contention between the TPLF and the EPRF who had entered a united front with the Ethiopian Democratic Union, see Bennett and EPRP, op. cit.)

Given the inability of the Dergue to end their war in Eritrea, or to meet the claims of oppressed nationalities in Ethiopia on any terms other than the Dergue's own, both EPLF and TPLF are agreed on the importance of creating a new, democratic government in Addis Ababa and an end to national oppression and recognition of the rights of nationalities within a multinational Ethiopian state. As Lionel Cliffe argued in ROAPE 30 (Briefings, P. 87) 'even those who would gladly see the end to military rule of that of Mengistu might pause to contemplate the dangers if there is simply a disintegration of any central power in Ethiopia.' Hence the importance of
agreement among opposition forces on the nature of the democratic state they wish to bring into existence in Ethiopia and a clear strategy for bringing it about.

* * *

THE EPLF AND ITS RELATIONS WITH DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENTS IN ETHIOPIA

(ADULIS, vol 1. no. 11, May 1985*)

Ethiopia's rulers regard Eritrea as a territory that must remain under their occupation at any cost. As long as this outlook prevails in Addis Ababa, Eritrean independence, peace and stability may not be guaranteed, even after the military defeat of the Ethiopian army in the hands of the Eritrean revolution. Unreconciled to the 'loss' of Eritrea, the regime in Addis Ababa will rearm itself to continue the war of aggression, thereby depriving the Eritrean people of the peace and security that are essential for successful national reconstruction. Therefore, the overthrow of the expansionist Addis Ababa regime and its replacement by a popular and democratic state are essential for a lasting solution of the Eritrean case and the establishment of peace and good neighbourliness in the Horn of Africa.

Conscious of this interrelationship and convinced that the Eritrean Revolution is an integral part of the peoples' struggles throughout the world, the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) has, while leading the Eritrean national struggle, forged links and fully cooperated with Ethiopian organizations capable of setting up a democratic alternative to the Dergue's military regime. For the EPLF, this cooperation is not based on the belief that 'the enemy of my enemy is my friend', but rather on the firm conviction that total independence for Eritrea and the emergence of a progressive government with popular support in Ethiopia are inseparable goals. Hence, the front encourages and assists those organizations and movements that push towards this goal while, at the same time, criticizes and opposes those forces and tendencies that harm the cause and push its attainment further away.

But which are the programmes and political lines that advance the peoples' struggles in Eritrea and Ethiopia and bring the day of liberation and peace closer? And which are those that hamper the cause? How can the past ten years' experience of the democratic movements in Ethiopia and their relationship with the EPLF be assessed? To provide satisfactory answers to these questions, Ethiopia's problems and their solutions must be analysed properly.

Ethiopia is a multi-national state. Apart from the exploiting classes, the masses of all nationalities have been deprived of basic rights and the fruits of their labour. This picture is complicated, however by national oppression which affects all nationalities, except the Amharas. These nationalities — Oromo, Tigrai, Somali, Afar, Sidama, etc. — have been deprived of their lands and denied the right to determine their destiny, to participate as equals in the political life of the country and to develop their languages and cultures.

National oppression — this powerful weapon of the ruling classes — is, however, a double edged sword, which harms not only the subject nationalities but the masses

* Adulis is a monthly magazine published by the Central Bureau of Foreign Relations of the EPLF, available from them at 42 rue Lebour, 93100 Montreuil, France.
agreement among opposition forces on the nature of the democratic state they wish to bring into existence in Ethiopia and a clear strategy for bringing it about.

* * *

THE EPLF AND ITS RELATIONS WITH DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENTS IN ETHIOPIA

(*Adulis, vol 1. no. 11, May 1985*)

Ethiopia's rulers regard Eritrea as a territory that must remain under their occupation at any cost. As long as this outlook prevails in Addis Ababa, Eritrean independence, peace and stability may not be guaranteed, even after the military defeat of the Ethiopian army in the hands of the Eritrean revolution. Unreconciled to the 'loss' of Eritrea, the regime in Addis Ababa will rearm itself to continue the war of aggression, thereby depriving the Eritrean people of the peace and security that are essential for successful national reconstruction. Therefore, the overthrow of the expansionist Addis Ababa regime and its replacement by a popular and democratic state are essential for a lasting solution of the Eritrean case and the establishment of peace and good neighbourliness in the Horn of Africa.

Conscious of this interrelationship and convinced that the Eritrean Revolution is an integral part of the peoples' struggles throughout the world, the Eritrean People’s Liberation Front (EPLF) has, while leading the Eritrean national struggle, forged links and fully cooperated with Ethiopian organizations capable of setting up a democratic alternative to the Dergue’s military regime. For the EPLF, this cooperation is not based on the belief that ‘the enemy of my enemy is my friend’, but rather on the firm conviction that total independence for Eritrea and the emergence of a progressive government with popular support in Ethiopia are inseparable goals. Hence, the front encourages and assists those organizations and movements that push towards this goal while, at the same time, criticizes and opposes those forces and tendencies that harm the cause and push its attainment further away.

But which are the programmes and political lines that advance the peoples’ struggles in Eritrea and Ethiopia and bring the day of liberation and peace closer? And which are those that hamper the cause? How can the past ten years’ experience of the democratic movements in Ethiopia and their relationship with the EPLF be assessed? To provide satisfactory answers to these questions, Ethiopia’s problems and their solutions must be analysed properly.

Ethiopia is a multi-national state. Apart from the exploiting classes, the masses of all nationalities have been deprived of basic rights and the fruits of their labour. This picture is complicated, however by national oppression which affects all nationalities, except the Amharas. These nationalities — Oromo, Tigrai, Somali, Afar, Sidama, etc. — have been deprived of their lands and denied the right to determine their destiny, to participate as equals in the political life of the country and to develop their languages and cultures.

National oppression — this powerful weapon of the ruling classes — is, however, a double edged sword, which harms not only the subject nationalities but the masses
of the oppressor nationality as well. Among Amhara toilers — regardless of how poor they may be — it fosters contempt for the oppressed nationalities, while among the Oromo, Tigray, Somali and Afar masses, it arouses deep hatred not only for the Amhara rulers but also for Amhara workers and peasants. Moreover, it induces the oppressed nationalities to regard each other with contempt and hatred. The ruling classes fan these feelings of mutual suspicion and scorn as they pit the masses of all nationalities, who have the same interests, against one another and enable the rulers to consolidate their power and perpetuate their exploitation.

The task of combating this evil and dangerous policy and forging solidarity and unity among the different nationalities falls on Ethiopian progressives. Many of them, however, have pushed the interest of the people aside and, instead of striving to eliminate the feelings of resentment and enmity induced by national oppression, have utilized them to advance their sectarian interests.

Soon after Haile Selassie’s autocratic regime fell in 1974 under the joint pressures of the Ethiopian people’s spontaneous uprising and the Eritrean Revolution, multinational organizations capable of gaining wide support and influence among the people had emerged in Ethiopia. Among other mistakes, however, these organizations could not get rid of their Amhara, great national chauvinism. Slighting the question of nationalities, they characterized all movements fighting for the rights of oppressed nationalities as ‘petty-bourgeois, reactionary and anti-proletarian’. Moreover, they did not only refuse to cooperate with these national movements, but considering them principal enemies, waged propaganda and agitational campaigns against them; besides rendering direct or indirect assistance to the Dergue’s liquidationist wars against the oppressed nationalities, they directed their arms to fight the national movements.

On the other hand, the nationality movements which gained more popularity in the post 1974 period, and whose fight was and remains just, could not free themselves from a narrow outlook. Instead of striving to overcome the suspicion and hatred that their peoples harboured for oppressed Amharas and Amhara progressives, they worked to deepen these feelings. The thinking that all Amharas, no matter how progressive they claimed to be, were ‘Neftegnas’ — i.e. people imbued with a settler — colonial mentality — and that joint work with them was impossible became dominant in these organizations. To them the national struggle became paramount and secession the ultimate goal. And from these followed the policy of not allowing multinational movements or other national movements to work in the ‘national territory’.

As a result of the incorrect handling of the question by both the national and multinational movements, the interests of particular organizations and nationalities were deemed paramount in lieu of the interests of all nationalities and the whole people. In due course, this led to harmful rivalry and spiteful competition, culminating in internecine war. As a result, the unity of the oppressed peoples, whom the ruling classes had pitted against each other, and the establishment of a united front of organizations, which, if they had pooled their resources could have become a formidable force and succeeded in overthrowing what was then a shaky regime, could not materialize. Thus the revolutions in Eritrea and Ethiopia were setback.

Today, in Ethiopia, there is no multi-national organization with a broad base among the masses. And overall, the national movement is weak. On the other hand, after 10
years of dictatorial military rule and the starvation of one million people to death, the anti-popular character of the Dergue's regime has become obvious. The objective conditions are favourable for the escalation of armed struggle. If the Ethiopian peoples are not going to miss the opportunity to establish a democratic state for the second time however, the mistakes of the first period must be corrected. All Ethiopian progressives must develop a clear common understanding of the question of nationalities and its correct solution as well as the necessity of a united front and the basis of its formations.

Unity Based on Equality or Secession?

Leaving aside the especial case of Western Somalia which was ceded to Ethiopia by Britain in the forties of this century, the borders of modern Ethiopia took shape towards the end of the century when Menelik, having emerged victorious over his feudal rivals, rapidly and greatly expanded the Southern and Western frontiers of his kingdom. Prior to this, in the territories of the oppressed nationalities, there were feudal principalities which fought against each other and with those of the Amharas, but there were no economically cohesive and clearly demarcated independent states of the Oromos, Tigreans, Afars or others. Hence among Ethiopia's oppressed nationalities there can be no hankering for a return to a formerly nonexistent independent status, no nostalgia for an independent state. The demand for secession, therefore, has no historical basis.

Ethiopia's oppressed nationalities are not economically cohesive entities, either. And although the chauvinist policies of Ethiopia's ruling classes have hurt them economically and perpetuated their underdevelopment, secession from multi-national Ethiopia, especially once a democratic state that guarantees the political, economic and social equality of nationalities is set up, will damage rather than help the economic development of the oppressed nationalities. There is, thus, no economic basis for the demand for a separate state.

Another factor that could incude the separation of an oppressed nationality from a central state is the sharpening of the national antagonism to the extent that it makes it impossible for two nationalities to live together.

While it is true that national oppression has, in the particular conditions of Ethiopia, aroused bitterness and resentment, it has not rendered impossible the establishment of an equal and harmonious relationship among nationalities once oppression has been eliminated. Furthermore, the feelings of resentment and mutual distrust among nationalities will fade in the process of the joint political and armed struggle that is necessary for the establishment of a democratic state that upholds the right of self-determination.

To sum up, once a progressive state is set up in Ethiopia and the system of national domination and oppression gives way to one based on the equal rights of all nationalities, there would be no historical, economic or other factors that would make the demand for secession correct and justifiable from the standpoint of the interests of the masses. On the other hand, secession is impossible as long as a repressive regime holds sway in Addis Ababa because Ethiopia's ruling classes will fight the demand for separation to the very end.

To argue that secession is an incorrect and impractical solution in the particular conditions of Ethiopia, however, does not imply a rejection of the right to political independence, which is included in the right to self-determination. Some national
questions are solved on the basis of secession; others on the basis of unity with equality. In both cases, the right to self-determination is upheld. But a specific problem demands a specific solution.

(Likewise) on the question of Ethiopian nationalities, what is at stake is not the principle of the right to self-determination in general but the particular destinies of particular peoples. And in this specific case, historical, economic and other factors show that the only correct solution is unity based on equality. Agreement of views on this crucial question would play a major role in removing the hurdles that obstructed the advance of the Ethiopian revolution in the past stage. But there is another question which needs to be clarified and properly answered and that is the concept of nationalities and the national question itself.

The Question of Nationalities in Ethiopia
The question of nationalities is a question of the destiny, political destiny in the first place, of peoples who inhabit the same geographical area and have economic ties as well as a common language and culture. It is the struggle for the right of self-determination of a particular nationality. It is different from the question of 'nations' (in the wider use of the term) or colonies in the sense that here the people fight not for the rights of individual nationalities but for the right of the whole people who, in the majority of cases, are composed of various nationalities. The question of 'nations' (again in the wider use of the term) and colonies is defined by the boundaries of the country in question, while the question of nationalities is not fettered by the administrative boundaries within the concerned multi-national state.

Let's give some examples. In Ethiopia, the Oromo people live in several of the country's adjoining administrative regions. These boundaries, however, have no influence on their struggle. The Oromos of the administrative regions of Wollega and Sidamo do not fight as Wollegans or Sidamans but they and the rest of the Oromos fight as one people for the rights of their nationality. On the other hand, the fact that Oromos live in the administrative region of Sidamo does not allow them to declare the whole region their territory and prevent other oppressed nationalities living there — Sidamas in this particular example — from organizing their national movements and fighting for their liberation. Similarly, the Afar people who live in Wollo and Tigrai have the right to struggle not as Wolloans and Tigraians but as Afars and for the rights of their nationality. And the people of Tigrai who have stood up to regain their national rights should not begrudge the same right to another oppressed people.

This has nothing to do with the giving away of 'one's territory'. But it calls for respect for the rights of others in as much as one demands respect for one's rights. This would serve as a basis for forging the unity of the oppressed which scares the enemy and brings the day of liberation much closer. Moreover, the frontiers of the nationalities do not coincide with the administrative boundaries of regions and provinces drawn by the Addis Ababa regime for administrative and other reasons which do not take the interests of the nationalities into account.

Experience in different parts of Ethiopia has shown that to delineate a nationality's territory on the basis of this administrative boundaries or by extending them further is counter-productive. It is a harmful measure based on a narrow outlook and ends up frustrating the unity of the oppressed which is essential for victory. It leads to territorial disputes among national movements, to preventing other oppressed
nationality movements from setting up independent organizations and launching armed struggle in the areas that you consider your ‘territory’, to disallowing multi-national movements — which by their character must work actively throughout the country — to organize in the given nationality’s territory.

If the common and final aim is unity based on equality, however, there is no need for this scramble as the territories which are objects of dispute belong to a single country, to a single people. Surely, there is no need to attempt now to extend the frontiers of one’s nationality, if tomorrow all nationalities are going to live together as citizens of one country. Moreover, the boundaries of nationalities should not be drawn today and unilaterally, but with the participation and consent of all nationalities after the setting up of a democratic Ethiopia which respects the right to self-administration.

Here, the case of the nationalities which have been divided up by the international boundaries of Ethiopia and its neighbours can be raised. For if the Afars of Tigrai and Wollo, unimpeded by the boundaries that separate them into two administrative regions, have the right to press their cause as a single people, what is there to prevent them from calling on the Afars living beyond Ethiopia’s borders in Eritrea and Djibouti to join them? If the Oromos in Ethiopia’s different administrative regions have the right to organize a single national movement, why can’t the Oromos in Kenya join them?

It is true that the boundaries of Ethiopia and its neighbours — Eritrea, Djibouti, Kenya, Somalia and the Sudan, — like those of the rest of the African countries, were drawn up on the basis of the capital and power of the European colonizers and did not take national composition and destiny into account. As a result, many nationalities were divided up and now live in two or more countries.

On the other hand, the colonial powers broke down nationality and tribal barriers within the colonial boundaries and gave rise to the colonized peoples political and economic unity and a national consciousness. This, in turn, gave rise to movements that struggle, not for the rights of individual nationalities, but for the national independence and social progress of multi-national peoples. Therefore, Eritreans struggle not as Tigrignas, Tigres, Afars, Sahos, etc., but all Eritrean nine nationalities as a single people; and the same goes for the people of Kenya who fought as Kenyans and not as Kikuyus, Luos, Oromos or others. Here, the Afars of Djibouti and Eritrea join hands with the peoples of Djibouti and Eritrea; the Kenyan Oromos with the rest of the Kenyan people.

The Sudanese Nuers cast their lots with the Sudanese people and their brothers in Ethiopia with Ethiopians. Similarly, the Tigre people of Eritrea fight as Eritreans, while those across the border in the Sudan partake in Sudanese affairs. Once the separate national identity of a multi-national people is recognized, it is unacceptable to demand from without that certain of the nationalities join hands with you. Clearly, a country’s internal administrative boundaries are qualitatively different from the international boundaries that were drawn up by the colonial powers and which, in the course of a long historical, political and economic process, became the basis for united national struggles.

The Question of a United Front

Such a clear understanding of the nature of the question of nationalities and its resolution is a precondition for the formation of a united front of all national and
multi-national organizations in Ethiopia. If the nature of the question is well understood and the goal of unity based on equality clearly stated, every national organization will be encouraged to mobilize its people for the common goal; multinational organizations will be free to work in the areas where they will be most effective, regardless of which nationality lives there; and national and multinational organizations will fight side by side and assist each other. This will create optimum conditions for the united front to draw up a nation-wide strategy and deploy its forces in the areas where it can deal the heaviest blow to the Addis Abeba regime.

A united force that would work in such a mature and effective manner would create a new and optimistic spirit of struggle throughout Ethiopia. Moreover, it would enable the front to speak with a single and weighty voice on behalf of the Ethiopian people, isolate the Dergue internationally and gain broad recognition and support. While it is true that external support and influence do not constitute the decisive factor in any popular struggle, the formation of a democratic alternative to the Dergue capable of gaining international recognition would play a major role in speeding up the Ethiopian people's victory, as the military junta in Addis Abeba would not be able to stand long without the massive external help that is propping it up.

On the other hand, as the unproductive attempts of the past stage have confirmed, a united front that is not based on unanimity of views on the nature of the question of nationalities and its solution is bound to be an ineffective and short-lived instrument, one in which each organisation jockeys for its sectarian interests. An agreement to join hands against the common foe cannot form a solid basis for genuine and active cooperation if there is disagreement on the basic and burning issues of the day. Joint work is unthinkable as long as territorial disputes are not settled, as long as one organization fights for secession while another opposes it.

As long as the united front is not linked by a common aspiration which makes the sacrificing of sectional and group interests worth-while, each organization will strive to grow and gain influence at the expense of another. Since the United Front attempts to mobilize the masses for diametrically opposed aims — secession and unity — each organization will work to isolate its rival from the people by political and propaganda campaigns and by raising the exclusivist issue of the 'lands and boundaries of nationalities'. In Ethiopia where the question of nationalities is very sensitive, such disagreements inevitably lead to violence and internecine war.

In short, a united front organization in Ethiopia must have as its main aim the establishment of a democratic state which would bring to fruition the unity of equal nationalities, if it is to succeed in correctly handling the complex class-nationality relations in the country and lead the people to victory. The rights of nationalities in the new democratic state and the relations between the central government and the administrative organs of the nationalities must be clearly spelled out and the organizations that constitute the United Front must accept them and fight for their implementation. Taking into account the concrete conditions of Ethiopia and the problems of gaining regional and international recognition, it is clear that any united front which falls short of these requirements and is divided on the decisive issues will remain inoperative and, in the long run, harm the struggle of the peoples of Ethiopia.

Another issue which is closely linked with the aims of the United Front is the
question of membership. An indisputable criterion for membership is opposition to the Dergue's regime and to Soviet intervention in the affairs of the Eritrean and Ethiopian peoples. However, will organizations which meet this requirement but are the orderlies of Western imperialism and dream of reviving the feudal relations which have been weakened over the past 10 years of struggle be allowed to join the United Front? Will the Front open its doors to groups which imperialism has organized, sustained and armed and is now getting ready to infiltrate into Ethiopia?

In the present conditions of Ethiopia, are there any groups, except those who have already declared their anti-imperialist stand, which oppose the Dergue and Soviet intervention but are not in the service of U.S. imperialism? And is it possible that such groups can exist? The answer to all these questions is a definite 'no'!

The groups that draw their swords at the Dergue and Soviet intervention but bow to western imperialism are precisely those whom imperialism has been sustaining, those who still carry the smell of the overthrown autocratic regime. It is obvious that these forces have no place in the United Front, and if that is the case, it must be clearly stated in the criteria for membership that those who can participate in the United Front must be opposed not only to the Addis Abeba military regime and the Soviet union's pro-Dergue stance but also to feudal exploitation, imperialism and all forms of foreign domination.

Apart from the above mentioned crucial issues which have a direct and immediate bearing on the progress of the Ethiopian revolution and, indirectly on the Eritrean revolution, the EPLF considers all other issues — the question of the 'Social imperialist' nature of the Soviet Union, for instance — as secondary. One thing is beyond dispute: there must be unwavering opposition to the Soviet Union's liquidationist stand and aggressive role in the region and a demonstrated readiness to confront its military intervention. It is also reasonable to propose that the internal and external policies of the Soviet Union be discussed by organizations and their cadres with the aim of bring differing views on the subject closer.

However, it is totally incorrect to suggest that Ethiopian organizations and the EPLF be divided into antagonistic groups on the basis of their answer to the question of whether capitalism has been restored in the Soviet Union, a controversy which has not been resolved by revolutionary forces who seek to derive lessons from the experience of the socialist camp for their struggles for progressive societies.

To argue that 'it is strategic to differentiate friend from enemy on a world scale', to declare that 'whoever considers the Soviet Union an imperialist power is with us' and 'whoever doesn't call the Soviet Union imperialist is against us' and, on that basis, to malign organizations that have courageously fought Soviet military intervention and condemned its anti-liberation movement stance in this region and other continents as defenders, apologists and puppets of the Soviet Union and group them in the ranks of the enemies is wrong. Once you dub an organization an enemy, you are bound to conduct propaganda campaigns and mass mobilization efforts against it, strive to limit its influence and strength and conspire against it. These inevitably lead to the straining of relations between organizations and peoples and then to open conflict.

This is what experience has shown. In many Western and Third World countries, this type of outlook and thinking has resulted in the fragmentation of groups and the
fizzling out of revolutionary movements which, if they had remained united, could have achieved much. For all these reasons, the 'Social imperialist' nature of the Soviet Union should not be a touchstone that divides Ethiopian organizations and the EPLF into two antagonistic camps.

The Eritrean People’s Liberation Front has come forward to give its forthright views on the basic questions and tasks of the Ethiopian revolution because it is convinced that the destiny of the Eritrean and Ethiopian peoples is closely linked. The Front believes that for the advance of the Eritrean revolution, cooperation with the struggle of the Ethiopian peoples comes second only to the capability of the Eritrean people and that, for the Ethiopian revolution, the most important external factor is the Eritrean people’s struggle. It works carefully, patiently and seriously to broaden and deepen its relations with democratic Ethiopian organizations and reinforce the solidarity of the two peoples. The EPLF puts the importance of the formation of a solid alliance between the two revolutions above any of its diplomatic activities. At the same time, it expects from Ethiopia’s democratic movements of similar stand and an equal sense of responsibility.

* * *

STATEMENT BY THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE TIGRAY PEOPLE’S LIBERATION FRONT (TPLF) ON THE OCCASION OF THE 24TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARMED STRUGGLE IN ERITREA.

It is 24 years since the struggle of the Eritrean people began. On this day, the 1st September 1985, the 24th anniversary of the beginning of the armed struggle, great celebrations are being held in the liberated and semi-liberated areas of Eritrea and elsewhere. This great occasion is honoured not only by the heroic people of Eritrea but also by the TPLF and the Tigrayan masses.

The anniversary of the birth of the armed struggle in Eritrea which has a great and deep meaning for the Tigrayan people and its vanguard the TPLF, is regarded with special deep feeling and respect. This is not only because the Eritrean people are close neighbours and brothers of the Tigrayan masses, or only because the heroic Tigrayan fighters have repeatedly closed ranks with their Eritrean counterparts to make the ultimate sacrifice for the realization of the ideals of the struggle in Eritrea. The fundamental reason is far deeper than that.

That the Eritrean question is a historically proven, theoretically and scientifically supported case of colonialism and the struggle that the Eritrean masses are waging is a just and necessary struggle against colonialism are beyond any reasonable question. It goes without saying that all forces which stand for democracy and justice must necessarily support and uphold that struggle.

The TPLF, basing its stand on historical facts and sound scientific analysis has rightly supported, from the beginning, the Eritrean struggle against colonialism.

While many forces changed their position due to opportunistic considerations and opposed the just struggle of the Eritrean masses, the TPLF stood steady-fast on its conviction in and support for the struggle. The TPLF’s principled open support for the Eritrean people’s struggle has not been without political and other repercussions within Ethiopia and elsewhere. However, the TPLF did not succumb
fizzling out of revolutionary movements which, if they had remained united, could have achieved much. For all these reasons, the 'Social imperialist' nature of the Soviet Union should not be a touchstone that divides Ethiopian organizations and the EPLF into two antagonistic camps.

The Eritrean People's Liberation Front has come forward to give its forthright views on the basic questions and tasks of the Ethiopian revolution because it is convinced that the destiny of the Eritrean and Ethiopian peoples is closely linked. The Front believes that for the advance of the Eritrean revolution, cooperation with the struggle of the Ethiopian peoples comes second only to the capability of the Eritrean people and that, for the Ethiopian revolution, the most important external factor is the Eritrean people's struggle. It works carefully, patiently and seriously to broaden and deepen its relations with democratic Ethiopian organizations and reinforce the solidarity of the two peoples. The EPLF puts the importance of the formation of a solid alliance between the two revolutions above any of its diplomatic activities. At the same time, it expects from Ethiopia's democratic movements of similar stand and an equal sense of responsibility.

* * *

STATEMENT BY THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE TIGRAY PEOPLE’S LIBERATION FRONT (TPLF) ON THE OCCASION OF THE 24TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARMED STRUGGLE IN ERITREA.

It is 24 years since the struggle of the Eritrean people began. On this day, the 1st September 1985, the 24th anniversary of the beginning of the armed struggle, great celebrations are being held in the liberated and semi-liberated areas of Eritrea and elsewhere. This great occasion is honoured not only by the heroic people of Eritrea but also by the TPLF and the Tigrayan masses.

The anniversary of the birth of the armed struggle in Eritrea which has a great and deep meaning for the Tigrayan people and its vanguard the TPLF, is regarded with special deep feeling and respect. This is not only because the Eritrean people are close neighbours and brothers of the Tigrayan masses, or only because the heroic Tigrayan fighters have repeatedly closed ranks with their Eritrean counterparts to make the ultimate sacrifice for the realization of the ideals of the struggle in Eritrea. The fundamental reason is far deeper than that.

That the Eritrean question is a historically proven, theoretically and scientifically supported case of colonialism and the struggle that the Eritrean masses are waging is a just and necessary struggle against colonialism are beyond any reasonable question. It goes without saying that all forces which stand for democracy and justice must necessarily support and uphold that struggle.

The TPLF, basing its stand on historical facts and sound scientific analysis has rightly supported, from the beginning, the Eritrean struggle against colonialism.

While many forces changed their position due to opportunistic considerations and opposed the just struggle of the Eritrean masses, the TPLF stood steadfast on its conviction in and support for the struggle. The TPLF's principled open support for the Eritrean people's struggle has not been without political and other repercussions within Ethiopia and elsewhere. However, the TPLF did not succumb
to the pressures of these problems but stood firm in supporting the just struggle of the Eritrean people. And it will not let itself be compromised by whatever pressures may arise in the future. It will continue to stand firm on its conviction that the struggle against colonialism in Eritrea is just. The TPLF today, as in the past, will go as far as paying within the lives of its heroic fighters for the cause of the Eritrean struggle. Today as in the past the TPLF calls on those who uphold the cause of democracy and justice to support the Eritrean struggle.

**To All Ethiopian Democrats,**
The Eritrean question has a far deeper meaning than just a question of the struggle against colonialism. A nation that oppresses another nation by definition cannot be free itself. As long as the Eritrean people are brought under the yoke of the Amhara ruling classes, the methods that are used for oppressing and subjugating the Eritrean people are also necessarily used to subjugate the Ethiopian masses as well. The liberation of the Ethiopian masses is closely linked with the struggle of the Eritrean people. The forces that have brought the Eritrean people under the yoke of colonialism are the same forces that have imposed untold suffering and oppression on the Ethiopian peoples. It followed then that the Eritrean question has a far deeper meaning to all Ethiopian democratic forces than just an anti-colonial struggle. The Eritrean struggle’s special relationship with the Ethiopian democratic forces naturally entails a stronger support and commitment.

As one of the democratic forces in Ethiopia, the TPLF supports the Eritrean anti-colonial struggle not only because of its justness but also because it has a direct link with the Ethiopian struggle in general and the Tigrayan struggle in particular. Due to this fundamental and important reason the TPLF have given special consideration and support to the struggle in Eritrea. In future, as in the past, no matter what problems may result from this unwavering stand, the TPLF will give special attention and support to the Eritrean struggle.

Based on this principle, the TPLF has right from the outset tried to stand in solidarity and give support to the different organisations in Eritrea. The solidarity between Eritrean and Tigrayan masses did not only manifest itself in the support that the TPLF gave to the ELF and the EPLF, but also in the fact that Eritrean fighters sacrificed their lives for the cause of the oppressed people of Tigray and vice versa. TPLF fighters fell for and shared to a limited extent the cause that the ELF stood for and to a far greater extent shared the cause of the EPLF fighters.

However, this solidarity and support has not advanced as it should. The leaders of the ELF carried out atrocious acts of sabotage and aggression against the Tigrayan revolution regardless of the support and solidarity that the Tigrayan people and their vanguard the TPLF gave to the Eritrean struggle. The ELF leaders finally closing ranks with the EPRP declared war against the Tigrayan people and brought about much suffering and bloodshed on both sides ... Needless to say that this fact has left a black mark on the development of positive relationships.

Though the strong relationship between the TPLF and the EPLF was based on the same principle of support for the Eritrean question, it does not mean that the two organisations did not have differences in outlook on questions pertaining to the democratic revolution in Ethiopia and Eritrea. However, these differences were discussed only between the members of the Central Committees of the two organisations and not by the rank and file fighters or the general population.
The TPLF believes that bringing out the differences that exist between the two organisations in open discussion reflects a developed and advanced democratic method of struggle. Believing that this method of struggle should be applied not only between enemy organisations but also between friendly ones, the TPLF has brought out the differences between itself and the EPLF for open and democratic debate and discussion. The EPLF leadership not only agreed to this but also quickly carried out similar action.

The TPLF hailed the EPLF's exposure of the differences between the two organisations to the fighters and the masses as a great step forward in the political culture of our part of the world. Convinced of the correctness of this approach and realising that the EPLF had openly presented its arguments, the TPLF likewise presented its points on an open platform.

The developments that followed this process however have not been conducive to frank and democratic discussions. At a time when the Tigrayan people were going through great suffering due to a terrible famine and the whole world was engaged in an exemplarary effort to combat this problem the EPLF, the organisation that the Tigrayan masses considered as one of their co-combatants in the struggle for justice, blocked the life-line of the famine victims and committed an unpardonable act which would have come as a surprise even from our enemies much less our friends. It was after these developments that the EPLF announced that it had decided to sever all contact between itself and the TPLF.

This decision not only hampers the process of free and democratic discussion in the political culture of our corner of the world that we genuinely upheld but also goes beyond that to weaken the strong ties between the peoples and struggles.

This decision can only serve the interests of the enemies of the Eritrean and Ethiopian peoples. And that is why the TPLF considers it as ill advised, wrong and harmful.

The TPLF still strongly believes that the Eritrean people's struggle is just and deserves to be supported. Standing firm on this conviction it also believes that support for solidarity must be truly mutual and genuine between itself and the EPLF. However, the TPLF also believes that the differences between the two organisations must not be hushed up or covered over but brought out into the open for discussion and debate in order to close the gap while standing firmly together on the points on which both organisations agree. Therefore the TPLF believes and advocates the idea that open discussion between the two organisations must develop even further while the mutual support continues unhampered.

On this very day when the Eritrean masses assess their struggle of 24 years they must not be prevented from appreciating the support and solidarity they enjoy from all their true friends in general and the TPLF in particular.

Central Committee of the TPLF
September 1985
A group of Mozambiquan students wrote a collective poem on the anniversary of the massacre of Soweto — to declare their love and solidarity for their South African brothers and sisters:

Soweto

Your streets are great rivers of blood
Pregnant with corpses!

Soweto

The cries of children
Calling to the Power of the People
That neither the hostile faces of the guards
Or the guns managed to smother —
This great desire
This flame of freedom!

The united hands
Of this great People
Firmly clenched
Shall lay in ruins the foundations of Apartheid!

It is more than saluting
the voice of reason

It is more than seeing
the reason of the Struggle

It is more than being certain
of the awaited victor

We are with you — only one People
Of the one Africa
Who arise from the long night
To destroy the chains of oppression —
We are with you

Reviews

Eritrean Journey by Doris Burgess, Jenny Pierce, Jenny Rossiter, Trish Silkin, War on Want London, 1986 (£1.75)* and Fighting The Famine by Nigel Twose and Mike Goldwater, Pluto, London 1985, (£4.95)

Although these two books address somewhat different issues, and were written out of different experiences, they have a number of striking similarities. They are books that are built around powerful and telling photographs; the pictures tell the story. The photos and the text in both of these volumes stand as a tribute to the peasants in Africa involved in struggle, and as such serve a very valuable purpose in breaking the visual images that dominated reporting on Africa throughout 1985, of a depressed, dependent, pathetic and helpless peasantry unable or unwilling to take any control over their own lives.

The images in both of these books are strong. Pictures of women learning to read and write in small groups under trees, of girls mending motor vehicles, of sick people being treated in local hospitals, of irrigation schemes indigenously run, of nomads fighting for survival. Eritrean Journey focuses only on Eritrea and primarily on the women and their struggle in Eritrea. Fighting the Famine has photographs from the whole of the Sahel, though the bulk of the pictures do come from Eritrea and Tigray — regions where the determination of the people themselves to run their own lives and to effect real social and economic transformation is realised, even under the current appalling conditions of famine and war.

In the face of a relentless, technologically sophisticated modern war the peoples of Eritrea and Tigray are undertaking radical transformation of their society, as well as fighting. Both these books report positively of the strides taken in education. The four European women who undertook their Eritrean journey found the experience of watching nomadic women struggle to become literate, of visiting the central school where hundreds of children learn from a newly developed curriculum with Eritrean produced textbooks impressive. New educational ideas are worked out in this school and then disseminated to the many schools throughout liberated Eritrea, and to the ERA (Eritrean Relief Association) run schools in the refugee camps in the Sudan. Maths, science, four languages, metal and wood work, arts, music, sports are all on the curriculum, and while there is a great emphasis on relevant practical
education, there is also a vast appreciation of poetry, culture and music. The piano hidden in the underground school which had been 'liberated' from the enemy stood as a powerful symbol to one of the authors: 'We all laugh at the image of a piano being hauled over rocky mountains in the face of strategic withdrawal but for me it stands for the Eritrean's determination to preserve their humanity in the middle of war.' Girls as well as boys are fully integrated into the new education, and outside of formal schooling for children significant resources are put into mass literacy campaigns designed to reach out to people, particularly the nomadic population, for whom education has been nonexistent until recently.

Similarly both books are impressed by the strides made in health care, though the war and resulting injuries obviously drain off many of the health care resources. A team of barefoot doctors, backed up by locally produced generic antibiotics and vaccines, covers large areas of the country and they are attempting to set up village health councils. The key focus is on prevention, and improving the general health of the whole population. There are a networks of hospitals where trained doctors perform operations and life-saving actions under conditions of intense camouflage because they have become a focus for enemy bombing. Under the most difficult conditions of aerial war everything has to be hidden, buried or camouflaged and most work has to be done at night, yet it is here that some of the most progressive steps in medical care to be seen in Africa have been taken. Again the pictures convey so much more that the text can ever do, of patients and doctors working against incredible odds to achieve better health care.

In agriculture the lack of rain, the war, the erosion of soil and hundreds of years of poor land use militate against easy success. Land reform, collective production, land redistribution, the giving out of essential seeds and hoes have begun but the peoples of Eritrea and of Tigray have been forced to move mass populations in 1985 to provide starving people with basic foods. The attempts to feed people in remote corners of the area by trucking supplies in from Port Sudan, over hand-built rocky roads, by night, are again graphically pictured and described, and although much was achieved and many Eritreans were fed inside the country, others did have to cross borders and become refugees in Sudan in order to survive. The international community deprived them of the much needed grain which they could then have distributed in the remote areas. Their appeals for assistance with extra transport also went largely unheeded except by a few small charities. The attempts of the Eritreans firstly to feed their people at home, and then later in camps for displaced persons such as Solomuna are contrasted with the refugee camps in Sudan. The sense of purpose and determination inside Eritrea, (and indeed inside Tigray), contrasts uncomfortably with the appalling conditions in the camps in Sudan where hundreds died, and hope for many was extinguished. The pictures of the camps in Sudan in Fighting the Famine are particularly poignant.

These two pictorial accounts, one of the Sahel and one of Eritrea during the terrible famine (and war) conditions of 1985 make a clear statement about the determination in struggle of sections of the African peasantry. Far from sitting down helplessly under conditions that would crush the average Westerner, they are actively engaged in processes of radical transformation in land and agriculture, the position of women, in health, in education and in politics. As such, though these are both short volumes and do not go into deep analysis of events, they are important and contain many strong, unambiguous essential statements.

*Available from ROAPE

Tina Wallace
Unless otherwise stated, the theses listed below are doctoral theses. They may normally be obtained on inter-library loan, when the number below the author's name will need to be quoted: DAI — Dissertation Abstracts International, Series A.

7d. SUDAN

671 Salih, H E
Some aspects of interaction between the national liberation movement in the Sudan and the movements of Arab-African unity. Leipzig, 1979, 335pp

672 Al Saadoon, A
Sudan's foreign policy 1969-80. MA, Calgary, 1981

673 Ali, T M A
Political economy of agricultural development in the Sudan 1956-64. Toronto, 1982; DAI, 44,3 (1983) 859

674 Fadlalla, A F
Sudan: a quest for a model. Sthn. Calif., 1979

675 Johnson, D H

676 Muhammed, A E
Labour requirements and supply for cotton picking in New Halfa Agricultural Corporation. MSU, 1979, 208pp; DAI, 41,5 (1980) 2225

677 Ahmed, A H

678 O'Brien, J J

679 El Hassan, I S

680 Sulton, J E
Regional autonomy in the S Sudan; a study in conflict regulation. Johns Hopkins, 1980, 459pp; Ibid., 4154

681 Khalafalla, E S

682 Abbadi, K A

683 Abdalla, E A S
Development administration and regionalism: towards a communalist approach to the decisional process in the Sudan. Pittsburg, 1981, 507pp; Ibid., 3746

684 Mohamed, A A
Regional resource allocations in the Sudan. Florida SU, 1981, 161pp; DAI, 42,10 (1982) 4571

685 Saeed, A

686 Gruenbaum, E R
Health services, health and development; the impact of the Gezira Scheme. Connecticut, 1982, 402pp; DAI, 43,2 (1982) 492

687 Ahmed, E A

688 Abdelrahiem, Z H
Government expenditure and economic development of the Sudan 1956-80. Syracuse, 1982, 277pp; Ibid., 3068

689 Hassan, S M
The impact of the export sector on the domestic economy of Sudan. Syracuse, 1982, 245pp; Ibid., 3057

690 Mohammed, O M A
The international regime of the River Nile. Sthn Calif., 1982; DAI, 43,10 (1983) 3412

691 Elarabi, A M

692 Abdelmagid, M M
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Thanks to those of you who have sent enthusiastic proposals to the Conference. Offers of papers are falling more or less in line with our suggestion especially on the themes of Liberation Movements, Popular Consciousness and Ideology. We are asking convenors to coordinate workshops on these and the other themes.

Reminders:

- Details and booking forms for the Conference were published in ROAPE 34. They are also available from the Conference Organisers.
- Abstracts (on not more than 2 sides of A4 paper) should have been sent to the Conference Organiser by 1 April 1986. Late submissions will not be excluded!
- Papers (not more than 8000 words) should be sent to the Conference Organisers by 1 July 1986.
- Bookings by 1 May 1986 will guarantee that you receive your abstracts in advance. The final date for bookings for accommodation and/or meals will be 1 August 1986 after which a late fee will be charged.
- All Booking forms, abstracts, papers and enquiries should be sent to Penelope Roberts, Department of Sociology, University of Liverpool, Liverpool L69 3BX.

Barry Munslow
Penelope Roberts

Conference Organisers
March 1986
PUBLICATIONS 1974-1986

Number 1: Development in Africa
Number 2: Multinational Corporations
Number 3: Classes in Africa
Number 4: Class Struggle & Liberation
Number 5: The State in Africa
Number 6: Merchant Capital/Neo-Colonialism
Number 7: Special Issue on South Africa
Number 8: Capitalism in Africa
Number 9: Southern Africa
Number 10: Peasants
Number 11: Southern Africa
Number 12: Mining and Mine Labour
Number 13: Special issue on Nigeria
Number 14: New Colonialism and Military Rule
Number 15/16: The Roots of Famine
Number 17: Debate in Kenya
Number 18: Special Issue on Zimbabwe
Number 19: Consciousness & Class
Number 20: Kenya: The Agrarian Question
Number 21: Peasants, Capital & The State
Number 22: Ideology, Class & Development
Number 23: Scandinavian Perspectives of Africa
Number 24: The French Connection
Number 25: Ruth First Memorial
Number 26: The Sudan
Number 27/28: Women, Oppression & Liberation
Number 29: Resistance & Resettlement
Number 30: Conflict in the Horn
Number 31: Capital vs. Labour in West Africa
Number 32: The 'Left' in Africa
Number 33: War and Famine
Number 34: Market Forces

ORDER FORM

Subscriptions (3 issues per year, including postage and packing)

**Individuals**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 yr.</th>
<th>2 yr.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK and Africa</td>
<td>£8</td>
<td>£15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elsewhere</td>
<td>£10/US$18</td>
<td>£19/US$24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa/Elsewhere airmail</td>
<td>£16/US$29</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back Issues</td>
<td>£3.50/US$6 each except no.29 which is £4.50/US$7.25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Rate</td>
<td>£5.50/US$10 (verification needed with payment)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Institutions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 yr.</th>
<th>2 yr.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK and Africa</td>
<td>£18</td>
<td>£25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elsewhere</td>
<td>£20/US$40</td>
<td>£25/US$60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa/Elsewhere</td>
<td>£22/US$46</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back Issues</td>
<td>£6/US$12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please start/continue my sub with issue

BOOKS FROM ROAPE

(all prices include postage and packing)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eritrean Journey</td>
<td>£2/$3.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never Kneel Down: Drought, Development and Liberation in Eritrea</td>
<td>£4.95/US$7.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hell Hole Robben Island: Reminiscences of a Political Prisoner</td>
<td>£4.95/US$9.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behind the War in Eritrea</td>
<td>£3.50/US$7.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African Socialism in Practice: Tanzania</td>
<td>£2.95/US$6/50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State and Society in Nigeria</td>
<td>£3.25/US$7.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL

Cheques (US Dollars, on US Banks, International MO or Sterling cheques) payable to ROAPE, 341 Glossop Road, Sheffield S10 2HP, England. Phone (0742) 752671. GIRO ACCOUNT No. 64 960 4008. (Because of the fluctuation in the £/$ rate, ROAPE reserves the right to adjust rates accordingly.)

Name

Address

________________________________________________________________________