EDITORIAL: Warlords and Problems of Democracy in Africa

This double issue of ROAPE is concerned with a number of separate, but clearly related, issues at the heart of political activity in Africa. It addresses aspects of the increasing role of force in African politics and the difficulties this raises for democratic development. Linking the problems of political violence and political democracy is entirely appropriate: the spiral of violence and repression sweeping the continent effectively disenfranchises the mass of citizens, making them powerless and helpless victims, refugees, cannon-fodder, corpses — while predatory opportunists fight around and over them. All too often, only armed resistance offers any hope of democratic change. In consequence, the struggle to extend the terrain of political debate, expand human rights, increase mass participation and establish at least popular (never mind socialist) democracy — issues highlighted at the 1989 ROAPE Conference, on Taking Democracy Seriously — remains a difficult one.

These issues give much cause for pessimism at present. In contrast to the hopes that have been raised by the collapse of Stalinism in eastern Europe and by the retreat of apartheid in South Africa, the situation in much of Africa is enough to induce profound disquiet. The eighties have been years of mounting political instability, international debt, economic decline and famine. The outcome has been widening poverty, mass misery and an increasingly brutal kind of politics. There is a pressing need to begin an analysis of these problems and to initiate a critical exploration of alternatives. Indeed, little else could be as urgent. The crises of the eighties, themselves rooted in deeper, more fundamental contradictions, have emphasised the degree to which the mass of Africa's citizens are excluded from any control over their lives, from even the most minimal ability to make decisions, even the most cursory level of consultation, even the most minuscule security from violence and terror.

Militarisation, State Violence and Resistance
That militarisation — and military regimes — are widespread on the continent is a commonplace. In general, in the eighties, military governments have continued to exhibit their traditional features: they have tended to increase internal repression; to respond to the demands of external interests while imposing further 'austerity' on their own citizenry (though not on themselves); and to increase internal disorder and turmoil (through violence against civilian populations or as
a result of civil war). Whatever their motives, they have inevitably imposed an authoritarian rule and culture on their societies and have invariably defended property against people. At worst, they have made life arbitrary, dangerous and violent for their citizens.

Yet, as Cock's analysis indicates, it is not necessary to have a military regime for society to undergo a process of militarisation. In the eighties, South Africa's use of the so-called 'total strategy' placed the security apparatus at the centre of executive action. Military force and terror was used against the people of neighbouring states (including occupied Namibia) and against black protest at home, where more than 20,000 were detained, many of them small children (see ROAPE 40, 1988). As part of this process, critics of the regime were murdered. A report by David Webster, completed in 1989, spoke of anti-apartheid activists being assassinated and kidnapped by 'clandestine groups, presumably death squads ... perhaps linked to the state, or by surrogate or right-wing groups'. (The Independent, 3 May 1989). A few days later, Webster was himself killed. Subsequent reports have implicated death squads, one of which was said to be responsible for the murders, among others, of Webster and the Swapo lawyer, Anton Lubowski. This particular squad is said to have been called the Civil Co-operation Bureau (it has always been thus; Amin's murder squads in Uganda are said to have used 'Social Research Council').

The capacity of the state also to use surrogates and clients against its citizens is highlighted in the contributions in this issue by Mare and Mohamed Salih. Mare evaluates the role played by Inkatha and the KwaZulu bantustan in the policing of Natal's black population. Despite the protestations of Inkatha's leadership to the contrary, KwaZulu's place in the institutional structure of apartheid imposes on it the function of being part of the state's repressive apparatus, a function it has itself expanded (for instance, with the growth of the 'Zulu police'). Mohamed Salih, on the other hand, considers the delegation of military functions by the Sudanese state to a number of tribal militias which act to terrorise and rob civilian populations, thus contributing to a 'retribalisation' of politics which deepens the misery of the people.

The process of militarisation, coupled with the growth of violence, increasingly involves all elements of society and social life. Some contributions in this issue, for instance, consider the way in which war and militarism impose themselves on women. Burgess reports a number of interviews with women in the frontline in Eritrea, indicating that participation in the struggle of the EPLF has heightened political consciousness and self-confidence in ways that may have a lasting effect after the war ends. Boyd's study of present efforts to extend the role and influence of women in Uganda also expresses optimism about the process and possible outcome. To an extent that surpasses other revolutions in Africa, the NRM would seem to place much emphasis on the empowerment of women as an essential element of any effort to build a democratic future. Given that such hopes have been raised before (most famously by Fanon about Algeria, and in Mozambique and Zimbabwe) it will be interesting to observe the process in Eritrea and Uganda.

Cock's analysis of efforts to incorporate white women into the militarist ethos of the 'total strategy', is in a very different vein. The South African Defence Force did not seek to incorporate women directly into combat; on the contrary, it was important to exclude them from this aspect of war. By stressing 'feminine' attributes and 'femininity' it sought, at one and the same time: to deploy them in
non-combatant industrial and support roles; to enlist them in the maintenance of ideologies of masculinity and militarism and of patriotism and anti-communism; and to use them as an ideological justification for war. Not all white women permitted themselves to be thus incorporated, as Cock points out, and some actively opposed the regime. Such women, having transgressed against official concepts of ‘masculinity’ and ‘femininity’, were vilified as ‘failed women’.

All this necessarily raises the question of resistance to state violence. In Namibia, a war against South Africa’s illegal and violent occupation ended in November 1989 with UN supervised elections under an uneasy truce. The process is documented in three reports from Namibia featured in our Briefings section (Leys, Bush and Cliffe). The potential for South African disruption of the transition to independence and of any efforts to develop a democratic society, they note, remains strong, even now. Another such just war has been fought by Polisario against the Moroccan occupation of Western Sahara. Seddon details diplomatic efforts to end the war; Morocco’s seeming unwillingness to negotiate seriously means that, for the present, it continues. So do the struggles in Eritrea and Tigray, with much success, and in southern Sudan. In Uganda, the NRM’s fight against the legacy of the Amin-Obote years, and the problems of human rights which are posed by it, are considered here by Nkamuhayo and Seidel. In South Africa, a racist regime incapable of responding to protest or petition without callous repression and violence, has produced an increasingly violent response from the oppressed.

**Are there Warlords in Africa?**

One aspect of the rising tide of political crisis has been the apparent loss of control of particular regions by the state. This space has then come to be filled by local or sectional interests with enough muscle and determination to impose control over the local population. The phenomenon has led a number of observers to ask if the concept of ‘warlordism’ has become applicable to Africa. The term was used to describe the process in China where the collapse of central control led to the emergence of regional overlords who imposed a rule of force over the local populations in their areas. Such warlords were, in many cases, former functionaries of the state who developed an independent role as the state lost power over its periphery. Roberts’ excellent introduction to the concept and the literature on Chinese warlordism is included here on the assumption that much of it will be unknown to Africanists and in the hope that it will help readers to evaluate this debate.

We also feature two articles that take very different views of the value of transposing the concept to Africa. Considering Chad, Charlton and May find clear parallels with the warlord model: the collapse of the central state, factional strife, the breakdown of central authority accompanied by the increasing use of force to settle disputes, and the regionalisation of the political process. Recent events would seem to strengthen their argument. In April 1989, an attempted coup split the Habre regime and led to intense fighting between factions supporting Habre and those supporting his dissident officers. At least three factions, headed by powerful warlords, have emerged to challenge the regime. Meanwhile the Libyans have renewed their involvement and the US and Iraq are giving military support to Habre’s group (‘Chad: The Warlords return’, *Africa Confidential*, 30 (14) 7 July 1989).
The role of Renamo in Mozambique is much less clear-cut than Chad. Darch finds few of the characteristics described by Roberts. The MNR does not represent a former branch of the state which has taken independent regional power as a result of the contraction of the centre. Frelimo has neither relinquished nor lost national control; instead it is confronted by a war promoted from abroad in which Renamo are surrogates for South Africa. The real warlords are in Pretoria, says Darch. This argument bears on a debate which has been featured in the pages of *Politique Africaine*, (29, March 1988) and *The Southern African Review of Books*, (April/May 1989 and December 1989/January 1990). The contributors there mostly agree that internal problems, especially the unpopularity of some of Frelimo's policies, have aided Renamo. Michel Cahen argues that Frelimo's use of the term 'armed bandits' ignores the extent of its own failure to build democratic structures capable of revitalising socialist aims. Otto Roesch agrees that there is substantial peasant alienation and that more weight must be given to internal problems in Mozambique. Nevertheless, like Darch, he gives primacy to external forces:

Western imperialism, acting primarily through South Africa, quite simply kicked the stuffing out of the Mozambican revolution. South African destabilisation (through its surrogate force Renamo) was the means by which to destroy Mozambique's economy and force its reintegration into the neo-colonial fold ...

This argument is relevant to the use of the warlord concept in Africa. Of itself, external support (even sponsorship) does not seem sufficient reason for disqualification of the concept in a particular case (indeed, Roberts mentions external support as a fairly common feature of Chinese warlordism). More important would seem to be the question of whether or not there is a collapse of state authority and, also, some degree of independent interest on the part of the 'warlord' who makes his own use of external support. It is these aspects which Darch correctly identifies as absent in Renamo's case.

More apposite, perhaps, is the case of Inkatha discussed by Mare and mentioned by Darch. Here is an organisation with strong personal leadership which uses violence against its opponents, which promotes its own, separate 'Zulu' persona in competition with organisations that seek to unite all black people, which seeks to make Natal its own, exclusive domain, which operates as a para-military force; yet it owes everything to the space given it by apartheid structures and the South African state, which has delegated policing powers to it in certain areas. There are clearly elements of the warlord in this case and that of the 'tribal militias' in Sudan described by Mohamed Salih. But there is also a much more dependent, surrogate character to them; they owe much to sponsorship. If there is an 'African warlord' (and not just a Chadian one) it is far more in thrall to imperialist interests than ever was its Chinese counterpart.

The Failure of Democracy

Whether or not the concept of warlordism 'fits' a particular case or not, the very fact that the question is being posed, taken together with the prevalence of military regimes, death squads, 'tribal militias', and so on, indicates something of the crisis confronting African states. Mohamed Salih writes of a withdrawal from public, central politics and of 'the present political brawl', words relevant far beyond the borders of Sudan. The present malaise indicates clearly that there has been a failure to build democratic structures throughout the continent. As a result, regional,
ethnic and cultural diversity, class interests and mass aspirations, ideas of social justice, equality and democracy, cannot be harmonised and unified and so must be suppressed. The result is a lack of consensus, security and stability. The underlying causes are intimately bound up with the nature of the development crisis in Africa and are easily identified. Firstly, the nature of underdevelopment itself reduces the capacity of the state to respond to national aspirations and quickly brings disillusionment. In the eighties this was compounded by the deepening debt crisis which, though smaller in aggregate than that of the major debtors in Latin America, represented a more fundamental burden on states with little prospect of ever repaying their creditors (Africa has 35 of the 36 poorest nations on earth, most of them — and some of the nominally better-off 'lower middle income'countries too — lacking the productive capacity even to fund debt servicing). The imposition of IMF 'stabilisation' measures increased austerity and shifted the debt burden to the poorest and weakest members of these societies. Stabilisation thus brought instability, protest, repression and violence. In Zambia, for instance, the IMF medicine produced food riots in December 1986 during which protesters were shot by the police. This prompted the government to abandon its IMF stabilisation agreement in April 1987, President Kaunda observing, in effect, that, while he was eager to implement restructuring measures, these could not require the state to shoot its own citizens. Other governments have been less squeamish.

Secondly, the nature of imperialism imposes pressures on postcolonial states to perpetuate their place in the international division of labour and to avoid attempts at fundamental restructuring and reform. Opposition to efforts by third world states to attempt independent economic growth policies has been well documented and needs no repetition here. Such pressures are most strongly expressed through the foreign policy stance of the United States. Noam Chomsky argues that American hostility to reform (frequently involving sanctions and even destabilisation) is often intended to show others, who might be tempted into similar strategies, that to further 'human rights, the raising of living standards and democratisation' is a hazardous, ultimately futile undertaking. It is the programme that must be discredited, he argues; if the attacks cause a war weary population to 'give in', to return to a regime obedient to US wishes, then so much the better — but that is not the first priority. It is justified as the need to defend 'democracy' but the democracy that Americans enjoy is not what is on offer; in fact, notes Chomsky, studies indicate that the worse the human rights record of client regimes, the higher US aid to them tends to be (Chomsky, The Chomsky Reader, (Random House, 1987) pp.318-32,358-60).

If this analysis over simplifies US policy (in some cases it may be in the interests of US capital to foster growth and democratisation) and if it is truer of central America than elsewhere, nevertheless its general outlines are recognisable to most observers. As Wright notes in this issue, the policy is bound up with Cold War considerations. Under Reagan, the policy was intensified, interpreting almost all third world conflicts in terms of the regime's anti-communist crusade, and destabilisation, once concentrated in Latin America, was extended also to Africa. South Africa was given virtually a blank cheque to pursue its 'total strategy' against its neighbours and there was support, direct and indirect, for Unita and Renamo. Given the origins of the policy as traced by Wright, it is difficult to believe that it will change substantially under Bush — despite the thaw in relations with the Soviet Union. Wright's analysis suggests that there might be a shift from the gross
brutality of the Reagan doctrine to something more sophisticated. Nevertheless, the general pattern of defending American control over the global economy will continue. Indeed, in announcing military cuts in Europe, Bush spoke of concentrating on a new, 'flexible response' anywhere in the world; more recently, his defence secretary, Chaney, has spoken of the 'continuation' of a 'Soviet threat' in the third world. As far as Africa is concerned, the message is clear.

If imperialism and underdevelopment combine to undermine attempts at democratic development, the nature of the postcolonial state has tended to emphasise this problem. Lacking an adequate class base, unable to legitimise their control of the state apparatus through successful strategies of growth or accumulation, lacking the institutions of bourgeois civil society to protect them, forced by imperialist pressures into helplessness, and confronted by a disenchanted and oppressed peasantry and working class, the functionaries of the state seek refuge in the one thing they inherited from colonialism that works: state repression and coercion. Instead of a process of building democratic institutions and ideas many politicians rushed headlong into regionalist and ethnic forms of political conflict in order to stake out their political 'territory' including the politicisation of religion so graphically described by Ibrahim in the case of Nigeria; thence to the one-party state, that 'dictatorship of the national bourgeoisie' as Fanon called it; and finally, the last refuge of property, the military dictatorship, suitably bolstered by massive doses of foreign military assistance for which peasants and workers pay. It is the weakness of the postcolonial state, its inability either to promote viable capitalist development or undertake a democratic break with capital, that is evidenced in the pattern of repression and resistance we have been discussing.

Given the structural durability of these forces, it is not easy to offer general solutions for change. In the first place, there are few if any models of democratic empowerment of peasants and workers. Second, there are few organisations espousing such changes and those that do tend to be ruthlessly persecuted. Third, any development of such movements will find itself confronted not only by the state, but also by international forces described above. Yet, if the millennium is not immediately to hand, there is no reason for despair and inactivity. Events throughout the world in recent years have demonstrated clearly that mass action can remove even what seems to be the most ferocious state power. Even in South Africa, despite the regime's readiness to kill protesters, even there the regime has been forced to budge a little.

What is needed is to begin to define the nature and aims of democratic struggle. These are long-term problems but the work needs to begin; in any case, Africa is not going anywhere else right now. The contributions to this issue all raise aspects of the problem and introduce matters for discussion and debate. Most particularly, four papers focus directly on questions of democratisation: Beckman critically evaluates the limitations of bourgeois and popular forms of democracy but also identifies how they may still create space for further democratisation; Fine argues that nationalism needs to be given a more critical support than in the past, when socialists too often accepted its terms as defining their strategies — a critique made all the more pertinent, we would suggest, by the demonstrated inability of nationalist programmes to promote a successful democratic development; Boyd, as noted, considers the practical experience of efforts in Uganda to expand the arena of female participation — an issue to which too many
movements either pay lip-service or ignore — and the role that particular institutions of the NRM might potentially play; and Sachikonye surveys the present debate in Zimbabwe about the direction of economic and political development — a debate which does not appear (yet) to involve the peasantry but which nevertheless indicates a widespread awareness of issues. These are all crucially important matters, but no one pretends that they exhaust the questions that need to be asked and answered. We hope that they will encourage further contributions and the development of an ongoing debate.

South Africa: De Klerk’s ‘Reforms’ and Mandela’s ‘Freedom’
The unbanning of more than 30 proscribed organisations, including the ANC, PAC and SACP, and the release of Nelson Mandela after 27 years of imprisonment, has unleashed widespread optimism and euphoria. Rightly so. That these events were preceded by a speech from South Africa’s president in which he spoke of ‘a new dispensation’, not based on race, is cause for optimism and celebration. It represents a victory for people worldwide who have campaigned in different ways against the apartheid state and have not been discouraged by the sneering of cynical politicians and greedy businessmen, all of whom knew better. That church bells rang throughout Britain in celebration of Mandela’s release is testimony to the extraordinary international solidarity forged across national, racial and class lines; apartheid’s barbarism, as we noted previously (editorial, ROAPE 40, 1988) succeeded in uniting the human race in opposition to it.

The events of early 1990 are a triumph for solidarity workers, for students and churches boycotting profiteers in apartheid, for black Americans prepared to be arrested in order to protest the Reagan Gang’s support for apartheid, for African states prepared to support the liberation struggle despite the casualties inflicted on them by the ‘total strategy’ and the IMF’s debt restructuring measures, for the heroic defenders of Cuito Cuanavale in southern Angola, whose defeat of SADF and Unita forces ended Pretoria’s reliance on regional destabilisation and introduced a new phase of diplomacy in both Namibia and South Africa, for many others. Above all, though, it is a triumph for the liberation struggle, for the sustained protest and resistance maintained throughout the mid and late eighties. More than anything else, it is the fact that young people have been prepared to keep on dying, without seeming end, rather than to submit, which has forced the apartheid state to seek some solution other than suppression, detention and murder. It is the sacrifices of young protesters which has frightened foreign investment away, persuaded some to disinvest and imposed sanctions on the regime, these ‘insignificant’ sanctions that apartheid’s supporters stress do not matter but which need to be ended at all costs.

Yet a terrible price has had to be paid for De Klerk’s speech. It is also inconceivable that anything like so many whites would have had to be killed before international action was forthcoming. Racism is not confined to South Africa. That alone must temper the euphoria. But there are more reasons for sobriety. If such a price had to be paid just to get the regime to talk, what more will be needed for a real (not cosmetic) settlement? Mandela, as Andre Brink so aptly put it, has been released into a larger prison. The structures of apartheid remain essentially intact. The massive security apparatus remains in place and continues to shoot first and ask questions afterwards. The racist character of capitalism remains entrenched.
It has been observed that De Klerk's 'reforms' have so far done little more than return the political position to what it was in 1960 just before Sharpeville. In fact, that comparison is misleading; in many ways the situation now is far worse than it was in 1960. In the intervening years, millions have been forcibly evicted from their homes and dumped into the poverty and helplessness of the bantustans. Several generations have had their lives blighted, perhaps permanently, by the distortions and inadequacies of 'bantu education' and by the place imposed on them in the economy. Apartheid has created a human disaster on a scale that is probably beyond the capacity of any government to repair within a generation.

The political problems this poses are even more serious than questions of what to do about the security apparatus and the loonies of the ultra-right. There is also a network of black apartheid functionaries in place, hostile to the liberation struggle and the democratic movement, which may still have a role to play in defending the past. No one reading Mare's account in this issue can have any reason for complacency on that score. There is a need to rebuild links between generations of leaders separated, from mass action and from each other, by exile and imprisonment and a need to integrate exiles into the new traditions of democratic politics which have been forged on the ground. This last is perhaps the most important project for the liberation movement: it is this blossoming of mass action which gives the oppressed peoples their greatest strength and holds out hope that South Africa can evolve something different and better than the postcolonial malaise which has blighted the continent. If mass democratic action can be preserved, in a way that {	extit{poder popular}} in Angola and Mozambique, for example, were not, the possibility is increased that the state might not have to turn to coercion of its citizens when the going gets tough.

The perpetuation of mass democratic participation is not, of course, what the present state has in mind for De Klerk's 'new dispensation'. Indeed, it is clear that one of its hopes is that the leadership of the liberation movement will be able to get control of township activists and union militants in a way that proved beyond the capacity of the police and army. A clue to this is found in Mandela's July 1989 memo to P.W. Botha ('The Mandela Plan: ANC leader pushes for lasting peace', the {	extit{Guardian}}, 26 January 1990). Precisely because it is framed as a reply to questions and arguments put to him, this document gives us an insight into the government's position as well as the ANC's. Basically, Mandela dealt with three key arguments which the state claimed prevented it from releasing prisoners and legalising banned organisations: first, that the ANC is dominated by the SACP and that it must end this alliance; second, that the ANC's commitment to armed struggle needs to be abandoned; third, that any settlement must recognise the need to protect 'group rights' in some way.

Reiterating the policies of the ANC, Mandela rejected each demand in turn: the movement would not abandon an ally though it was not itself a marxist party; the armed struggle would continue as long as the violence of apartheid continued; and democracy had to rest on a common franchise, a unitary state and individual rather than group rights. Subsequently, Mandela added a fourth element to this debate in a statement from prison: 'The nationalisation of the mines, banks and monopoly industries is the policy of the ANC and a change ... in this regard is inconceivable ... in our situation, state control of certain sectors of the economy is unavoidable'. (the {	extit{Guardian}}, 30 January 1990).
Looking at this debate, it is clear that the ANC is having to respond to the concerns not just of Afrikaner nationalism, but also of the state apparatus, the mining companies and other major elements of local and foreign capital, and the western powers. This is a formidable array of adversaries with whom to negotiate (indeed, capital has been vitriolic in its attacks on ANC nationalisation plans since Mandela's release; it certainly does not come across as the dynamic anti-apartheid force described by apologists of business). That De Klerk's speech was made without any of these issues being conceded by the ANC is encouraging, even though the emergency remains in force and political prisoners have not been released. It may point to a genuine desire to negotiate a settlement (rather than just negotiate). Nevertheless, the state retains options other than agreement with the ANC: the security apparatus might still take a hand, De Klerk might seek to use negotiations to legitimise an agreement with the bantustan leaders, the government might be replaced by the further right. None of these alternatives has much long-term future, but that might not be what the state is looking for at present. Certainly, South Africa's behaviour during the 1989 Namibian election campaign does not give the impression of a regime keen to mend its fences with Africans.

There is thus much difficulty and uncertainty ahead. If apartheid is dismantled, there is no guarantee that a democratic constitution will replace it. What is certain is that the ANC and its allies face serious challenges. As the pressures for it to 'compromise', to abandon some of its central tenets, mount from every side, the temptation to do so in the interests of resolving the conflict will become ever greater. Yet the nature of South Africa, the legacy of apartheid, the history of death and deprivation, make this difficult. Years of state violence have left the people embittered and angry. Many young activists see no difference between capitalism and racism; their experience has taught them that the two are the same. Without major restructuring, there is little prospect of peace. A future government, however democratic its original base, which has its hands tied by a constitution protecting present structures of privilege and interest, will be unable to respond to inevitable demands from the people and will end up having to repress them. South Africa already has a repressive regime; it is important to insist that it does not need another one.

Morris Szeftel
Warlords and Militarism in Chad
Roger Charlton and Roy May

After considering the inadequacies of the prevailing concern in African studies with violence and the collapse of the postcolonial state, the authors argue that the uses made of concepts of 'militarism' and 'militarisation' are equally confused and inadequate, particularly in explaining recent Chad history. They suggest an alternative approach, the elaboration of the warlord model used to discuss Chinese history between 1916 and 1928. They argue that there are striking parallels between the China of that time and Chad from the late seventies in the form of the collapse of central control, the rise of regional centres of power based on personalised rule and military force, and the consequent prevalence of a politics of conflict and war.

The capacity of Chad and Chadians to spring surprises on Africanists appears to be inexhaustible. No sooner had the country been written off as a permanently 'broken-backed' state (Tinker, 1964) than it, apparently, rose from the dead and reconstituted itself — with American and French assistance — as a viable political and military, if not yet economic, entity under Hissene Habre. It then proceeded to expel the Libyans, first from occupied Chadian territory, then, albeit temporarily, from much of the disputed Aouzou strip. Briefly, it even took the war of state reconstitution into Libya itself. An OAU inspired ceasefire was announced on 11 September 1987, followed by a statement from Colonel Quaddafi on 17 September that henceforth Chad would be left to the Chadians. Since then (from October 1988) diplomatic ties between Chad and Libya have been reopened, in turn helping to precipitate an attempted military coup in April 1989. This failed coup, paradoxically, underlined Habre's personal ascendancy and, at the same time, left him (as West Africa neatly put it) an increasingly 'lonely warlord'. Thus, a not inappropriate point has been reached to begin conceptualising or, perhaps better, re-conceptualising more than two decades of always eventful and mainly turbulent independence.

However, this exercise is not undertaken in the expectation that Chadian politics is necessarily entering a new era, or even a new chapter of its troubled history. On the contrary, it seems clear that so deep-seated is the factionalism that is at the centre of the Chadian political process, that any notion of the ending of an era is at best premature and, at worst, naive and misplaced. Indeed, it is the almost permanent instability of Chadian politics that makes that state's political processes fascinating and, in most respects, unpredictable even with the benefit of hindsight. It also leads to Africanists generally finding it more prudent to describe seemingly
kaleidoscopic developments than to attempt to step back and understand or explain them theoretically.

In part at least this tendency to theoretical abdication is a fault of the conceptual models commonly used by Africanists. These tend to the unilinear and, therefore, can only be uncomfortably applied to a state whose fortunes oscillate with such incredible rapidity. The problem many Africanists have of separating the wood from the trees is, however, one common to area studies. Equally to blame is the inadequate development of theories of armed forces and society capable of dealing with highly complex cases of militarism such as that exhibited in the erratic trajectory of the Chadian state (and its successive regimes).

In the case of Chad it is interesting (and personally comforting) to note that analytical inadequacies and consequent failure of prediction are not confined to academics alone. French policy, too, has been characterised by vacillation and inconsistency such that almost every contestant for power since independence has, at some time or other, received French backing — including both President Habre and his chief rival, Goukouni Oueddi. Moreover, as Lemarchand has stressed, every significant faction in Chad politics has also received, at some time or another, support from Libya as well — although the latter is presently paying the price of picking weak (and therefore hypothetically more manipulable) clients. Since it is the US State Department's contention that 'you can no longer buy an African state, you can only rent one by the day', it is ironic that the implications of this claim as far as it applies to Chad are better understood (having been painfully learned) in Paris and Tripoli than in Washington. To date, the US, uniquely among Chad's contending foreign patrons, has been consistent in its policy aims — described by Helen Kitchen as 'bashing Libya's Quaddafi' — and in its support for its own instrument — Hissene Habre. Yet the Bush regime is likely to have to face a crucial policy choice avoided by its predecessor: what to do when Habre (assuming his survival) finally establishes a working relationship with Libya, as he must if he is to stabilise his regime in the long term.

This article therefore, after dealing briefly with Chad from the perspectives of African studies and of the wider literature of militarisation and militarism, seeks both to justify and to develop a theoretical perspective which, while remaining open-ended as to future prospects, takes advantage of hindsight to focus specifically on the key features of the Chadian situation. It is our contention that a 'warlord' perspective — to date utilised in a widespread but rather loose and casual manner by Chad specialists, provides this desired focus and, in particular, while situating the Chadian case within a developing theoretical and empirical literature, also raises important questions to guide future research.

**Chad and African Studies**

In evaluating the post-independence performance of the continent's fifty-odd states it can hardly be argued that Africanists have adopted particularly exacting standards of judgment. 'A generation after independence', Christopher Clapham argues, 'the survival of African states is their main achievement'. In some cases, and notably that of Chad — Africa's 'basket case' to borrow Rene Lemarchand's evocative phrase — it has sometimes appeared as if formal state survival was the only achievement.
Moreover, following Jackson and Rosberg’s arguments, many Africanists have come to accept that it is the operation of the international or inter-state system which provides the key as to ‘why Africa’s weak states persist’ (World Politics, 35, 1, 1982). From this perspective African states are juridical expressions rather than empirical entities, surviving to date simply because the international system has ‘successfully outlawed force as a method of producing new states in Africa’. This is perceived as especially apt in the case of Chad where, as Rothchild & Foley put it, ‘internationally accorded “statehood” stands in for the last vestiges of “stateness”...’ (1983:313). Most of the continent has therefore been confined to a limbo between the heaven of stable statehood and the hell of dismemberment, with international recognition bringing only the continued assurance that no African secessionist or irredentist movement is likely to achieve its ultimate aims — even if, as Donald Horowitz said of Chad from 1979, ‘everyone has seceded’.

Given the concentration, even fixation, of African studies on the question of state weakness and collapse, it is not surprising that Chad specialists in particular were unprepared to cope theoretically with the upward trajectory of the Chadian state after 1979. Concentration on the ease with which state deconstitution occurred perhaps blinded them to the rapidity with which such trends could be reversed and reconstitution could occur. In short, Africanists moved too rapidly and too completely from observations of empirical unilinearity to assumptions of theoretical unilinearity.

The unilinear inadequacies of contemporary African studies theorising become particularly obvious when the assumptions underlying theories of state weakness and marginality are considered. For, underpinning these perspectives, is the view that the most pressing current threats to state integrity and coherence stem directly or indirectly from rising tides of intra and inter-state violence — a view exemplified by the widespread assumption of the growing ‘militarisation’ of African political processes. The empirical basis for this view, in turn, is to be found in the perception of a growing propensity to resort to force as a first rather than as a last resort. Thus, as Robin Luckham puts it, ‘force has become a critical component of the post-colonial settlement’.

In this respect Jackson & Rosberg’s most recent listing of the ‘empirical conditions’ currently facing Africa’s states is most instructive: it covers refugees, genocide, ethnic massacres, strife and discrimination, coups, coup attempts and plots, civil wars and other internal armed conflicts, and dictatorships both maling and more benign. Only after these violence-related dimensions have been listed are ‘generally poor’ economic performance and endemic corruption mentioned.

Thus violence, frequently viewed by theorists of the development of the modern European state as historically functional, indeed essential, for effective state building, is perceived by Africanists as automatically and inherently dysfunctional for contemporary state building. Yet if, as Charles Tilly, among many others, contends, ‘European states took shape through external war and internal coercion’, why should Africanists not appreciate that contemporary violence might have comparable effects?

To some extent, of course, the answer to the above question lies in the very recent nature of independence and the inevitable inadequacy of intellectual perspectives generated in response to a series of what may well be short-term, but are certainly very serious, crises of statehood, exacerbated by global recession and Cold War
resurgence in a regional context of climatic disasters, ecological collapse and burgeoning population. Indeed, it would require a rather considerable leap of the intellectual imagination to conclude that effective state building is occurring in those African states afflicted by crisis since independence and, perhaps in particular, in those states such as Uganda and Chad itself, in which over much of this period, violence has become both more prevalent and increasingly severe at the same time as the state's ability to counteract or even to cope with such violence frequently appears to have declined.

Nevertheless, it is impossible not to conclude that the fixation of Africanists on the issue of state collapse, and their equally firm assumptions concerning the causal connection between collapse and rising violence (May & Charlton 1986) has led African studies into its current intellectual cul-de-sac; whereby significant state building almost appears to be impossible by definition, except in some rather exceptional cases (Botswana, Kenya, Ivory Coast) where mineral resources and/or external linkages coincide with stable regimes. Accordingly, our suggestion, to be pursued below in the context of Chad, is that the assumption that African violence is related to attempts by the state to accumulate power be retained, but without its attendant assumption that rising violence is necessarily totally dysfunctional for state formation, thereby leaving the question of positive or negative relationships open to empirical investigation. Quite simply, more detailed and more discriminating conceptions and measures of both the levels and types of violence that are currently practiced in Africa are required in order to fully evaluate the nature of the potential and actual relationships between violence (in all its forms and degrees), 'statehood' and 'stateness'.

**Militarisation and Militarism**

Unfortunately, in developing such typologies of violence and its impacts we cannot turn to any developed or satisfactory body of theory within either the broad context of global analyses of war and society or even in the more focused literature on civil-military relations. Theorists of armed forces and society currently operate with confusing and confused concepts, notably 'militarisation' and 'militarism', which have no generally accepted definition and are therefore used idiosyncratically and often indiscriminately. 'The very terms "militarism" and "militarisation"', argues Marek Thee, 'need more elucidation, and need to be given a meaningful contemporary currency. These terms are often used with different connotations in east and west, north and south, and are too often applied in the political debate without precise definition' (1980:15). Unsurprisingly perhaps, Thee's own definitions of the two terms illustrate rather than remove the definitional nightmare and, in particular, the tendency to conflate the two concepts. 'We' do indeed, as Thee enjoins, 'need more research and more informed discussion on problems of militarism and militarisation'.

Equally unsurprisingly, this definitional and conceptual disaster area has been replicated in the still burgeoning literature on African militarism and militarisation. For example, Simon Baynham in a recent and judicious survey of the literature notes 'repeated charges that the continent is being rapidly militarised and that a new arms race has been unleashed in Africa'. Over the last decade or so, the focus of this militarisation literature has changed very markedly: militarisation is now no longer primarily perceived in terms of a threat to the remaining civilian regimes of the region but instead redefined in terms of a perception of an increasingly
hostile continental and global environment and ultimately seen as a potential threat to world peace, liable to turn 'seemingly parochial African disputes into occasions for superpower competition' (Foltz, 1985:171). However, the key concepts, militarisation and militarism, are still utilised loosely, frequently without any serious attempt at definitional precision (to refer to any military-related developments in the region): in this sense the literature is characterised by continuity rather than change.

Moreover, where definitions are given they are, inevitably, idiosyncratic and too broad to adequately discriminate between the experiences of the different states in the region. For example, Robin Luckham's depiction of 'the militarisation of Africa' involves a wide-ranging 'process that includes not only the acquisition of weapons, but also an expansion in the size of professional military establishments, the prevalence of authoritarian regimes relying on force as an instrument of government, and an increase in both external and internal war' (1980:179). With such a definition, even broad distinctions, such as that between civilian and military, or between different African states and regimes, disappear and all African states can be perceived as militarised.

Such a perspective fails to allow for the numerous paradoxes and contradictions that any detailed analysis of the African experience immediately highlights. In particular, how does one account for the apparent paradox of the exceptionally high levels of intra-state violence which have frequently pertained in states such as Chad and Uganda, states which have relatively small armed forces and comparatively small military budgets?

In this context our initial argument is relatively straightforward. A more discriminating and theoretically coherent account of intra and inter-state violence in African states can most simply be gained by distinguishing between militarisation and militarism rather than conflating the two. Such a distinction, commonly made in everyday speech, separates the increase or spread of things military (militarisation) from the rise of military ethos or spirit (militarism).

Thus, militarisation, following Eide and Thee, is manifested in any 'increase in armaments, advances in the destructive capacity of weapons, growing numbers of people under arms, and...increases in military expenditure' (1980:9-10), as well as in any consequent rise in the political role and impact of the military, whether or not that impact manifests itself in the form of a military regime. Militarism, on the other hand, is manifested in the attitudes and behaviour both of states and of significant groups within states, as they rely on force as a normal political tactic.

Clearly, further and more detailed analyses of both militarisation and militarism in Africa are now required along with enquiries which explicitly seek to examine the empirical relationships between these two analytically separable processes. Most importantly, the impact of militarisation and of militarism may in practice vary at least somewhat independently of each other in any individual state; it is possible that relatively high levels of militarisation may be accompanied by relatively low levels of militarism and vice versa. The assumption that underpins the militarisation literature (that militaristic attitudes accompany the process of militarisation) needs to be tested in each case. Furthermore, we also suggest that militarism and the use of force, conventionally viewed as an independent variable could profitably be designated as the dependent variable in future studies.
The Relevance of a 'Warlord' Model

Our own research has led us to identify Chad as one particularly promising case for such an analysis. For Chad is an almost classical example of a state in which force has become the norm rather than the exception in the political process; a state riven by factional fighting and suffering from apparently incurable political decay. Indeed, it has seriously been contended that the very concept of a Chadian state is itself almost a contradiction in terms. Michalon, for example, bluntly talks of 'un Etat Fictif'. Two decades of internal schism, compounded by the involvement of external powers in Chadian politics, have often made that country the very epitome of juridical rather than empirical statehood — a state which persists sometimes in name alone. It is true that a number of other African states have also suffered violent regional or factional challenges to the authority of their central governments, and some have even appeared to suffer fates similar or comparable to that of Chad, in the sense that central governmental control over significant areas of territory has sometimes been lost for significant periods of time — Angola, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Nigeria, Uganda and Zaire immediately spring to mind. Yet, in none of these examples, save possibly that of contemporary Uganda, has the breakdown of authority and the prevalence of force and arms as political resources been so complete as in the Chadian example.

In this context it may well be illuminating to seek to compare Chadian militarism — the propensity of its factions to resort to force as a first rather than a last resort — to other extreme examples of internal militarism not only in other contemporary African states, but also in other regions. Indeed the great advantage of such an eclectic approach is that it may provide — given sufficient empirical similarities — theoretical and explanatory insights which more limited comparisons may fail to reveal. For example, two related processes are apparent in the historical development of Chadian internal militarism. First, it involves a process of de-institutionalisation and organisational decay at the level of the central government. Second, it involves a concomitant and progressive growth of regionalism, ultimately emerging as a regionalisation of the whole political process. Both of these processes, in both sequence and substance, seem at least superficially, strikingly similar to events which occurred in China between 1916 and 1928, the classically 'confused and destructive' period of 'warlord politics' which followed the collapse of the Imperial system and the inauguration of a Republic.

In a pattern which appears to have been replicated in Chad, the breakdown of central authority in Republican China was accompanied by both an increasing reliance on force of arms to settle political disputes and to determine policy, and a regionalisation of the political process. Both developments came together in the rise of the 'warlords': those regional leaders who exercised or sought to exercise power in such a system. Like the competing Chadian factional leaders the Chinese 'warlords' relied upon their personal politico-military skills to establish first, their control over a regional power-base and second, drawing upon the economic resources of their fiefdoms, to expand, by force if necessary, their domain of effective power. However, as in Chad, the expansionist ambitions of any one 'warlord' immediately impinged on the sphere of influence of neighbouring 'warlords', leading to periods of often intense but ultimately indeterminate fighting, leaving the whole system suspended in a state of competitive disequilibrium, aptly described in the Chinese case as 'internal anarchy'. In China, of course, this particular form of anarchy was to a large extent ameliorated, if not entirely ended,
by the growing military predominance of what had originally been one 'warlord' faction, the Kuomintang. Such an outcome appeared (at least until very recently) unlikely in contemporary Chad where direct foreign interventions encouraged the perpetuation of a situation of internal stalemate. Nevertheless the parallels between post-colonial Chadian history and events in China between the Revolution in 1911 and 1928 — the year which saw the successful conclusion of the 'Northern Expedition' by the Kuomintang and effectively ended the classical era of Republican 'warlordism' — are sufficiently striking as to suggest that further, more detailed comparative study is warranted.

Indeed, it may now even be prudent to extend such comparisons beyond 1928, given recent developments in Chad. For Hissene Habre's remarkable resurrection of a united (however loosely) and unified (however temporarily) Chadian state at least raises the possibility that he may be that state's Chiang, though it is somewhat improbable that he might be Chad's Mao! In particular, the recent recrudescence of Chadian factionalism, even before the euphoria over apparent reunification has begun to wane, is at least superficially similar to developments post-1928 in China. In that case, if the classical era of 'warlordism' was effectively ended in 1928, 'militarism' certainly was not. As Ch'I points out, 'militarism remained a dominant feature of Chinese politics for a long time after', crucially continuing 'as an important aspect of the Nationalist Government between 1928 and 1949', although taking a rather different form under the altered politico-military conditions pertaining under Nationalist rule (1976:237-9). Crucially, some warlords survived and continued to operate, leading to one depiction of the overall situation as 'residual warlordism' (Sheridan, 1966:15). Significantly, this situation was almost precisely replicated in Chad, where two important warlords loomed large over Habre's Third Republic, namely Goukouni Oueddei (the former President) and Acheik Ibn Oumar. Currently only the former remains (outside Chad) a focus for opposition forces. The latter, after rallying to the government in November 1988, was appointed Foreign Minister in March 1989, an event that contributed to the coup attempt in April.

Chadian Politics: Warlord Perspectives

A major part of the potential utility of a developed 'warlord' perspective, particularly as it is being currently developed by sinologists, is its flexibility and, specifically, its salience in dealing with highly complex and apparently mutually contradictory developments in which incipient and often hidden state building occurs alongside apparent state collapse and/or in which state weakness and collapse is imminent in apparent state formation. A 'warlord' model can generate useful hypotheses and raise significant new questions about both the progressive or, better perhaps, regressive, collapse of the Chadian state after Independence and/or its present seeming resurgence under Hissene Habre. Most important, it can link these apparently divergent developments in a single analytical framework.

Equally significantly, a warlord model is also perfectly compatible with both of the currently dominant theoretical perspectives offered by Chad specialists to 'explain' post-colonial political developments and processes: Lemarchand's factionalism model and Decalo's centre-periphery approach. Indeed a major strength of the warlord perspective is that it can be used to combine and synthesise these two existing models into a single and, hopefully, more coherent whole, based on the central ideas of armed factionalism, militarised regional autonomy and central
state collapse, defined in terms of loss of physical control over significant portions of both national territory and population.

At the same time it is vital to underline that there is no single conceptualisation of Chinese developments which could be defined as 'the' warlord model and applied in toto to the Chadian case. In practice it is more appropriate perhaps to refer to Chinese 'warlord studies' and resultant 'warlord perspectives', involving a whole series of wide-ranging and very diverse historical and conceptual studies from which a series of theoretical models are emerging with widely differing foci and implications. Currently these models coexist alongside each other, each one illustrating different facets and dimensions of military, political and socio-economic reality as well as regional and temporal variations within an astonishingly diverse and incredibly complex period of Chinese history, during which, in only 16 years from 1912 to 1928, more than 1300 warlords fought more than 140 separable wars (Ch'en, 1968:563).

In short, for both states but clearly much more particularly so for Chad, the idea of the 'warlord model' refers to work in progress rather than a finished product. In particular, Chad specialists have only just begun to tap the explanatory strengths of the warlord analogy. To date the concept of warlord and of warlord politics has been rather casually and loosely applied to Chadian factional/regional/personal schisms and armed conflicts. In fact Chadian warlord studies are currently roughly at the state identified two decades ago by Jerome Ch'en for its sinological counterpart. Then, in an important review article inspired by the publication of James Sheridan's path-breaking Chinese Warlord, Ch'en noted the existence 'of various projects on Chinese warlords. It is hoped, he continued, 'that they will eventually take this subject from the state of "gossip columns" to that of proper history' (ibid). In the intervening years Ch'en's wish has been amply fulfilled and the body of relevant studies continues to grow rather rapidly with 'a considerable number of scholars' tapping, as Diana Lary underlines in an important recent review essay, 'vast, rich and sometimes overwhelming arrays of source materials'. In the Chadian case source materials are never 'overwhelming', always patchy and generally considerably more difficult to obtain while work on the ground can reasonably be termed difficult, sometimes hazardous and often impossible, leading to more constrained research possibilities. Nevertheless, there remains, as in the Chinese case, much untapped material, particularly if research 'on the ground' outside N'Djamena becomes possible. Moreover, much useful work can be done in the Chadian case by simply reworking and reinterpreting, with the benefit of hindsight, already familiar material. For example, in an earlier (1985) formulation we predicted that a Chadian equivalent of the Chinese reunification under the Kuomintang was 'an outcome which appears somewhat unlikely...' due to the fact that 'direct foreign intervention currently ensures the perpetuation of the present situation of internal stalemate'. Such an interpretation was, in turn, consistent with conventional interpretations which underlined the likely determinative effect of intervention by non-African powers. What we failed to see then, but cannot fail to see today, was that the equilibrium or stalemate that existed between apparently evenly matched coalitions of external and internal actors was much more precarious than it appeared. In retrospect, there were two rather obvious reasons for this.

In the first place, our analysis underestimated the extent to which the Libyans, as an occupying power, would undermine their own credibility and acceptability in
the eyes of the Chad population and would do so particularly in the occupied territories, rapidly negating any original appeals based on ethno-religious commonality. Jean-Claude Pomonti, writing in *Le Monde* as early as 1982, illustrates this point amply, underlining ‘the unpopularity of the occupation by the Libyans, who pillaged the country without furnishing it the least economic aid...’ Libyan behaviour, in turn, engendered radical second thoughts among some members of the pro-Libyan warlord coalition as they perceived ‘what began as a Libyan-sponsored rescue operation’ turning ‘into a full scale annexation’ (Lemarchand, 1984).

In the second place, our earlier analysis also underestimated both Habre’s politico-military abilities and the extent to which he was perceived by the mass of Chadians and external backers to be a leader with a programme coherent enough to offer hope for the future and determined enough to make his prophecies of a reunited Chad come true, despite his previously chequered politico-military career and his often troubled relations with France.

**Developing a Warlord Model**

In both cases, Libyan occupation and Habre’s trajectory, Chinese analogies — a Japanese invasion and occupation and Chiang Kai-shek and the Kuomintang respectively — would have pointed rather clearly to the present outcome. Accordingly, in the remainder of this article, we will first outline the warlord model as it has been applied, both explicitly and implicitly, to the Chadian case to date and, second, highlight some dimensions of the wider warlord literature and of the Chinese situation which might prove to be either conceptually illuminating or analogically useful in the Chadian context.

Chad, all commentators now appear to agree, has warlords with an equal amount of consistency in identifying their key features. As in the parent model, ‘two basic characteristics of a warlord’ are posited; namely, ‘a private army and an area under his control’. Jerome Ch'en’s formulation for China is paralleled by the stress of Chad specialists on both these features, in the form of the personalisation of politico-military leadership and its regionalisation. Accordingly, James Sheridan’s early definition neatly summarises key features of both the Chinese and Chadian cases. ‘A warlord’, he argues, ‘exercised effective governmental control over a fairly well-defined region by means of a military organisation that obeyed no higher authority than himself’ (1966:1). David Yost makes a very similar point. ‘Faction leaders in Chad’, he claims, ‘are equivalent to warlords. Several have exercised (and disputed) effective autonomous control over different territories with Chad’. Moreover, Chad specialists also conceptualised the rules of the political game in terms much more than superficially reminiscent of the Chinese case. For example, Chiang Kai-shek’s formulation of the five essential characteristics of warlord behaviour (lack of a political principle, occupation of an area, an insatiable need for money and property, love of his own skin, and dependence on imperialist support) is rather precisely replicated in numerous depictions of the behaviour of Chadian politico-military factional leaders. As David Yost, for example, puts it, Chadian warlord loyalties ‘have shifted frequently’ and he underlines this point by quoting Rene Lemarchand’s graphic description of the mainsprings of factionalism; characterised by ‘short-term calculations’ in their dealings with fellow Chadians and their outside backers alike, involving ‘opportunism, bribery, revenge
and assassination' and utilising whatever resources come to hand 'from cattle and cash to guns and ammunition'.

Implicitly at least, Chad's specialists also agree that the state suffered from the structural and functional equivalent of 'the warlord period' in Chinese history; defined by Wang Gungwu in terms of the 'disintegration of political authority' and, therefore, analytically separable from all the many earlier periods of schism, division and instability in Chinese history which were, as Diana Lary stresses, contextually different in that they were merely 'breakdowns of central administration'. In the Chadian case, as in the Chinese, much argument is likely to continue as to exactly when the respective warlord periods began, as well, no doubt, in the future as to when it could be defined as ending. For Chad, following the arguments presented by Roy May in the most detailed application of a warlord perspective to date, we have suggested 1978 as the most appropriate date of origin (1985).

However, to Africanists generally, the main analytical utility of the above definition of a 'warlord period' may well be less to aid periodisations of Chad's history — a state in which it is universally agreed there was a 'disintegration of political authority' at the centre from at least the late 1970s — than to situate the Chadian example of state collapse in a more satisfactory comparative perspective. In particular, the Chadian example of disintegration is often lumped together with other cases of regionally focused instability, notably those in Angola, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Sudan, Uganda, Zaire and, most recently Mozambique. Collectively these are defined as cases in which the respective 'central governments lost control of important areas in their jurisdiction during struggles with rival political organisations' (Jackson & Rosberg).

However, what a warlord perspective would suggest — at least on the basis of the Chinese example — is that, with the possible exception of Uganda, all the other above-mentioned African examples can more properly be defined as closer to temporary 'breakdowns of central administration' than to the type of degree of state collapse achieved in either China or Chad in their warlord periods. At the same time it must be stressed that the concept of warlord is analytically separable from the idea of a warlord period and if the latter concept (fortunately) has but a relatively restricted relevance to contemporary Africa, the former is, sadly, quite widely applicable.

Probably the clearest point of difference that emerges from a comparison of the two literatures, Chinese and Chadian, is the omnipresence of non-Chadian actors, notably French, Libyan and US as well as numerous regional participants. Interestingly, despite Chiang Kai-shek's stress on the dependence of warlords on 'imperialists' for support, the Chinese literature focuses relatively little on the impact of external forces in either inaugurating or sustaining the warlord era. In this respect, the contrast in the style of presentation and the focus of analyses — internally focused for China and stressing the political room for manoeuvre open to the warlords, externally focused for Chad and stressing political constraints — is striking. It caused Roy May to question the applicability of the whole Chinese model because, despite the existence of external intervention and support in the Chinese case 'it did not have the central significance that the external influences appear to have in Chad' (1985).
Interestingly, however, May was, even then, torn between the possibility of a 'lack of “fit” in the applicability of the Chinese model to the case of Chad' and the alternative possibility that 'external’ support was important but not crucial to the survival of ‘major Chadian leaders and, most importantly, that even without such support ‘they would have survived anyway'. In retrospect, we feel that the second possibility is worth further consideration but that, more significantly, this earlier formulation expresses the conceptual alternatives too starkly. Our current suggestion is that — as underlined by the Habre trajectory — the determining influence of competing external actors in maintaining Chad in a state of constant disequilibrium was perhaps exaggerated in earlier accounts.

In this respect we feel that sinologists — noting, as Ch’en points out, that while ‘some prominent warlords did obtain foreign support...many especially small ones...did not' — are right in generally not following Chiang by including external support as part of the definition of a warlord. As Diana Lary forcefully points out, any ‘notion that warlords were simply the running dogs of imperialism has never been specifically proven, and...has in some cases been explicitly debunked’. Yet as with Chad, any political room for manoeuvre available to China’s warlords occurred within the severe economic constraints exerted by substantial external controls over both sources of armaments and of funds; controls which were probably, overall, little less severe in the Chinese than in the Chadian case. Moreover, in both cases, warlord predominance discouraged further direct economic penetration by removing any possibilities for productive investment to occur, whilst, at the same time, producing the conditions of state collapse and weakness that encouraged a singled predatory foreign power — Japan and Libya respectively — to exploit the situation militarily and invade.

Thus, we feel, Chad specialists could profitably take a leaf out of the sinologists’ book and look more closely at the internal bases and outcomes of warlordism. In particular, much work needs to be done on the internal socio-economic underpinnings of warlordism in Chad and, in particular, at its fiscal and financial workings and the attendant administrative arrangements it engendered. In the Chinese case much fascinating work is under way involving analyses of the economic and social relationships between the ‘gentry’ and warlords at the local and regional levels (Ch’en 1979). In Chad, with a miniscule middle class at independence, did the warlord era encourage class development and the emergence of a comparable ‘gentry’ to manage the process of extraction and provide the rudiments of a local bureaucracy? Alternatively, how much of warlord behaviour in Chad was simply uncontrolled predation; what, in China, would have been termed ‘banditry’? Only detailed fieldwork on the ground, outside N’Djamena, will answer such questions.

Certainly, the formulation of states better able to extract than control seems apt for much of contemporary Africa, even where state control has not been threatened to the degree it has in Chad. However, in cases such as that of Chad, studies have concentrated almost exclusively on the problems of loss of control, ignoring the issue of state extraction almost entirely. Could they, therefore, have also ignored some incipient state-building beneath apparent chaos?

Clearly, in the case of Chad at least, this question must remain an open one for some time to come. The crucial tests will come in the aftermath of the actual, as opposed to formal, ending of hostilities with Libya. In terms of our own formulation Chadian politics has suffered from an excessive dose of militarism, but not (at least
on most conventional indicators) from a correspondingly serious case of militarisation. In this context, the parallels with Uganda are, at least superficially, both rather obvious and rather discouraging since, in the latter case, levels of violence appear not to have fallen and life, even in Kampala, remains precarious.

Indeed, in Chad itself the apparent resilience of the politics of elite factionalism is already clear and there are no signs that this particular dimension of the political process has been in any sense transformed by recent developments. Indeed, if Chinese parallels have any relevance, it is as well to remember, in this context, the corresponding resilience of militarism under the Kuomintang. Thus, it is tempting to end this article on the same note that we adopted in 1985: 'If the suggested parallels between Chinese history and contemporary African politics are valid the prognosis for...those African states, such as Chad and Uganda, already heavily affected by rising tides of militarism, is indeed grim'.

Yet, albeit tentatively and cautiously, we would now wish to add a slightly more optimistic note, at least for Chad. Even given that a recent past of militarism and the predominance of force may well prove very hard to transcend in a determinedly factionalised polity, it seems to us that there is at least one significant difference between Yoweri Museveni of Uganda and Hissene Habre of Chad.
The latter's trajectory, although surprising, was much less sudden and unexpected than the former's and may have allowed him to build a more than transient socio-economic basis of support within an incipient Chadian entrepreneurial middle class: a Chadian version of a military-gentry coalition. This, in turn, with continued outside support may be sufficient to allow him both to remain as the warlord of Chad, and to move from a successful politics of extraction to a more effective politics of control. Habré's own political agenda, as outlined in *Le Monde* in 1983, is uncompromising: 'There will be no more warlords, no more factions, no more private armies'. Moving from rhetoric to reality will not, however, be easy. Even within his own coalition turning warlord commanders into a conventional military bureaucracy and synthesising them within a civilianised administration poses a number of weighty problems, problems amply illustrated by the participation of three of Habré's closest associates in the April 1989 coup attempt.

**Bibliographic note**

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On Chad and warlordism: Th Michalon, 'L'Impuissance d'unetat fictif' *Le Monde Diplomatique* September 1983; Roy May, 'Political authority in Chad: the relevance of the warlord model', African Studies Association of UK, Symposium, University of Birmingham, May 1985; R May, 'The state of Chad: political factions and political decay', *Civilisations*
Warlordism in China

J.A.G. Roberts

The Review is pleased to include this succinct summary of the elements defining, and the debates surrounding, the warlord phenomenon in China's history. Dr Roberts assesses the various ways in which the 'classical' warlordism of the period from 1916 to 1928 has been understood and interpreted. The focus is on the collapse of central state authority and the rise of provincial or regional military rulers exercising considerable power and autonomy over the locality. The paper presents a lucid account of how the origins of warlordism have been explained, what are considered to be the main characteristics of warlords and warlordism and what their effects were on the society and polity of China. A number of points raise interesting questions about the extent to which the concept might usefully be applied to some current problems in Africa. These include the decay of nationalism into regionalism and sectarianism; the extent to which such provincial power centres link up with foreign interests; the disintegration of the military hierarchy and the rise of lower-ranked officer strata; and the burdens imposed on civil society by the extortion and violence occasioned by warlordism and by the obstacles it places in the way of political solutions to problems. The paper concludes with a brief consideration of alternative possibilities that were thrown up in China by the 'space' created by the decline of political control which warlordism reflected and perpetuated.

Warlordism in China has had a long history. The historian Ssu-ma Ch'ien, who died c. 90 B.C., recorded the activities of warlords in the *The Records of the Grand Historian*. When the Han dynasty collapsed (in the third century A.D.) and when the T'ang dynasty fell apart (in the tenth century A.D.) no single authority was able to retain power and competing warlord regimes emerged. In the late seventeenth century, after the Manchu conquest, the invaders sought to consolidate their power by eliminating the semi-independent regimes of Wu San-kuei and those other generals who had connived with the conquest. In the 1960s, at the time of the Cultural Revolution, there were allegations that the independent activity of senior military officers who had established local power bases was heralding a return to warlordism (Whitson 1969).

However, in modern Chinese history, the period of warlordism usually refers to 1916-1928, that is to say, the period from the death of Yuan Shih-k'ai, first president of the Chinese Republic to the reunification of China under the Kuomintang or Nationalist Party. In that period the authority of the central government virtually
collapsed (though a regime in Peking continued to carry out some of the functions of a national government). Effective local or regional power fell into the hands of some dozens of *tuchun*, military governors who have become known in the west as the warlords. In those twelve years perhaps 160 wars were fought, the period therefore being known as that of warlordism.

To contemporary western eyes, warlordism was a phenomenon which combined comedy with tragedy. Accounts of warlords and their deeds concentrated on the brutal and bizarre. At the same time the assumption was that the decline into warlordism negated the hopes raised by the revolution of 1911 that China was transforming herself into a modern state. When the nationalists came to power in 1928 the contrast between the disintegration of the warlord period and the reintegration of the Nationalist period was stressed. The negative and insignificant assessment of the period has been echoed in modern interpretations.

In the last twenty years 'a minor industry has developed in warlord studies' (Lary 1985:7). About a dozen monographs and a number of important articles have appeared in English. Because of the extent of warlordism, the number of warlord regimes, and the quantity of source materials, the topic is awkward to handle. Most writers have concentrated on the career of a single warlord, or on the history of warlordism in a single province. However, some studies have attempted to deal more broadly with the subject (Pye 1971; Lary 1974; Ch'i 1976; Ch'en 1979).

A summary of the main themes which have arisen in the study of warlordism in China should begin with the terms of reference used. The best-known definition of a Chinese warlord was that proposed by James Sheridan in his biography of the 'Christian General', Feng Yu-hsiang:

In Chinese history, the term warlord ordinarily designates a man who was lord of a particular area by virtue of his capacity to wage war. A warlord exercised effective governmental control over a fairly well-defined region by means of a military organization that obeyed no higher authority than himself (Sheridan 1966:1).

Some writers have avoided the use of the terms ‘warlord’ and ‘warlordism’, because they regard them as too pejorative. C. Martin Wilbur used the phrase ‘regional militarist’ (Wilbur, 1968) and other writers, following this tendency, have referred to ‘provincial militarism’ (Kapp 1973). This tendency was denounced by Diana Lary:

While it is true that no warlord ever referred to himself as a warlord, but used much more high-sounding honorifics and titles, few of the individuals whom other Chinese called warlords manifested the kind of personal characteristics which would give them the right to have their sensitivities pandered to. A spade is a spade, and a rose is a rose (Lary 1980:442).

In a recent article James Sheridan reviewed the terms in use and concluded that

Since many leading warlords held the position of military governor of a province, the term *tu-chun* is used as a rough synonym for warlord or regional militarist (Sheridan 1983:284).

The most extensive debate about Chinese warlordism in the 1920s concerns its origin. Two views were put forward initially. On the one hand Franz Michael argued that throughout Chinese history there is evidence a pattern of recurrent decline in the authority of central government and the development of what he described as 'regionalist power centres'. The most recent example of this decline, the warlord
period of the 1920s, should be traced to the great rebellions of the mid-nineteenth century, and in particular to the effects of the Taiping Rebellion (1851-1864). In an attempt to recover its authority, the Manchu dynasty had made fatal concessions to the elite group, the gentry, and had permitted the raising of regional armies by the two outstanding leaders of the time, Tseng Kuo-fan and Li Hung-chang. This had led to a loss of central power which Michael described as ‘regionalism’ (Michael 1964:xxi). This view was echoed by Sheridan who saw regional militarism as ‘the culmination of a pattern which had begun about a century earlier’ (Sheridan 1966:1). C.Martin Wilbur emphasised the importance of regional differences in China as latent factors in the rise of autonomous military-political regions:

centrifugal tendencies were always powerful, and the area we think of as China was divided for periods nearly as long as those in which it was united. (Wilbur 1968:217).

He also identified the part played by the provincial or regional army leaders of the mid-nineteenth-century and by Yuan Shih-k'ai and the Pehyang Army at the beginning of this century in bringing about this division. But he added that the development of military separatism did not imply an autonomous force, for other important historical processes interacted with it closely,

We may mention the gradual breakdown of the Chinese social fabric in the nineteenth century under the pressure of rapidly growing population and increasing economic inequality between social classes; the decay of the imperial institution and decline in the efficiency of the Ch'ing bureaucracy; and foreign competition for paramountcy over China's territory and wealth (Wilbur 1968:219-220).

On the other hand, Jerome Ch'en traced the origins of warlordism to China's military modernisation, and in particular to the role of Yuan Shih-k'ai who, in the late 1890s had created the Peiyang Army, China's first truly modern fighting force. Ch'en detected the seeds of warlordism in the personal example which Yuan had set as a selfish opportunist and the relationship which he had established between himself and his generals. When Yuan died in 1916, his most powerful single legacy was the creation of a large number of warlords who were neither Confucian generals ... owing their allegiance to the throne nor officers of a national army pledged to defend the country's honor and interests (Ch'en 1972:214).

Both these arguments have been attacked. Wang Gung-wu challenged the view that regional militarism was 'an old and recurring Chinese problem'. He agreed that on a number of occasions in the past China had suffered from division or loss of central control. However he suggested that twentieth-century regionalism was a new phenomenon, at least in part because it was connected with 'the decay of an Old Order and the emergence of a New Order' (Wang 1968:268). The idea that the warlord period was in some general way related to the process of modernisation in China was given a broader treatment by Sheridan. He suggested that the modern period in Chinese history could best be seen as showing a pattern of disintegration and re-integration. The nadir of this process was reached in the warlord period, when the bonds uniting the traditional state had snapped and the new ties of the modern state had yet to be formed (Sheridan 1975:20).

The idea that Yuan Shih-k'ai was the 'father of the warlords' was attacked by Stephen MacKinnon who argued that the Peiyang Army was less regional and private than the regional armies of the mid-nineteenth century, and that the
personal connection between Yuan and his senior officers was not as strong as has been suggested. He concluded that the proto-warlord thesis of the rise of Yuan Shih-k'ai and the Peiyang Army ... simply does not square with the facts ... Yuan does not fit the basic definition of a warlord.

and he added

The question of warlord origins should be re-examined in a context wider than just the military one. The warlord phenomenon of the 1916-1927 period was also the result of an immediate break-down of class structure and of social and political institutions other than military — the how and whys of which are poorly understood (MacKinnon, 1973:423).

Donald Sutton challenged both explanations of the origin of warlordism. From a study of the Yunnan Army, he concluded that the evidence showed that the Yunnan Army, 'entered the Republic with an essentially modern, non-private structure' (Sutton, 1980:2). It was only after the revolution of 1911 that the revolutionaries became militarists, and the key development took place in the period 1920-22, when the unity of the Yunnan Army collapsed consequent upon a feud between two senior officers. A disintegration of the force occurred because the second level of command, the brigadiers, had been unable to maintain control, and so effective power had devolved to junior officers — a process which he likened to colonels' coups in developing countries in the 1950s and 1960s (Sutton 1980: 266-67).

In the discussion of the general characteristics of warlord regimes, a number of themes have been explored. C.Martin Wilbur attempted an 'anatomy of the regional militarist system'. He pointed out that the great majority of the regional militarists were 'static', that is to say that their principal aim was to secure and maintain control of a particular tract of territory. The ease or difficulty with which this could be achieved depended on the desirability of the territory and the security of its frontiers. Valuable assets were the inclusion within the territory of cities whose inhabitants could be taxed, and access to the sea to enable the supply of arms from foreign sources. These considerations explained why the most powerful of the regional militarists were Chang Tso-lin and Chang Hsueh-liang, the warlords of Manchuria, who enjoyed all these assets, while the most durable of the warlords was Yen Hsi-shan, the warlord of the poor but defensible inland province of Shansi (Wilbur 1968).

Another important issue concerning warlord regimes is that of the relationship between warlord regimes and the nation. It has generally been argued that warlord regimes did not reject the idea of an unified China, the warlords commonly expressed their desire to see China re-unified and denied that their actions were responsible for the fragmentation of the country. This issue was taken up by Robert Kapp, in his book on provincial militarism in Szechwan province, in which he examined the relationship between provincial militarism and provincial separatism. He described 'provincial militarism' as 'a symptom of the times, a manifestation of specific conditions after the fall of the Ch'ing dynasty'. But 'provincial separatism' was a 'manifestation of political tendencies and dilemmas as old as the Chinese Empire' (Kapp 1973:1). He argued that the Szechwan military elite at first continued to identify itself strongly with China proper, and that it had no wish to secede permanently from the Chinese state. However the failure of national political development led to second-generation militarists perceiving their interests in exclusively provincial terms and so they promoted provincial
autonomy. This provincial separatism continued after the Nationalist revolution of 1927-29, until a crisis of militarism in 1934 brought the central government back into the province (Kapp, 1973:20,98).

Diana Lary addressed herself to related issues with reference to the province of Kwangsi, which was dominated by a military clique from the mid-1920s until 1949. The 'regional militarism' which developed was

a self-protective, conservative phenomenon. It protected the region by detaching it from the turbulent state. It protected not the inhabitants of the region but its military rulers (Lary 1974:12).

Her main line of enquiry was whether the clique was regionalist or nationalist. Her conclusion was that it was both, at the same time. This was because the clique functioned in what she described as the 'indistinct but real framework of layered loyalties'. The clique ruled the province as an autonomous unit, but this did not mean that it rejected national and nationalist concerns,

The Kwangsi leaders still felt themselves to be nationalists; but nationalism was a remote and rarefied ideal, a distant vision of a strong, rich, united China (Lary 1974:194).

A third general theme relating to warlords and warlordism concerns the analysis of different types of warlords, derived from the ideology which they expressed. J.E.Sheridan suggested three broad categories: reactionary, such as Chang Hsun, the 'Pig-Tailed General', who in 1917 brought about a brief restoration of the Manchus; conservative, such as Wu P'ei-fu, leader of the Chihli clique, who was a Confucianist, and about whom his biographer Odoric Wou wrote:

He regarded Confucian tradition and customs as the components of the Chinese nation. This pride in the indigenous Chinese culture and the identification of the Chinese tradition with the Chinese nation was actually a manifestation of his nationalistic feeling (Wou 1978:37).

and finally reformers, of whom the best-known was Yen Hsi-shan, the 'Model Governor' of Shansi (Sheridan 1975:59-77).

A number of studies of warlordism and of individual warlords have investigated the basis on which warlords formed alliances. In an attempt to see beyond the confusing impression of irrational and impermanent alliances, efforts have been made to identify the general principles which lay behind the forging and severance of relationships. Warlord alliances often had a personal basis, which might involve blood or marriage ties, but which also included non-familial links of patronage, shared education and training and provincial or local connections. Ties of self-interest were obviously important, but so too under some circumstances were those of a common ideological outlook (Pye 1971:77-93; Ch'i 1976:36-76).

Other studies have considered the military aspects of warlord regimes. Ch'i estimated the number of soldiers under arms in this period as rising from around 500,000 in 1916 to around 2,000,000 by 1928, his figures excluding those who should more properly be described as bandits rather than as the soldiers of warlords. He went on to discuss the military capabilities of warlord regimes in terms of recruitment and training of their soldiers and the use of weaponry and tactics (Ch'i 1976:77-149). Diana Lary considered the sources and methods of recruitment
of the soldiers in warlord armies, the conditions of army life and the consequences
of militarism on Chinese society (Lary 1983).

The maintenance of warlord armies involved substantial expenses, and a number
of writers have attempted to identify the sources of revenue of warlord regimes.
Sheridan included material on this in his biography of Feng Yu-hsiang, and noted
his use of railway revenues, his raising of an ingenious variety of local taxes, and
his use of finance derived from the sale of opium, (notwithstanding his prohibition
of the cultivation of poppies) (Sheridan 1966:156-8). Feng was a 'mobile warlord'
(that is he did not command a territorial base), and this prevented him from
regularly collecting the land tax, which in imperial times had been the principal
revenue of the central government, and which now provided much of the revenue
of warlord regimes. A general analysis of warlord finances was made by Ch'i
Hsi-sheng, who after an exhaustive survey concluded that during the warlord
period the cost of fighting soared and that as a consequence warlords were drawn
to extort more and more from the territories under their control, with the
consequent impoverishment of the peasantry and the oppression of all forms of
economic activity (Ch'i 1976:150-178).

It was C. Martin Wilbur who suggested the importance of foreign contacts to
warlord regimes and this point has been followed up by a number of writers. In
his biography of Wu P'ei-fu, Odoric Wou included a long section on what he
described rather politely as 'a pattern of multi-tier and multi-choice foreign
relations'. He stressed how

It was certainly impossible for any Chinese militarist to wage a war in China without giving
at least perfunctory attention to, if not actually cultivating relations with foreign nations (Wou

The complexities of the relationship between warlordism and imperialism was
examined by Gavan McCormack with reference to that which subsisted between
Chang Tso-lin, the warlord of Manchuria, and Japan. At the end of the book
McCormack commented,

In the case of Chang Tso-lin it is impossible to sidestep the issue; yet it is also most difficult
to answer it categorically. Certainly Chang was no Japanese puppet; yet neither was he in
any sense a nationalist or an anti-imperialist.

Chang could not resist Japanese imperialism, so he strove to use it to obtain Japan's
benevolent neutrality, while he built up his own strength. This suggested that he
was pro-Japanese, whereas in fact he remained committed to the integrity of China — a commitment which might be said to have led to his assassination by members
of the Japanese Kwantung Army (McCormack 1977:253-4).

It might seem possible to summarise the significance of the warlord period in
modern Chinese history in entirely negative terms. This is the often-expressed view,
and the one reiterated by Diana Lary in her recent review of warlord studies,

For its victims, warlordism was a profound tragedy, an endless menace and degradation.
For many peasants, warlordism was a burden which made hard lives unendurable. For
merchants and businessmen, warlordism meant intolerable interruption and harassment.
For China's politicians and intellectuals, warlordism carried the despairing connotation of
reducing the country to wreck and ruin without the promise of any salvation. It confounded
their hopes for the future by showing that a country could continue to exist in degradation,
without unity, without law, without order. Even foreigners who were committed to China
regarded warlordism as an unmitigated evil. It disrupted the trade of businessmen, ruined the lives of missionaries' converts, and created an atmosphere of terror in which even the cosseted foreigner became fearful for his own safety.

Warlordism entrenched the military at the centre of Chinese life, it introduced hundreds upon thousands of young men to the military life as officers and soldiers. By its own actions, and by the adjunct actions of banditry, it institutionalized violence. It reduced politics and political solutions to impotence and ridicule; it substituted fear and force for due process. It undermined China's economy, threw her fiscal system into disarray, and retarded efforts at economic advancement, except in areas under foreign control (Lary 1980:439-440).

Can this be accepted as a balanced statement of the effects of warlordism on China? The ascription of all China's problems in this era to the single, if widespread phenomenon of warlordism has been challenged. Lucien Pye in a book which, although published in 1971, was completed in all essential details some twenty years earlier, argued that one consequence of the warlord era was that in modern China political power cannot be divorced from military power (Pye 1971:169). Perhaps in the 1950s this assumption of the dominance of the military in Chinese affairs might have seemed justified, but to regard it as a permanent consequence of the warlord period was been challenged by Sheridan, who commented 'this militarization was not profound or permanent' (Sheridan 1983:319).

Another issue concerning the consequences of warlordism is that of its economic effects. The assumption that warlordism had a disastrous effect on China's economic development was expressed at the time and has been repeated subsequently. However, J.K.Chang's estimates of industrial production show that the first burst of rapid growth in the modern sector of the Chinese economy occurred in the 1920s. Admittedly much of this growth took place in the treaty ports. More recently questions have been raised about the alleged damage caused by warlordism in terms of a drain on the country's wealth, and the degree of hardship caused by warlord exactions (Sheridan 1983:317-9)

It would be difficult to find a true apologist for warlordism in China, although some of the biographers of warlords have found things to say in favour of their subject. However the case has been made out that important benefits did derive from the dislocation of the warlord era. Lucien Pye argued that warlordism provided a period of political freedom,

A fundamental paradox of China's modernization is that the phase of military domination brought competitive politics to China while the periods of party domination have brought monolithic authority and the denial of open competition — the exact reverse of the typical pattern in the currently developing countries (Pye 1971:viii).

Likewise it has long been noted that the warlord period coincided with the great burst of intellectual activity known as the May Fourth Movement. To conclude this review on the issue of warlordism, one may quote from James Sheridan's balanced summary on this theme

Most warlords were conservative men, strongly attuned to traditional values. Paradoxically, the disunity and disorder they fostered provided rich opportunity for intellectual diversity and iconoclasm to flourish. Neither the central government nor the provincial warlords were capable of efficiently controlling the universities, periodicals, publishing industries and other agencies of China's intellectual life. Chinese intellectuals in those years, partly in response to the evils of warlordism, engaged in the most intense discussion of ways in which China might be modernized and strengthened. The founding of the Communist Party in 1921 and the reorganization of the Kuomintang in 1924 stemmed partly from this intellectual flowering.
Thus, on the one hand, the warlord years represented the low point of political unity and national strength in the twentieth century. On the other hand, they also represented the peak of intellectual and literary achievement, and out of that tumultuous and bloody era, partly in response to the warlords, flowed the intellectual and social movements that culminated in the reunification and rejuvenation of China (Sheridan 1983:320-1).

Bibliographic Note


For a recent bibliographical study, see Diana Lary, 'Warlord studies', Modern China, 6.4. 1980.

Endnote

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Are there Warlords in Provincial Mozambique? Questions of the Social Base of MNR Banditry

Colin Darch

Exploring the origins, nature and consequences of MNR violence and murder, this article argues that Renamo does not conform to the classical characteristics of warlordism. It does not represent a cession of central control to local interests; rather it is an attack on the national sovereignty of Mozambique created and perpetuated by external powers. Nevertheless, in some areas the externally imposed proxy war may have been able to achieve a certain local dynamic and so, to this extent, the warlord concept may have some limited usefulness. Darch also completely rejects the idea that the MNR can be considered to be a case of ‘social banditry’, even allowing for the weaknesses inherent in this concept.

This article examines some of the existing analyses of the domestic aspects of the MNR phenomenon, especially the question of its social base. The result will certainly be more of an agenda for research and clarification than a developed position. There is already extensive and completely convincing evidence for the fact that the MNR took on its present shape in 1980, when the South African military took it over from the defunct Rhodesian regime. At the time of writing (July 1989) there is also extensive evidence for the fact that support continues to flow from South Africa to the MNR in violation of the Nkomati Accord and other agreements. The MNR has other important sources of support, especially in Portugal, the US and West Germany.

But as the various ‘peace processes’ in Angola, Mozambique and perhaps South Africa creep forward, the important question becomes: to what extent is it now necessary to take the MNR seriously as a political phenomenon, as well as a military one, inside the country? That is to say, do the bandits in fact now have (and have they ever had) any kind of social base within Mozambique, apart from their role as a proxy army for the pursuit of South African policy?

At a theoretical level, the choice of the problematic within which an analyst proposes to produce his or her account of the phenomenon will largely determine the way in which this question is posed and the answers produced. Later in this chapter, we shall examine what seem to be the two major problematics which have emerged and their incompatibilities.
Whatever its nature as a social movement, it has always been clear to serious students that the MNR does not constitute a legitimate Mozambican political opposition movement, at least at the national level. This point needs to be laboured over and over again, not only because circumstances change over fifteen years, but because of the kind of circumstantial 'evidence' produced by the movement's sympathizers abroad.

Empirically, it must be said that for obvious reasons we have little direct and reliable information about the nature of the movement. The work of Robert Gersony among the victims of banditry, and of William Minter among ex-members of the MNR are clearly basic sources of a quality quite different from most other writing on the subject. The analysis and reports of Paul Fauvet, who has worked as a journalist in Mozambique for eight years, and of the Mozambican reporter Gil Laurenciano for the Mozambican News Agency, are also of major importance, as is the recently published analysis of the historical documentation by the Mozambican historian, Gulamo Taju, which provides us with a synthesis of the primary material. We shall have more to say about Taju's analysis later on.

Despite, or perhaps because of, the well-established Rhodesian and South African linkages, many writers on the subject of the MNR are clearly puzzled by their object of study. Titles such as 'What is the MNR?' or 'Who are the armed bandits?' are common. Authors speak of the 'amazing tenacity' of the phenomenon in tones of surprise, and even promise to reveal the 'special forces' behind it. But there is nothing 'special' about the forces behind the MNR; they are the same old combination of the South African security forces and the vicious extreme right in the US and, to some extent, in Portugal and West Germany (see ROAPE no.43 for list of US-based individuals and organisations that support RENAMO).

Over and above the tone of perplexity which runs through the literature, there is a serious difficulty of deciding on terminology. This is not, despite the dismissive noises made by some academics who should know better, merely a linguistic game. For many years, Frelimo and the Mozambican Government have insisted on the exclusive use of the term 'bandidos armados', usually inadequately rendered into English as 'armed bandits', although 'armed gansters' might be a better alternative.

It was argued, with some justice, that to use an organisational name was to legitimise the political aspirations of what were, in the end, nothing more than a gang of criminals. This point should not be ignored or dismissed by academic writers in the comfort of their studies in Europe or America. Jose Mota Lopes of the Centre of African Studies in Maputo summarised the point of view succinctly to a Portuguese daily in May 1986, when he bluntly declared that 'Renamo doesn't exist. It's a fiction, serving South African policy'. We shall return to the question of legitimisation later in the article.

Nevertheless, broadly speaking, there are two modes of analysis of the phenomenon of armed banditry in Mozambique. The first, clearly favoured by Frelimo and the Mozambican Government for several years, was to insist that the MNR was simply a wing of the South African Defence Forces (SADF) and that it could be understood at local levels through Marxist class analysis. Thus, any local support for the MNR in a particular region was to be understood in terms of the dispossession, by the successful revolution of 1975 onwards, of such groups as the regulos or the feiticeiros. Opposing this view, there has emerged what we might term the 'anthropological' approach group especially around such French writers...
as Christian Geffray, Michel Cahen and others, which argues for a much closer cultural analysis at the local level, in order to understand the specific features of ethnicity, economics and social organisation which might lend themselves to exploitation by those who are dissatisfied with the present order.

The Concept of the Warlord
Clearly, if we are to ascertain whether the phenomenon of armed banditry in Mozambique can be usefully or even partially analysed outside the problematic of South African military destabilisation, it is necessary to step very carefully indeed. Nothing in the argument which follows should be construed, therefore, as either explicitly or implicitly attempting to legitimise the MNR’s political agenda, such as it is.

It can be argued that in some areas of southern Africa, we are seeing a breakdown of civil government in the generally accepted sense. Specifically, this may be occurring in parts of rural Mozambique and Angola, as well as sporadically in some of the bantustan areas of South Africa.

Villagers in parts of Mozambique are unable to sleep in their dwellings at night, for fear of being murdered or robbed by marauding bandits. They are unable to cultivate their fields; they are driven to become bandits themselves or refugees. In some parts of Mozambique, according to published reports, this can occur without the victims ever succeeding in getting a clear idea of what has happened to them, or what is at stake.

In South Africa, particularly around the Pietermaritzburg area in Natal, the fighting between the Inkatha movement and UDF/COSATU supporters has led to a large-scale breakdown of civil order. The term ‘warlord’, used to describe especially the local Inkatha leaders, has entered into the day-to-day political vocabulary of the area. It is used by ordinary people, by journalists and lawyers alike.

The question is: if and when civil government breaks down, what has actually replaced it? The MNR has claimed in the past that it ‘controlled’ certain areas and, appropriating the vocabulary of the liberation movement, has spoken of ‘liberated areas’. The MNR’s boosters have even asserted at times that it represents a hypothetical ‘genuine’ Frelimo tradition derived from the supposedly non-Marxist leadership of Eduardo Mondlane, so it is not surprising, perhaps, that they should appropriate the terminology and slogans of Frelimo.

The idea bears examination that the phenomenon of the MNR represents an example of ‘warlordism’. But what exactly do we mean by a warlord, and what are the conditions, both sufficient and necessary for his emergence? There seem to be two useful answers to the questions.

The term has not been widely used in any precise way by social scientists. Indeed, in English it may have come into common use through the literal translation of Kriegsherr, one of the formal titles of the German Kaisers. In practice, however, it has been used loosely and descriptively to designate a local military commander who has also acquired some civil powers, and uses them by force. Specific examples may be derived from the China of the 1920s and, in Africa, from Ethiopia during the period 1769 to 1855.
In 1915, Yuan Shih-kai, who had been president of the Republic of China since 1912, managed with Japanese support to declare himself Emperor. This attempt to restore the monarchy, and thus the central authority of a state apparatus which was rapidly falling apart, was ill-judged. Yuan’s accession to the throne provoked a ferocious reaction and, instead of strengthening the state, hastened its dissolution. By 1916, Yuan was forced to cancel his decree, but it was already too late to reconstitute a centralised republic. Local leaders and their provinces began to secede, in practice if not in law. China was entering the period of the tuchun. Barbara Tuchman characterises the tuchun in a memorable passage:

Some were able governors and predators combined, others ignorant ex-bandits and adventurers tossed to the top in the general broil. Appointed military governor of a province by the nominal government in Peking, either in recognition of existing control or in consideration for support, the tuchun furnished and paid, or failed to pay, his own military forces. Chinese soldiers no longer served the state but feudal overlords who in constantly changing alliances traded and fought for power, gnawing like rats at what was left of the Republic. The “Government” of China recognised by the powers remained in Peking in the hands of a group of northern warlords known as the Anfu clique...who owed their hold on office to Japanese support and loans (Tuchman, 1972:59).

A similar phenomenon had occurred in Ethiopia in the period between 1769 and 1855, when the central authority of the Gondarine emperors all but collapsed. This was the period known in Amharic as the Zamana Metsafint — the time of the princes or judges. But the Metsafint were really warlords (Abir); in the words of the American historian Robert L. Hess:

Central power almost completely disappeared. At the nadir of imperial fortunes, five men claimed the throne. As in the Holy Roman Empire, power devolved to the nobles and regional rulers. The central government disintegrated, and Ethiopia divided into a number of small kingdoms as old local ruling families asserted themselves and appointed governors converting their offices into hereditary positions. From the late eighteenth century until the mid-nineteenth century the Ethiopian Empire ceased to exist (1970:45-50).

In these descriptions of the historical phenomenon of the warlord, several common features start to emerge. First, large monarchical and/or feudal political systems had begun to fall apart, with a corresponding loss of authority at the centre of the system. But the weakened centre had held on to its legitimacy, if not to its power. Second, the warlords were themselves legitimate local rulers, either by tradition or appointment. In return for their autonomy, they respected the legitimacy of the centre. Third, their autonomy was based on the fact that the armed forces in their areas owed allegiance to them, the warlords, not to the centre.

Virtually none of these conditions are paralleled or reproduced in present-day rural Mozambique. Clearly, the country is not in an immediately post-feudal or post-monarchical situation. The disintegration of central state power in those rural areas most affected by banditry is not, for example, matched by a corresponding growth of the power of the provincial governors. Indeed, in this respect, since Mozambican local government is directly dependent on the central ministries in a pyramid-like structure, there is probably less real local autonomy in Mozambique than in Zimbabwe, for instance, where city and town councils are locally elected.

Nor do we have any real knowledge of powerful local bandit 'bosses' running local administrations as power bases, nor, more importantly, of running their own armies. 'General' Calisto Meque, the commandant of the main MNR base in Zambezia province, fled to Malawi in June or July 1988 and was killed at Gile on
11 September during an MNR attack on the town, apparently launched from Malawian territory. Meque had been one of the most feared of the local bandit chiefs, and was one of the few MNR ‘personalities’ to emerge from sympathetic press coverage. Yet there was no claim that he occupied any position other than that of a high commander in a centralised ‘command, control and communications’ system.

The nearest thing to a warlord faction within the MNR has been the splinter group led by former *Africa Livre* commander Gimo Phiri, who reportedly took about three battalions of men off to central Zambezia in mid-1988, to set up his own organisation, UNAMO. Reports of fighting between UNAMO and the MNR surfaced in May last year. But there is no evidence that UNAMO is anything more than a separatist faction, based on ethnic resentments, nor that it has any kind of autonomous social or military base apart from private financing, allegedly through Malawi or Portugal.

Meanwhile, the Mozambican central party government structures in Maputo continue to function. They have not, in practice, ceded control to local leaders, and have retained their ability to hold widespread general elections, for example, in 1986-1987, or to call district and provincial party conferences in the run-up to the 5th Congress in July 1989. But the war remains, by and large, a war without fronts, a war in which the MNR, for whatever reason, does not seek to take and hold towns, and continues to operate on a hit-and-run basis in the countryside.

There are, of course, local situations in which an equilibrium, a *modus vivendi*, has established itself. In Cabo Delgado, for instance, it appears that MNR groups cross the north-south coastal road, coming from the interior to pick up supplies of ammunition delivered by sea. It also appears that they do this without interference from the local population or, apparently, militia. In other parts of the country, the MNR may have been able to take advantage of existing local problems to gather some support along the line of: if X and his supporters are Frelimo, then Y and his supporters by default will be MNR; but this is on the margin. We shall examine the dangers of deriving any general principles from such local squabbles below.

The usefulness of this particular version of the ‘warlord’ paradigm in analysing present-day Mozambican reality is therefore limited. But it is still perfectly legitimate to investigate the extent to which an externally imposed proxy war is able to gain a local dynamic, which may vary from area to area, and which may then be erroneously presented as the original cause of the fighting. In this sense, to examine the concept of the warlord as the local chieftain who controls the men with the guns, not necessarily always within the highly centralised ‘control, command and communications’ structure described by Minter, may be helpful. For the question of the autonomy of MNR groups will obviously be crucial to the effectiveness of any cease-fire which may emerge from the peace initiatives. But this does not mean that it is permissible to project such situations of local autonomy which have emerged from the chaos of the war, backwards in time in order to find in them the origins of the fighting.

The Roots of the MNR
Some excellent work has already been published describing the historical origins of the bandit movement, including an article published in this journal in 1984 (*ROAPE* No.29). Unfortunately, the piece by Paul Fauvet, was stripped of its
footnotes in the published version, making it less useful to other students of the subject than it might otherwise have been. A well documented account, in Portuguese, of the origins of the MNR has appeared recently in Maputo, by Gulamo Taju (noted above). A detailed circumstantial account of Rhodesian and South African involvement, by David Martin and Phyllis Johnson, appeared in their book *Destructive Engagement* (1984:1-41). Let us rapidly summarise the agreed facts, and then look at differences in interpretation.

Former Rhodesian security officials have admitted that they set up the MNR, which to begin with recruited 'desperados setembristas' (i.e., defeated right-wing elements from the attempted coup in Lourenco Marques on 7 September 1974) from South Africa, Rhodesia and Portugal, plus elements from Portuguese special 'intervention' troops, paramilitary repressive groups, Fascist police and Frelimo deserters (Lima, 1981).

In mid-1976, after several abortive attempts, the Rhodesian Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO) began to put together a small group of black Mozambican dissidents, under the leadership of the cashiered former quartermaster, Andre Matsangaissa. The objectives of the group were quite clear: they were to conduct intelligence-gathering operations on ZANLA activities inside Mozambique, and when possible, to carry out sabotage operations. This included providing a cover for direct interventions by the Rhodesian armed forces, which were then claimed by the MNR itself. The most dramatic example of this was the Rhodesian SAS attack on the Beira fuel tanks in March 1979, in which even the semi-official history of the SAS allows the MNR only a minor role (Cole, 1984:264-70). Martin and Johnson cite interviews to show that the operation 'had nothing to do with the MNR'.

The attack on the oil tanks at Beira was undertaken in revenge for ZANU's having blown up the Salisbury tanks. According to one account, a Mozambican guide was shot dead in cold blood near the Beira site, wearing 'MNR' insignia on his uniform.

In October 1979 Andre Matsangaissa was killed in a contact with Frelimo soldiers at Gorongosza town, and was replaced as commander of the MNR by Afonso Dlakama. The Rhodesians had little respect for Dlakama, describing him as a 'weak character' who disliked military action and who lacked leadership qualities (Johnson and Martin, p.11).

According to Martin and Johnson, Ken Flower, the head of the Rhodesian CIO, had asked for South African support for the MNR in 1978 or early 1979, when the P.W.Botha/Magnus Malan axis rose to power. The South Africans appointed an SADF liaison officer, and committed themselves to financial support in 1980. After the Lancaster House agreement which led to the ZANU-PF victory in the 1980 independence elections in Zimbabwe, the British administration gave the MNR seventy-two hours to get out of the country. A planned three-phase transfer of the entire MNR operation to South Africa took place. This involved the staff of the propaganda radio station *Voz da Africa Livre*, seven military vehicles, and about 250 men with their weapons (Johnson and Martin, p.15).

In early 1980, South Africa was prepared to receive the Selous Scouts, Muzorewa's auxiliaries, and the mixed bag of international mercenaries who had been thrown out of a job by the ZANU-PF victory. These were to become the instructors and the new recruits for the MNR. The MNR groups put South Africa's anti-Mozambique strategy into practice — it was no accident that ANC attacks on power stations
inside South Africa were answered by the knocking down of power lines in central Mozambique.

At the same time, the MNR was looking for support in conservative circles in Lisbon, Madrid, Paris, London, where Orlando Cristina, Evo Fernandes and Even Domingos Arouca were to emerge. The propaganda radio station started up again, this time from the Transvaal, where the main MNR bases were located. The bases were protected by the SADF and were near to airfields. They were also near to the frontiers of Mozambique and Zimbabwe. Transport planes and helicopters provided the logistical support for operations inside Mozambique. Even at this late stage, it was planned to use southern Zimbabwe as a transit corridor.

From the beginning, the MNR and its controllers were desperate to dispel the image of the organisation as a wing of the SADF. In August 1982, it was reported from Lisbon that an MNR delegation which was to have left Portugal had been delayed for 'organisational reasons'. The group was to have visited France, West Germany, and perhaps the United Kingdom, to ask for 'increased arms supplies'. But Fanuel Mahluza, a member of the 12-man MNR 'Executive Council', was more forthcoming. He said that the objective was to modify the impression that the MNR was a South African-backed group.

Mahluza claimed that the MNR controlled four of Mozambique's ten provinces, but that it did not attempt to hold towns. The movement's strength was '12,000 well-armed men'. He denied that the MNR received weapons from South Africa, saying that they came from unidentified Western countries. An MNR government would improve trade relations with South Africa and would ban any ANC presence; the organisation was opposed to apartheid, however. Mahluza said that the MNR have no alternative but to attack economic targets, since they had no support from Mozambique's black neighbours (International Herald Tribune, 24 August 1982).

The story of continued South African control of and support for the MNR is extremely well known. Damning documentary evidence was captured by the Mozambican army at the MNR base in Garagua, in Manica province, in December 1981. In the minutes of an earlier meeting with South African security and the CIO, Afonso Dlakama is quoted as saying: 'You South Africans are like my parents...everything depends on you'.

Another document, the minutes of a meeting with SADF Col. Cornelius 'Charlie' van Niekerk on 25 October 1980, has the South African ordering the MNR to 'interdict rail traffic (in the south of Mozambique), establish bases inside Mozambique adjacent to the South African border, open a new military front in Maputo province'.

Before 'Operacao Leopardo' in 1980, when the MNR base at Sitatonga was captured by the Mozambican army, the MNR had some room for manoeuvre. It attacked the unpopular Lojas do Povo, agricultural cooperatives, state farms, collective farms, administrative posts, political headquarters, trains, lorries and main roads from the south to the centre and the north. Typical of this first phase were attacks on Re-education Centres in Manica and Sofala to get recruits. Most of the MNR recruits captured by the Mozambican army in 1980, in the big Manica sweeps, were young abductees. The weapons used were the same type as the Mozambican army's obtained by South Africa from international arms dealers.
In 1982, Mozambican army commanders were testifying that they had found European corpses at the captured MNR base in Chidogo, as well as South African passports and documents at other bases. The Mozambican army said that the MNR were regularly supplied at night in Tete and Manica by air drops.

The MNR attacked civilians, terrorising them if they refused to collaborate. Civilians were abducted to remote areas; political or administrative figures and their families were killed as 'communist agents' or had their lips, ears, or sexual organs cut off. Western diplomats estimated that the MNR had about 5000 men at this time, the middle of 1982, most of them coerced into joining; one said that he found reports of widespread MNR barbarism 'credible' (A and B Isaacman, 1982).

South African control and support continued well past the date of the signing of the Nkomati Accord in March 1984. The publication in September 1985 of the Gorongosa diaries, captured during a joint Mozambican-Zimbabwean assault on the MNR base at Casa Banana, showed beyond doubt that South Africa had systematically violated the Nkomati Accord by continuing to supply the MNR.

Since the publication of the Gorongosa documents in September 1985, and South Africa's admission that they were genuine, we have been presented with a steady stream of evidence of Pretoria's continued involvement in supporting and supplying the MNR. Both captured and amnestied former bandits continue to testify, up to the present, that they have seen South African supplies coming in. In April 1989, eyewitnesses say that South African soldiers were directly involved in an attack on the border town of Ressano Garcia in Maputo province. In June 1988, US Ambassador to Mozambique, Melissa Wells, went on record as saying she believed that there was still 'a pattern of continuing communication and support' for the MNR by South Africa (Askin, 1988).

So much, then, for the MNR's autonomy. But there remain significant differences in the interpretations of its origins. Gulamo Taju states bluntly that:

Samora Machel dated the roots of Renamo back to the actual foundation of Frelimo in 1962, arguing that "there are problems, which Frelimo dragged along with it right up to the day it won, and which were taken on board by the ultra-racists who used to be around here" (Taju, 1988:6).

This view of the continuity of the warfare in southern Africa was, oddly enough, recently confirmed from the other side, by the former Portuguese Minister of 'Overseas', Adriano Moreira, on 13 April 1989, when he commented that it is a mistake 'to think that the wars in the former Portuguese colonies have finished; they are continuing on a larger scale' ('O Seculo Joanesburgo', 17 April 1989).

Taju pays considerable attention in his lengthy article to the role of Jorge Jardim in the search for a neo-colonial solution to the colonial question, to the attempt to set up an 'internal front', and to all the manoeuvres which took place in the period 1973-1975. His interpretation agrees broadly on this point with that of Fauvet, who also highlights the origins of the constituent elements of the MNR and, oddly, with the MNR sympathizer Andre Thomashausen. However, Jose Mota Lopes, in a piece published in Africa Report in 1986, states bluntly that the MNR 'was initially created by the Central Intelligence Office (CIO) of Southern Rhodesia in 1968'. Colin Legum is equally emphatic: 'The MNR was set up in 1976 by Rhodesian intelligence.' Martin and Johnson's account confirms this.
These differences are ones of emphasis, rather than of substance. Nevertheless, it is important to take into account the point made in what we may assume is an official version of Frelimo's most recent position paper on the subject:

Armed banditry in Mozambique and its development are thus an extension of colonial occupation, part of the same historical process that saw . . . particularly aggressive opposition to the legitimate aspirations of the peoples of southern Africa [to] freely choose their own destinies ('Who are the armed bandits?', p.3).

It is this process which provides the domestic dynamic of armed banditry, which was set in motion by the Rhodesians, and continued by the South Africans. Unless we take into account the historical developments which allowed the enemies of Mozambique to set up the MNR, we run the danger of falling into the error of attributing everything to an autonomous internal process.

Social Banditry
'The attacks near Beira itself are mostly social banditry, among us, not Renamo', William Finnegan reports that he was told by a 'government planner' in the Beira corridor. The attackers might be People's Militia or soldiers from the corridor who are bored and have guns, so they 'decide to head toward the city and take whatever they can find there'.

Some of the 80 burnt and ruined vehicles scattered along the country's main north-south highway at Maluana, 50kms north of Maputo, after the MNR bandit ambush of 29 November, 1987.
The claim that there is ‘social banditry’ in Mozambique is increasingly heard. A recent exchange between Gervase Clarence-Smith and William Minter in the pages of the *Southern African Review of Books* (of which more below) bandied the expression about. But there are two problems with the use of the term, one with the concept itself, and the other with the direction in which it leads us. It is essential to analyse the content of the term if we are to produce anything more than a descriptive sociology of the MNR and its effects.

The attempt to produce a general theory of social brigandage was made by the British social historian Eric Hobsbawn in the 1950s and 1960s, with particular reference to such European examples as Sicily. Hobsbawm coined the term ‘social banditry’ and characterised this as a primitive form of organised social protest, by peasants, against changes in the social order. Social bandits cannot be classed simply as criminals, argued Hobsbawm, since they remain (and here is a crucial point) within the limits of the system of morality of the peasant community. Peasants see social bandits as heroes, who right wrongs by defying the representatives of an oppressive state. They are reformist, since they want to restore a traditional order; they are rendered obsolete by modern political organisation. Hobsbawm identified three main categories in a typology of social banditry: the ‘noble robber’, the primitive resistance fighter, and the avenger.

Hobsbawm’s conceptualisation was submitted to serious criticism at the time, and it is greatly to be regretted that it has resurfaced in the Mozambican context. The most obvious point is that all banditry is ‘social’. Another is that the bandits’ loyalty is not to the peasantry; their main objective is to find ways of creating upward mobility for themselves. Hobsbawm’s concept also over-emphasises social protest as an element in rural banditry.

In the Mozambican context, to use the term to describe the criminal activities of supposed ‘non-MNR’ bandits merely muddies further waters which are murky enough to begin with. In what sense do robberies committed in the Beira corridor remain within the bounds of a Mozambican rural moral code? In what sense do they represent a ‘Robin Hood’ principle of robbing the rich to give to the poor?

Again, the introduction of the term social (i.e. non-MNR) banditry serves to turn the situation on its head, by confusing the results of the war in Mozambique with its causes. The chaos in rural Mozambique is not the result of ‘pre-existing social banditry’, as Gervase Clarence-Smith has claimed. If non-MNR banditry does exist now, or if it did exist before the war — and there is little evidence for either proposition — then we would still need to look at the motives of its protagonists as possible contributory factors in the war.

It may well be that, at a local level, Frelimo’s sometimes authoritarian counter-insurgency tactics have created gangs of brigands who prey on the adjoining populations. Just as often though, such instances are a consequence of the MNR-created crisis.

**The Destabilisation Problem**

Historically, all South Africa’s neighbours were subordinated to the needs of South African capitalism. They functioned as labour reserves, as suppliers of raw materials or services such as transport, and they provided a nearby market for South African manufactured goods. It is an underlying assumption of this article
that South African regional policy has, as one of its major long-term objectives, the continuation of this subordination.

It has long been established that the use of proxy armies such as the MNR, UNITA in Angola, 'Super'-ZAPU in southern Zimbabwe, and the LLA (Lesotho Liberation Army) in Lesotho had its origins in the period of the later seventies and early eighties, when South Africa's regional policy was posited on the concept of the 'total strategy', a response to a supposed 'total onslaught' by 'world communism'.

Knowing this, the Mozambican government has for many years maintained the position that the armed bandits are merely South African proxies with no political programme of their own; they do not constitute an 'opposition' at the ideological level. This position has not changed. In a 12-point document (the so-called 'non-paper' circulated in 1988 to the Maputo embassies of the permanent members of the Security Council, among others, and made public in June 1989 after being reported in the foreign press) Frelimo argued that 'we are faced with a situation of destabilisation, which must not be confused with a struggle between two parties'. This echoes earlier Mozambican statements: 'we are in a decisive battle in which the real enemy is South Africa'.

If we accept that 'destabilisation' consists of extreme military and economic pressure on a neighbouring state, with the objective of weakening and subordinating, but not necessarily overthowing the government, the question naturally arises, why Pretoria would maintain such pressure on Maputo for such a long time. The answer, in its simplest form, can be put into two words: transport diplomacy.

Reg Green has been one of the most persistent advocates of the view that control of southern African transport links is the dominant underlying motive for South Africa's continued sponsorship of the MNR. In an article written jointly with Carol Thompson they argued:

Security hegemony interacts with economic. Economic hegemony reinforces South African security because it renders attempts at effective liberation in any sphere difficult. This is especially true in respect to transport, where denial of access to South African routes could at present (i.e. 1986) throttle the economies and state apparatuses of Lesotho, Botswana, Swaziland, Zimbabwe, Malawi and probably, Zambia...but dominance in the key transport sector is neither geographically nor economically natural. Ultimately it can be ensured only by action to keep other southern African routes wholly or partially non-functional...South Africa has used sustained violence, as well as direct economic means, to ensure that the transport links to Lobito Bay, Maputo, Beira and Nacala have been intermittently available, limited in capacity, or closed entirely.

The Villigisation Problem
Times passes, and as William Minter has pointed out, scholars can make or enhance their reputations by being in the vanguard of a 'paradigm shift'. The entirely sufficient explanation of the role of the MNR as a proxy army acting for South African regional policy is no longer of interest. The fact that Mozambique is an economic and military weakling located next door to a regional super-power, that the social and economic devastation which has been visited upon it has been shown repeatedly to be the direct result of its neighbour's intervention, can be dismissed. The economic errors of Frelimo's agricultural policy, and the Government's refusal to recognise the traditional 'tribal values' of the countryside, are now put forward as 'causes' of a war which has become, in this mode of
thought, a ‘civil war’ between Mozambican factions, rather than a war of aggression by South Africa against its neighbour.

Economic problems and ‘tribal values’ were admitted by the Government as factors in rural discontent, even as early as 1980. Yet the early accounts show that support in most areas for the MNR was short-lived as looting and terrorism alienated the peasantry (see A and B Isaacman).

Recently, the work of two anthropologists in particular, has been carelessly used by less cautious analysts to advance the view that the MNR benefits from widespread opposition to the government’s policy of villagisation. At the beginning of 1983, and again in November and December 1984, the French anthropologist Christian Geffray, together with Mogens Pedersen, conducted fieldwork in the district of Erati, in Nampula Province. Two documents emerged directly from this research. Geffray and Pedersen are very cautious in the hypotheses which they advance about the nature of the war and the nature of banditry (as the title to the Portuguese version shows most clearly). In essence their argument is that, in Erati district at least, there is evidence that Renamo may have been able to secure some sort of social base because the government’s villagisation policy created a social crisis. This set up marginalised traditional leaders against those who had managed to get a village located in their traditional territory, and was provoked by social and inter-lineage differentiation which arose from villagisation. Since guns were available in a situation of banditry, an explosive situation was created.

According to Geffray and Pedersen, former regulos in Erati were forced by the army to play an active role in the security of their areas, and were threatened with automatic imprisonment if the MNR should attack in their location. These threats, they write ‘may have favoured a pooling of interests between ex-chiefs and certain strata of the displaced population, which might perhaps not have happened otherwise’ (‘Sobre a Guerra’, p.310).

Geffray and Pedersen are extremely careful not to derive generalisations about the war from their research in a particular district. Ironically, the department in which they worked at Eduardo Mondlane University was criticised precisely for arguing the necessity of more such detailed anthropological micro-studies in order to understand the nature of the war in different areas.

Unfortunately, in the review article referred to above by Gervase Clarence-Smith, the caution of Geffray and Pedersen is not so evident. Clarence-Smith, who has done research on southern Angola, writes that their work (and that of others) shows ‘that it is the policy of villagisation which has contributed to the present civil war [sic] in Mozambique’. Begging one question — the nature of the war — we leap to a sweeping conclusion about its origins, unsupported by any generalised evidence.

The war began in 1980, and for villagisation to have made a major causal contribution, one would expect there to be some sort of geographical correlation between the extent of villagisation in a given area, and the spread of the fighting. Unfortunately for Gervase Clarence-Smith, this is not the case. In 1980, according to official government figures, the percentage of the rural population living in villages (only living, not involved in collective production) in the provinces most affected by MNR activity was low. In Manica it was six per cent and in Sofala it was eight per cent.
The provinces where villagisation was most advanced were Gaza (as a result of extensive floods along the Limpopo Valley in 1977), with 37 per cent of the rural population living in concentrated settlements, Niassa with 13 per cent, and Cabo Delgado (Frelimo’s heartland) with 89 per cent. Clarence-Smith quotes one of his authors as citing some Centre of African Studies fieldwork on villages in Cabo Delgado. The villages were unpopular with some of the peasants because they were perceived as ‘surveillance posts’ which people could not leave. But the example of Cabo Delgado is the weakest which could be chosen to establish a linkage between dissatisfaction with villages and hostility to Frelimo. A later study by the same work-group of the CEA focuses exactly on the question of ‘desagregacao* or the drift away from the villages back to dispersed settlements in Cabo Delgado, a process which the state was unable to reverse, but which did not have any organic link to the rise of banditry. Indeed, it was not until 1983 that the MNR appeared in the province; a long wait indeed, if villagisation is a major factor. It is also worth noting that, in Cabo Delgado, during that same fieldwork, the question, ‘are you a member of Frelimo?’ elicited the reply ‘member of Frelimo? We are Frelimo’.

If the war in Mozambique is a struggle against an undemocratic Frelimo government and against forced villagisation, we should expect locally-based fighters trying to get their land back. But no: ‘the final form of control is a systematic process of transferring recruits away from their home areas’, according to William Minter’s research. Minter goes on to say that ‘almost all (recruits) described marches of at least two days from the point of capture to the training base. One commander in Manica province specifically said that they had a policy of transferring soldiers in order to make it harder for them to run away’.

It is interesting to note that the MNR’s spokesmen abroad make very little mileage out of the question of forced villagisation as a hypothetical cause for peasant resentment of Frelimo. This is what one would expect, of course, if the movement is simply an arm of South African foreign policy; but it is clear that the politics of the MNR, at least for foreign consumption, is oriented towards a petty-bourgeois and European idea of what democracy and freedom actually mean. Nowhere in the several published and unpublished interviews with Evo Fernandes which I have consulted, for instance, does he attribute special importance to rural policy, rather than to such questions as freedom of assembly, freedom of worship and so forth.

In an article which may be the only outright defence of the MNR to be published with even the minimal of academic respectability, Andre Thomashausen asserts that

the main attraction of the resistance broadcasting was its information on deportations and arrests, which at the end of 1976 had reached enormous proportions.

If the MNR does have a rural social base, it would be hard to find it in this image of the urban petty bourgeoisie listening to their radios for news of their relatives in jail.

Thomashausen was by his own admission a close personal friend of Evo Fernandes, former secretary-general of the MNR, and his affectionate memoir after Fernandes’ murder was circulated by the Washington-based International Freedom
Foundation on 31 May 1988. His paper may therefore be considered to represent an insider's view of the MNR’s own self-perception.

What is interesting is that nowhere, in a paper written in 1983, and which purports to ‘trace the origins of the current civil war in Mozambique’ and to explain ‘the amazing tenacity of the MNR’, does Thomashausen mention rural policy or rural conditions, apart from a casual remark that ‘the marketing of food crops has been seriously affected’.

In fact, such economic reasoning is not a part of the mode of discourse of the movement’s spokesman, for the very good reason that none of them thought of it and none of them have any real contact with the rural populations which supposedly constitute their social base. If opposition to villagisation was a generalised motive for recruitment to the armed bandits, surely the news would have leaked out at some time in the last eight years?

The Peace Process

It is clear that the Mozambican people as a whole are tired of the war. In the preparatory meetings for the 5th Congress of Frelimo, some speakers at both the public meetings for the discussion of the theses, and at the district and provincial Party conferences for the election of delegates, appealed repeatedly for negotiations to end the fighting. The appeals provoked surprisingly fierce opposition from other participants, some of whom argued that the government’s policy of amnesty should not be extended and that any compromise with the MNR would constitute a ‘betrayal’ of the bandits earlier victims (Askin interview 1988). The official response to the appeals was to ask, ‘with whom should we negotiate, and what should we negotiate about?’ We are already talking to the South Africans’.

The MNR has held a ‘congress’ in the bush, at which the external leadership was systematically replaced by local elements, and at which all the talk was of ‘dialogue’. But the Mozambican government is apparently maintaining its line that it is the South Africans who can end the war by stopping their support for the bandits, and that reintegration of former MNR elements into an increasingly participatory and open political system can solve domestic contradictions.

Church leaders such as Mgr. Jaime Goncalves of Beira have been making contact with MNR spokesmen, with the authorisation of the government. This authorisation consists mainly of an assurance that such contacts would not be regarded as criminal by the government. At the same time, the twelve-point ‘non-paper’ mentioned above has been released, opening the way to a ‘dialogue’ between Mozambicans within the existing social order.

We can only speculate about the international and domestic pressures behind these initiatives. It seems possible that there is some US and Soviet pressure for a regional settlement, which probably includes some inducements for the South Africans to genuinely pull the rug out from under their Mozambican proxies. If this is in fact the case, and if some sort of peace comes to the region as a result, then the true nature of this war will have been demonstrated for all to see. But we have also witnessed, since Nkomati, several commitments by the South Africans to stop their support; none of these commitments have been honoured, because the pursuit of the South African regime’s perceived regional interests have not
warranted it. The warlords of Mozambique, if the truth be known, have been sitting in SADF headquarters in Pretoria all along.

Endnote
I am grateful to Paul Fauvet in Maputo, and to Steve Askin and Carole Collins in Harare, for help with data, suggestions and criticism during the preparation of this paper.

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The discussion of problems thrown up by destabilisation draws on: the 12 — point document (the so-called 'non-paper') circulated by Frelimo in 1988, which was released at a Maputo press conference on 17 July 1989 and reported by *Noticias* (19 July 1989); and see Reginald H Green and Carol Thompson, 'Political economies in conflict: SADCC, South
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The discussion of villagisation: Allen and Barbara Isaacman, op.cit.; Christian Geffray and Mogens Pedersen, Transformacao da organizacao social e do sistema agrario do campesinato no Distrito do Erati: processo de socializacao do campo e diferenciacao social (Maputo, March 1985); Geffray and Pedersen, 'Nampula en guerre' Politique Africaine 29 (March 1988), also published as 'Sobre a guerra na provincia de Nampula' Revista Internacional de Estudos Africanos 4/5 (January-December 1986); Gervase Clarence-Smith, review article in The Southern African Review of Books (April-May 1989); and reply by William Minter, ibid. (June-July 1989); Andre Thomashausen, 'The National Resistance of Mozambique' Africa Insight 13 (2) 1983. The text reference to an 'Askin interview' refers to an unpublished interview with Steve Askin in June 1988; in it, US ambassador Melissa Wells commented that amnistiados were in danger from the revenge of the local population and that, therefore, the authorities made a great play of the importance of forgiveness and amnesty ceremonies — several of which she had attended.
Keeping the Fires Burning: Militarisation and the Politics of Gender in South Africa

Jacklyn Cock

This article focuses on the connection between women and militarisation. It is a connection which is obscured by analyses which conceptualise war as a male affair and the military as a patriarchal institution from which women are excluded and by whom they are often victimised. White women contribute to the militarisation of South African society in both material and ideological terms. At the same time a minority of white women are a source of resistance to the system of apartheid which militarism defends. The 'politics of gender', the power relations between men and women which are structured around opposing notions of 'masculinity' and 'femininity', shape both these processes of incorporation and challenge.

Women are understood as a social category with distinct and specific experiences. Such experience is structured not only by gender but by other social relations — most importantly, race and class. The process of militarisation, one of the most dramatic characteristics of the contemporary global scene, is manifest in sharp increases in military expenditure, in the growing destructive capacity of military weapons, in the spread of the power and influence of the military and in the increasing number of people under arms. This process is evident both in global terms and, more specifically, in South Africa.

The linkages between women and the process of militarisation are generally obscured. They are mystified by two opposing perspectives — those of sexism and feminism. Both exclude women from war on the grounds that they are bearers of 'special qualities'. Sexism excludes women from the ranks of the military on the grounds of their physical inferiority and unsuitability for combat roles. One variant of feminism similarly excludes women on opposite grounds — that of their innate nurturing qualities, their creativity and pacifism. The outcome of both positions is that war is understood as a totally male affair.

This article adopts a different approach. It focuses on the connection between women and war in South African society. It argues that women contribute to the militarisation of society in both material and ideological terms. It attempts to show that these linkages are complex and reverberate with contradictions embedded
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deep in the peculiar social conditions of South Africa. This article should be read as a research agenda which maps out a terrain for further exploration.

Militarisation as a Contested Concept

Our whole social organism is riddled by the disease of militarism (Bahro, 1982:89).

An understanding of militarisation hinges on a clear distinction being drawn between two social phenomena: 1) the military as a social institution: a set of social relationships organised around war, taking the shape of an armed force; 2) militarism as an ideology which values war and legitimates state violence as the solution to conflict; 3) militarism as a social process that involves mobilisation for war through the penetration of the military, its power and influence, into more and more social arenas, until the military have a primacy in state and society. In the literature there is a good deal of slippage between these three phenomena.

The military is frequently conceptualised as a discrete institutional entity. While Enloe refers to 'the military institution', others have expanded the notion to depict a 'military-industrial complex' or even 'the military-industrial-technological-bureaucratic complex' (Eide and Thee, 1980). This is sometimes identified with the state. For example, Williams (1985:224) refers to

an organised grouping of arms production, military, research and state-security interests which has, in effect, moved beyond the control of civil society and is the true contemporary form of the State itself.

This insight is tethered to what E.P. Thompson has termed 'exterminism'; a deadly system, first of weapons and then of institutions and ideas which has slowly assumed a total and ultimately destructive control. He has criticised the use of concepts which attempt to delimit the problem.

We speak of "the military-industrial complex" or of "the military sector" or "interest" of the arms lobby. This suggests that the evil is confined in a known and limited place: it may threaten to push forward, but it can be restrained: contamination does not extend through the whole societal body (Thompson, 1982:21).

Contamination is the crucial insight in his analysis; 'the USA and the USSR do not have military-industrial complexes: they are such complexes' (ibid:22).

Clearly different societies have experienced different levels of militarisation. However, whether one measures the level of militarisation through empirical indicators such as military expenditure, the size and sophistication of the weapons system, the scale of repression, or political influence of the military, South Africa is a highly militarised society (Frankel, 1984; Grundy, 1983, 1986; Frederickse, 1980):

virtually every member of the white and black populations is immersed in the militarisation of (South Africa) society, either as wielders of coercive and restrictive power or as objects or respondents to that power (Grundy, 1983:10).

Women and Militarisation in South Africa

Shooting comes as naturally as baking in the kitchen ("Ouma" Marina Hogenboezen, Paratus, 28 (2) February 1987, p.12).
The points or roles into which women have historically been incorporated into war are sketched out by Huston (1982:275-9) as follows:

1. In a passive, indirect sense women can be the pretext for war — the Helen of Troy syndrome. As Huston points out, women can be 'a valuable that needs to be defended, but they can also represent value itself, an ideal incarnating peace and virtue'.
2. As wives and prostitutes, women can fulfill Nietzsche's injunction to provide for the warrior's rest and recreation.
3. As entertainers, they can provide diversion.
4. As victims, 'they are more and more numerous among those bit parts known as casualties'.
5. As sympathetic nurses, the Florence Nightingale syndrome.
6. As seductive spies, the Mata Hari syndrome.
7. As cheerleaders, 'running along the sides of trains and waving goodbye to the departing men in uniform'.
8. As 'castrating bitches who belittle and berate men for refusing to become macho murderers'.
9. As miracle mothers providing sources of cannon fodder.
10. 'As treacherous tramps who are aroused by the sight of flashy uniforms and therefore tempted to find the invading armies sexier than their own'.
11. As cooperative citizens 'suddenly developing quasi-masculine stamina for field and factory work, which will just as suddenly evaporate when the war is over'.

White women are incorporated into the militarisation of South African society in all these roles. These points of incorporation will be discussed in two main sections, direct and indirect incorporation. Direct incorporation is clear in the increasing use of white women within the SADF in a variety of roles from nursing through to radar, intelligence work and cartography. Indirect incorporation is also extensive as women provide a considerable degree of support (both ideological and material) to the SADF.

The distinction between these direct and indirect linkages cannot be drawn in clear terms. One of the defining features of South Africa as a militarised society, a society engaged in a 'civil war' (as viewed by the black majority) or in defending itself against the 'total onslaught' (the view of the state and the vast majority of whites) is that the battlefield is the entire society. A clear demarcation of the battlefield is the fulcrum of the connection between militarisation and the politics of gender. If the military are viewed as a bastion of male identity, then it must categorise women as peripheral, as serving safely at the "rear", on the "home front". Women as women must be denied access to "the front", to "combat" ...the military has to constantly define "the front" and "combat" as wherever "women" are not (Enloe, 1984:15).

In a civil war or struggle such as that being waged in contemporary South Africa, the landscape of combat is redrawn as the experience of war is dispersed among the general population. In this process an important breach in the ideological constructions of gender is threatened. As Ruddick (1983:472) has written:

Dividing the protector from the protected, defender from defended, is the lynchpin of masculinist as well as military ideology.
Therefore considerable efforts are made to avoid this breach and elaborate a traditional but expanded notion of femininity for women within the SADF.

(a) Indirect linkages: material and ideological: The most remote connection between women and militarisation lies in the mother-providing-cannon-fodder role identified above. Writing of Nazi Germany, Mason (1976:88) has pointed out that all racialist movements which take the biological, pseudo-scientific elements in their ideologies seriously, are bound to attach particular importance to women's procreative role.

In South Africa, as in Nazi Germany, the state attaches a particular importance to family, domesticity and child bearing in the white community. This implies a celebration of women's domestic role as mothers and wives; an equation of femininity with domesticity. Women's role is 'to keep the home fires burning', to stay at home, produce babies and support 'our boys on the border'.

At the indirect material level, there are three linkages between women and war, or three ways in which white women contribute materially to the militarisation of South African society: firstly, they are active in support organisations such as the Southern Cross Fund which provides food parcels and recreational services for 'the boys on the border', and Operation Ride Safe which used to organise lifts for national serviceman; secondly they are active in Civil Defence and Commando units; and thirdly they are engaged in armaments production for Armscor.

The Southern Cross Fund is an important agency through which white South African women provide material support for the SADF. The Southern Cross Fund works for both the SADF and the SAP (South African Police) and its motto is 'they are our security'. It has 250 branches throughout the Republic and raises money for the security forces on a full-time basis. Since its inception in 1968 it has raised over R14 million (The Citizen, 31 May 1986). The money is used to provide aid and comfort to soldiers in the operational area; for example, it has donated recreational facilities such as snooker tables, swimming pools and television sets, as well as sending parcels to conscripts. They also visit hospitalised soldiers at No.1 Military Hospital near Pretoria regularly. According to Frankel (1984:98) the actual effect of Southern Cross activity is to market militarisation in a way which encourages public identification.

White women are also active in commando units and civil defence organisations. Civil Defence involves people in various aspects of work such as traffic control, fire fighting, first aid, drill, fieldcraft, crowd control, explosive identification, weapon training, roadblock routines, anti-riot procedures and lectures on internal security.

The Civil Defence Programme attempts to mobilise the civilian population for the military defence of the apartheid state. It fits neatly into the overall programme of total strategy.

While white women are increasingly active in Civil Defence organisations operating within urban areas, their involvement in Commando Units involved in counter-insurgency in rural areas is also intensifying.

My men cannot be everywhere at once but by training farmers and their wives [my emphasis] in the use of weapons and communication systems we have an answer to terrorism in the area (Col. Swanepoel, Paratus, 38 (2) February 1987).
In this process of incorporation traditional notions of femininity are restructured and expanded. For example, in the Soutpansberg Military Area commando members gathered recently for an evaluation.

In the past two years the Soutpansberg Military Area Unit has concentrated on taking counter-insurgency skills to the farming folk in the area, turning Oumas and housewives into trained auxiliaries of the Defence Force (ibid).

It is important to stress that traditional notions of femininity are not abandoned in this restructuring. For example, on one occasion the day's programme included a fashion show.

At the indirect material level, the final linkage between women and militarisation in South Africa is the involvement of white women in armaments production for Armscor where they perform only a fraction of the work that promotes militarisation, but a growing fraction nonetheless. Armscor has twelve nationalised subsidiaries whose activities are controlled by the corporation. It distributes work to over 1200 private industry contractors and subcontractors. It is extremely difficult to gain any detailed information on the workforce in the armaments sector. However, Ratcliffe has identified a clear pattern in which women appear to be the predominant sector of the Armscor workforce (Ratcliffe, 1983:77). He suggests this is because women are one of the weakest sections of the workforce. Women are perceived to be less militant than men and are thought to have greater dexterity for intricate assembly line production (ibid:85).

Many defence industry workers are women, not only in Armscor but increasingly in its affiliates (ibid:81-3).

The increasing and extensive involvement of women in such 'militarised work' is a global phenomenon (Enloe, 1983). Much of this work is distanced from the eventual weaponry so that the military connection between women's daily work and killing is obscured. This was not always the case, however. Women have, at various periods in the history of the West, been conscripted into armament production to meet serious manpower shortages. At present in South Africa extra-economic forms of coercion propel women into providing an important source of labour power for the defence industry.

The second indirect linkage or point at which white women are incorporated into the militarisation of South Africa society, is that they provide a crucial source of ideological support. The importance of this ideological support has been articulated by many SADF leaders on numerous occasions. Its function in maintaining soldiers' morale was expressed by General C.L. Viljoen, the chief of the SADF at the time:

I would especially like to thank those who stayed at home to keep the fires burning while the men were at the P.W. Botha Training Area. Without the support of their loved ones at home the men on the ground would not have been as successful as they were. The support from their loved ones is an important factor for the morale of the men who took part (Paratus, 35, October 1984).

Col. L.J. Holtzhausen, Officer Commanding the Seventh Division's Mobilisation Unit, gives even greater significance to women as a source of ideological support.
He believes women to be 'the mightiest weapon against the current threat'. However, gender roles must remain intact:

Remember the woman must remain a woman and keep on allowing her man to feel like a man because the men are fighting throughout our country not for material things but for their women, children and loved ones (Paratus, 35 (2) February 1984).

The wife of the Officer Commanding a parachute battalion in Bloemfontein explained the rationale:

We want to reach the woman and try through her to work on the man. A mother has influence over her son and a girlfriend over her boyfriend (Paratus, 34 (9) September 1983).

The importance of 'working on the man' is that it 'is never easy for the armed forces to acquire the manpower they claim they need' (Enloe, 1983:75). In South Africa, manpower is acquired directly by the conscription of white males into the SADF, and indirectly through an ideological conscription into militarism. It is in this latter respect that white women are crucial. They elaborate an ideology of gender roles which link masculinity to militarism. In this process they are a vital source of emotional support and incentives to men to 'act like men' both in battle and during their national service.

The significance of this connection between masculinity and militarism should not be underestimated. It is a connection by women; they socialise men into a particular definition of masculinity that is violent. Mothers do so from an early age through the provision of war toys and the censure of emotional expression. The army then carries this process to the extreme.

This linkage between militarism and masculinity is frequently the subject of emotional appeals. Military training is often legitimated in terms of its appropriateness in teaching masculine independence and discipline: 'do bear in mind that soldiering is, after all, a task for a man and the army has to train and discipline our sons to this end' (letter to The Star, 24 May 1987). This letter urges 'anxious army mums (to) give your sons all the moral support you can and help them to adopt a positive attitude to their training'. 'Holding on to his girlfriend's washing powder present and Mom's biscuits, he (the national serviceman) looks around the place that is going to be his home for the next two years' (supplement to Fair Lady, 8 November 1981). Clearly, 'mom' and 'girlfriend' are critical sources of support. They also provide an ideological legitimation as 'the defended' and 'the protected'.

However, it is as wives that women are the most important source of ideological legitimation and emotional support. Wives of serving members of the SADF automatically belong to the Defence Force Ladies Association. This Association strives to promote 'sympathetic understanding and active support for the husband's duty as defender of the Republic of South Africa' (White Paper on Defence, 1982:51; cited by Ratcliffe, 1983:70).

The central concept here is a definition of 'loyalty' which includes the following components:

**A knowledge of communism:** 'Knowledge of communism remains of the utmost importance because...communism leads to disloyalty' (Mrs Viljoen, National

**Meticulous grooming:** ‘Soldiers do enjoy a status in the community and their lady friends should be an asset to them. Certain standards are expected of him when wearing his uniform, the same applies to the woman accompanying him. Therefore the following is recommended: ‘For a formal dinner, a light material (chiffon) long dress, little jewellery, court shoes in either gold or satin and matching handbag. For visiting town, a neatly tailored outfit. Court shoes and handbag. Sandals can be worn if feet are well looked after and carefully manicured’ (Mrs Emsie Schoeman, address given to the SA Army Ladies Organisation in 1980. Supplement to *Paratus*, 31 (5) May 1980).

This meticulous grooming implies an elaborate cultivation of ‘femininity’, so as to mirror the soldier-husband’s status in the community. This clearly illustrates Virginia Woolf’s insight in *A Room of One's Own* where she argues that women serve as ‘magnifying mirrors’ which show men at twice their natural size. Such mirrors she claims, ‘are essential to all violent and heroic action’ (Woolf, 1957:35-36).

**Self knowledge:** ‘Happiness always has a woman in the picture. In the first place happiness is a woman who knows Who has made her. She is the crown of creation and no afterthought or accessory. Happiness also is a woman who knows why she was made. Happiness is also a woman who knows to whom she belongs’ (Mrs Viljoen, wife of the then Head of the SADF, quoted in *Paratus*, 34 (7) July 1983).

**Optimism:** ‘We must prevent thinking that we could lose. What we are dealing with is total onslaught — it is total war on all aspects of our lives’ (speaker at a two-day conference hosted by admiral’s and general’s wives, quoted in *Paratus*, 34 (4) April 1983).

**Shared values:** ‘The loyal wife is bound to her husband by a shared love of your fatherland, people and Provider’ (ibid).

**Regular correspondence:** ‘It’s up to you to make sure that your letters and actions while he’s away show him beyond any doubt that you love him just as much as always, and you’re going to wait for him, no matter how long. A family that does not write letters weakens the whole platoon’ (SADF Booklet, *While He is Away*, cited in *Human Awareness Project (HAP)*, 1986.

**Responsibility:** ‘The wife of a man in uniform has to show responsibility to her calling as a wife, believer and citizen. If the enemy succeeds in winning the wife away from her task then half his battle is won.’ (Mrs Naude, wife of the Chaplain-General, *Paratus*, 38 (1) January 1987).

**Commitment:** ‘Being a wife implies being supportive of her husband in all areas. It implies a job and is hard work. The current life style with its tendency towards democratising and questioning of authority, pessimism and lack of concern are little pricks which work on us daily and lead to disloyalty’ (speaker at the two-day conference hosted by admiral’s and general’s wives, *Paratus*, 34, (4) April 1983).

These interpretations of loyalty as the key quality of the soldier’s wife all emphasise an ideology of domesticity. Furthermore they suggest a notion of an ‘incorporated wife’ who is entirely submerged in her soldier-husband’s role, lacking autonomous
identity. The extent to which the wife is incorporated in her soldier-husband's role is best illustrated by the Johannesburg City Council's 1986 decision to restrict paid maternity leave to women employees whose husbands were presently doing or had done military service. Those to be excluded were 'specifically the wives of religious objectors' as well as all blacks, coloured, Indians and single women (Weekly Mail, 24 January 1986).

However, the incorporated wife is only one source, albeit crucial, of the ideological legitimation and emotional support which connects white women to the social process of militarisation. Other crucial sources are women in their roles as mothers, as we have noted, though here the ultimate point is the theme of sacrifice, and as providers of entertainment and diversion.

Much of the content of this entertainment reinforces an ideology of domesticity in which women and 'loved ones' provide a rationale for the soldier's privations. The message is conveyed through radio and television programmes and tours of the 'operational areas' on the part of female entertainers, media personalities and beauty queens. Their contribution to maintaining soldiers' morale does not go unrecognised. July 1987 marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of the popular radio programme for soldiers — 'Forces Favourites'. For the past twenty years this has been prepared and presented by Patricia Kerr. Her commitment earned her 'The Order of the Star of South Africa for exceptional service of military importance' (Paratus, 38 (4) April 1987). Gail Adams, who was producer of the Sunday evening radio programme 'Salute', reports that she 'fell in love about forty times' on her four hour visit to seventeen base camps. After this experience she planned to 'feature girls regularly, in the form of a "radio centrefold" which could be a chat-up with a reigning beauty queen' (Paratus, 34 (2) February 1983).

This 'centrefold' type use of women is a further component in the linkage between the politics of gender and militarism. A sexist abuse of female sexuality is evident in at least two different ways: the indirect visual abuse of women as sex objects in 'pin up' illustrations, and the direct physical abuse of women in the case of rape. As regards the former it is interesting that Paratus used to have a monthly 'pin up' page. A photograph of a woman, either fully clothed or in a bathing costume filled the final page of every issue until mid-1977 (Fine and Getz, 1986:30). This clearly reinforced a splintered and contradictory image of woman — an image fractured between the extremes of moralism and sexuality, 'Damned whores and God's police', sources of moral authority and dangerous sexuality (Summers, 1975).

Unfortunately it is as 'damned whores' that women frequently suffer at the hands of soldiers. Historically rape is often associated with war. In some war situations rape has been extremely widespread. For example, during the Bangladesh conflict it was estimated by some observers that 200,000 women were raped by Pakistani soldiers (Brownmiller, 1977:79; Medea and Thompson, 1972). Rape does occur in the war presently being waged in South Africa as sworn statements from victims clearly indicate.

It might be thought that the linkage between masculinity and militarism would be eroded by the increasing incorporation of women directly into the armed forces — a process that is occurring both globally and in South Africa. However, in the next section it will be argued that this incorporation preserves the ideology of gender roles; that the definition of femininity is expanded rather than fundamentally re-worked.
(b) The Direct Linkage: the Increasing Incorporation of White Women in the SADF:

In global terms women are increasingly used as a military resource. This may be related to a number of factors such as manpower constraints stemming from falling birth rates, a general militarisation of many different societies, and the rise of equal rights feminism.

Armed forces everywhere are distinctively patriarchal institutions. 'The military, even more than other patriarchal institutions, is a male preserve, run by men and for men according to masculine ideas and relying solely on manpower' (Enloe, 1983:7). The patriarchal nature of many societies smoothes or facilitates the connections between the armed forces and other institutions. For example, Enloe writes of the military-industrial complex as a patriarchal set of relations thoroughly imbued with masculine-defined militarist values. The network 'depends on male bonding, male privilege, and military derived notions of masculinity' (ibid, 1983:193). 'Maleness' in this ideology of gender is a relational concept — it implies a dichotomous relation between opposing sets of qualities which constructs 'femaleness'. Militarism is structured upon this dichotomy. As Mason (1976:87) describes it,

militarism is an organising principle of social life which necessarily magnified the distinctions between the sexes and was predicated upon overt or total male supremacy.

It is this dichotomy which explains women's exclusion from combat roles. However, this exclusion may be eroded under the pressure of 'manpower' constraints and shortages. When this occurs there are usually attempts to keep the ideology of gender roles intact. For example, in Israel, approximately 65 per cent of Israeli young women serve in the army through two years of compulsory military service.

In South Africa there are frequent injunctions to women not to allow their role in the SADF to contaminate their femininity. Physical appearance must be carefully cultivated (Paratus, 30 (5) 1979). The important point is that despite the increasing direct incorporation of white women into military structures in South Africa, the ideology of gender roles is not seriously breached. It is largely maintained by a sexual division of labour within the SADF whereby the vast majority of women are mainly employed in back up jobs such as secretarial work or catering, with very few in the top levels of policy and decision-making. This sexual division of labour is reinforced by the elaborate cultivation of a superwoman image whereby these women are encouraged to combine non-traditional jobs with their domestic responsibilities as wives and mothers. Both mechanisms are clearly apparent in the SADF.

According to the most recent estimates available there are now about 1000 white women in the Permanent Force. In other words, women constitute a significant proportion of its 18,000 members (Financial Mail, July 1987). This proportion has increased steadily in recent years. For instance, by 1977 the percentage of women in the SADF had increased from 0.6 per cent of the total force to 7 per cent (SAIRR, Annual Survey, 1980). In 1981, 12.5 per cent of the full-time permanent army were women (HAP, 1986). The Deputy Minister of Defence has said that the use of women in this way has reduced the burden on Permanent Force members and has freed national servicemen for other tasks (Hansard, No.11, 1980, Col.5310).
Women's exclusion from combat roles is legitimated on a number of different grounds:

**Women are instinctively unable to kill:** 'It's the task of women to give life and to preserve it...generally, the female has no place on the battle front' (Col. Hilda Botha, Senior Staff Officer Women, *Rand Daily Mail*, 18 March 1980).

**Women's socialisation is inappropriate:** 'Women encounter nothing like the extreme physical discomfort and danger of combat in their everyday life so they're not taught to cope with this sort of thing' (Alma Hannon, *Rand Daily Mail*, 18 March 1980).

**Women are incapacitated through physiological function such as menstruation:** 'Some women suffer from premenstrual tension and, at this time, they may be less mentally agile and well coordinated than at other times. A percentage are also more accident prone during this time.' (Senior Consultant in Gynaecology at the Johannesburg Hospital, *Rand Daily Mail*, 18 March 1980).

**Male Chivalry:** 'It would be very difficult to use women in an operational task. The physical implications like toilet and sleeping facilities would create endless difficulties. Men would find it difficult to prevent themselves saying things like "after you" or "I'll take that, it's too heavy for you"' (Commander Jurie Bosch, Commanding Officer of the South African Irish Regiment, *Rand Daily Mail*, 18 March 1980).

This exclusion from combat roles is essential to maintain the ideological structure of patriarchy because the notion of experiencing military 'combat' is central to the social construction of masculinity:

> to be a soldier of the state means to be subservient, obedient and almost totally dependent. But that mundane reality is hidden behind a potent myth: to be a soldier means possibly to experience "combat" and only in combat lies the ultimate test of a man's masculinity (Enloe, 1983:13).

Although white women in the SADF are not used in combat they are no longer relegated to the traditional female roles of medical and welfare work, and are involved in telecommunications and signals, logistics and finance, military police and instructional activity. The emphasis is on those who can present the image of women in uniform positively (*Paratus*, 35 (9) September 1984). The crucial theme is that there is no contradiction between femininity and serving the SADF. Thus the ideology of gender roles is preserved.

Other inducements to women to serve in the SADF are posed in terms of appeals to a mixture of patriotism and self-improvement: (1) Learning self-discipline, independence and self-reliance (interviews with eleven graduates from the George Army Women's College reported in *Paratus*, 35 (2) February 1984); (2) Patriotic duty: 'The defence of this country cannot be regarded as an exclusive male prerogative. We women have to come forward and stand by our men against the multi-facted onslaught against this country' (Captain Fiona Coughlan, *Paratus* 30 (12) December 1979); (3) Job satisfaction and career opportunities: 'I regard my work as dynamic, intelligent and fulfilling. The decision I made to join the SADF is one which I'll never regret. I have total job satisfaction' (ibid). The definition of femininity operating in this image has been expanded — the domestic role has not been abandoned but enlarged to include martial skills as well. Service in the
Permanent Force is given 'superwoman' status' (see Paratus, 38(5) May 1987 and 34(5) May 1983).

The increasing incorporation of women as a minority of the armed forces has not seriously breached the ideology of gender roles or the sexual division of labour. The most common functions women fulfill in militaries are clerical, administrative and servicing. These are jobs similar to those held by women in the wider labour market. They do not contaminate the ideology of femininity which reinforces the sexual division of labour. It is therefore difficult to see how this increasing use of white women as a military resource can be considered as advancing equality between the sexes: 'women's participation in the military has failed to challenge traditional and very basic sexist ideologies. It reinforces a sexual division of labour sharper and more rigid in the armed forces than in civilian life' (Stiehm 1982:391).

The almost universal exclusion of women from direct conscription resonates with the much wider question of women's subordination and exclusion from power and prestige. This exclusion is necessary to maintain the existing ideological order. That is why the SA Defence Force devotes so much attention to deflecting any potential contradiction between 'femininity' and participation in the SADF. In this process they ignore a much wider set of contradictions upon which the South Africa state is impaled. One of these surfaces in the fact that while the majority of white women contribute to the process of militarisation, a small minority of them are a source of resistance to it.

**Contradictions**

The linkages between women and war, the incorporation of white women both directly and indirectly, materially and ideologically into the militarisation of South African society, are not smooth, uniform processes. The linkages are complex and straddle contradictions which are embedded deep in the peculiar social conditions of South Africa. While white women are contributing to the process of militarisation, white women are more active than white men in the extra-parliamentary struggle against the apartheid regime which militarisation defends. Of course the relatively higher level of white women's participation in such groups has to be set against the high degree of passive acceptance and support for the apartheid regime among white South Africans generally. However women's participation is shaped by the politics of gender in contradictory ways. This will be illustrated by pointing to white women in two organisations — the End Conscription Campaign and the African National Congress.

Among the small number of whites convicted in South African courts for furthering the aims of the banned ANC, white women form a significant proportion. There have been a number of famous cases: Barbara Hogan, Helene Pastoors, Jansie Lourens, Trish Hanekom and Marion Sparg. The latter is a twenty-nine year old former journalist who, in 1986, was sentenced to twenty-five years imprisonment on charges of high treason and arson. She is the first white South African woman known to have served as a member of the ANC's military wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe. Pleading guilty to all the charges against her, Sparg admitted planting the limpet mines which exploded in Johannesburg's police headquarters and an East London police station in 1986. She said she knew it was possible policemen or civilians would die in the blasts, 'but my motive was not to injure or kill people. It
was one of a soldier in Umkhonto we Sizwe, a military army. I followed orders just like any other soldier' (Weekly Mail, 7 November 1986).

The politics of gender were used to deny and trivialise the validity of such choice and commitment. Shortly after her arrest in March 1986 several South African newspapers depicted Sparg as a failed woman; as a lonely, overweight, unattractive female who had turned to revolutionary politics not out of commitment but out of a desire to belong and win acceptance. She was depicted as a failed woman rather than a revolutionary. Paradoxically she was still a woman and so ipso facto could not have acted independently. As a woman, she had to be manipulated by a man of special persuasive powers. Sparg was described as acting under the influence of one such man who Williamson of the South African Security Police described as 'a sort of Charles Manson figure' (Observer, 31 March 1987).

A similar theme from the politics of gender was used in the media to denigrate the activities of Barbara Hogan, now serving a ten year sentence. She was described as 'an academic and trade unionist who was the first person convicted of high treason without committing violent acts. She had run an ANC cell for ten years after being recruited by her black boyfriend' (ibid). Similarly Jansie Lourens, now serving a four year sentence for treason, was said to be influenced by her boyfriend (now husband).

The revolutionary commitment of these women is denigrated by the suggestion that, as women, they could not have been acting autonomously. However, their status as white women also provides a degree of camouflage. It has been suggested that white women attract less attention than men, and under the guise of their femininity are able to travel more freely around the country fulfilling vital roles in the underground war, a role which is likely to expand in the near future (ibid).

Another challenge to the militarisation of South African society in which white women are active is the peace movement and the End Conscription Campaign (ECC) specifically. Started three years ago, the ECC has become a national coalition with fifty-two member organisations, branches in ten centres and thousands of active members and supporters. The growth of the ECC is remarkable given intense state harassment and repression. In 1986 about seventy ECC members were detained under the State of Emergency regulations for periods between one day and seven months, and twenty-six members were served with restriction orders. In December 1986 the State of Emergency Regulations were tightened to prevent anyone from 'discrediting or undermining' the system of compulsory military service. The penalty is a R20,000 fine or ten years imprisonment. Women are an extremely important source of commitment and leadership within this organisation.

It is paradoxical that many women in the ECC are moved by their maternal role, by their sense of responsibility to their children. It is often their role as mothers that generates their challenge to militarisation. For example, a letter to a Johannesburg newspaper urged mothers to organise to demand better army treatment for their sons:

The South African way of life allows a great many myths to exist in our society. One of the greatest of these is the one that goes "the army will make a man of your son" ...we allow the might of the army to swallow the boys we, as mothers, have spent eighteen years turning into civilised human beings, caring and considerate of others, and in two years turn them into efficient, largely unthinking, killing machines (letter to The Star, 15 April 1986).
Clearly this issue generates conflict for mothers. A local study reported that ‘the dilemma experienced as a result of the mothers’ opposition towards conscription and their simultaneous feelings that, as mothers, they should be committed to supporting their sons’ (Feinstein, et al, 1986:77). Women’s resistance to militarisation has often been rooted in their maternal roles, sometimes reinforcing such roles.

While the politics of gender is often used to deny the validity of women’s independent, autonomous political action, paradoxically it also gives them space for such action. There is no white male equivalent of the white women’s civil rights organisation, the Black Sash. Their silent protests predate and are reminiscent of the ‘Mad Mothers’ of the Plaza de Mayo in Buenos Aires since 1976 (Maclean, 1982:326).

Similar protest from white women like the Black Sash, or involvement in the ANC or ECC are not the only forms of resistance to militarisation at the present time. There is a growing realisation in parts of the white community of both the economic and human cost of a military solution to maintaining the apartheid regime. Green has estimated that the number of white South Africans killed in fighting SWAPO is proportionately three times more than the number of Americans killed in Vietnam (The Star, 2 November 1987). The possible human cost of increasing militarisation is provoking a number of different responses in the white community, which can be categorised as compliance, retreat and challenge. The response of compliance is evident in increased support for the ruling political party and those to the right of it, such as the Conservative Party, as in the 1987 general election. It is also evident in the dramatic increase in arms sales which makes white South Africa one of the most heavily armed communities in the world. In 1986 there were 220,221 firearm applications (from 135,382 in 1985) bringing the number of persons licensed to possess a firearm to 1,061,281 (Inside South Africa, May 1987).

The response of retreat is evident in the increasing number emigrating from South Africa. Emigration on the part of white South Africans is increasing and concern has been expressed about ‘the brain drain’ (The Star, 20 February 1987). According to statistics released in Parliament in February 1987, 47 per cent more professional and technical people left the country in 1986 than in 1985 (The Star, 4 March 1987). This is often a response to conscription (Frankel, 1984:139).

However, the sharpest and most direct challenge to the increasing militarisation of South African society is the growth of the End Conscription Campaign and the increasing number of white South Africans resisting military service. This resistance involves elements of retreat (seeking political asylum abroad), passive or personal resistance (in the form of not reporting to the SADF) or applications for alternative service and (in a few cases) serving a prison sentence in preference to military service.

It has been reported that 1000 objectors were granted political asylum in Britain between 1977 and 1981. It was also reported in Parliament that 7589 conscripts failed to report for duty in the SADF in January 1985, as compared with 1596 for the whole of 1984, (At Ease, ECC Newsletter, May 1986), although the SADF has challenged the former figure. In January 1986 General Magnus Malan refused to reveal in Parliament the number of people who had failed to report to the SADF (The Star, 3 March 1986).
The obvious question that arises in the light of 'manpower' pressures is whether the ideological construction of 'manpower' will be restructured further to include white women. There has been talk of extending conscription to white women since 1981. In that year the Prime Minister said that 'compulsory national service for women might be instituted in the distant future' (cited in HAP, 1986). However, the question of conscription for white women is not an issue of frequent debate in South Africa. Generally, conscription for women is still rare anywhere. Despite assertions of equality there are few states (Israel, Mali and Guinea) in which women are conscripted into the armed forces. Everywhere women are in the minority in such forces (Enloe, 1983:127-131).

However, one of the intentions of this article is to place the issue on the agenda. Future policy will hinge on the tension between the need to mobilise white women as soldiers under the pressure of 'manpower' shortages (and increasing resistance) and the need to avoid any contamination or dilution of the ideological construct of 'femininity'. This construct is crucial as a source of legitimation for the connection between masculinity and militarism. The identification of manhood with soldiering is of such ideological importance that it cannot be breached. Even without direct coercion into the SADF in the form of conscription, white women contribute both directly and indirectly, both materially and ideologically, to the militarisation of South African society. In a number of different senses, they 'keep the fires burning'.

Bibliographic Note
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Barbara Roberts (1984), 'The Death of Machothink: Feminist Research and the
The Politics of Religion in Nigeria: The Parameters of the 1987 Crisis in Kaduna State

Jibrin Ibrahim

This article analyses the immediate and long term causes of the outbreak of religious violence between Muslims and Christians in Kaduna State, Nigeria, in 1987. The author argues that the crisis arose from the politicisation of religion in the regional contest for power. On the one hand is the issue of the rise of fundamentalist Christianity and Islam. On the other is the struggle for political power by the 'northern Oligarchy' within the north and against the south in which religion has become a means for forging new coalitions.

On 5 March 1987 it was the turn of the Kafanchan College of Education to host the annual 'Mission '87' evangelical circuit of the 'born again' Christian students movement. A young lay preacher, Abubakar Bako, who is employed as a Research Fellow in the Centre for Social and Economic Research, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, was on the pulpit trying to convince his flock of the veracity of the Christian message. The foray by this Christian preacher into the holy book of Islam precipitated a major crisis that resulted in the massive destruction of property and the loss of many lives. It placed a question mark yet again on the ability of Nigerians to live peacefully with compatriots of different religious, ethnic or political persuasions. As happened after the massacres of May and September 1966, many residents of the core area of the uprising — Kaduna State — lost confidence in the capacity of the State to assure their security and left 'foreign territory' for their 'homelands'.

The 'foreigners' included second and third generation Hausa and Fulani settlers forced to flee the home they knew in the Jama'a Federation of Southern Zaria for their 'homelands' further north, and Netzig (non-Hausa/Fulani Christian minorities of southern Zaria). Many of the non-Muslim Nigerians resident in Kaduna State sent their families and properties 'home'. The poor residents of the Christian village of Wusasa, just outside Zaria city itself, could only run to the top of Wusasa hill.

The Muslim/Christian divide penetrates virtually all the nineteen states in the country to a greater or lesser extent. Nevertheless, while intra-religious squabbles and turbulence have been fairly common, direct conflict between Christians and Muslims has been rare in Nigeria. The most noted case was in October 1982 when
a number of churches were burnt in the Sabon Gari quarters of Kano. The spark that ignited the fire at that time was the decision of the Anglican Hausa church at Fagge quarters to build a bigger church within its walled premises. The majority Muslim population, spearheaded by a few zealots, campaigned against the project because the walls of the church premises and those of the Fagge Central Mosque are separated only by a road. The church had been on the site for over 40 years before the mosque was constructed. There was an orchestrated attempt to burn the church which was foiled by security forces who surrounded it with armed police. The arsonists then headed for the Sabon Gari quarters where they succeeded in burning a number of churches before the police could intervene again.

A number of analyses have already emerged purporting to explain the current religious crisis in Kaduna State, some of them by religious partisans. What is disturbing is that analysis from apparently radical perspectives have failed to go beyond the parameters of the 'religious' explanation. Thus in a press statement issued on 13 March 1987 Tijani and 21 other radical lecturers of Ahmadu Bello University argued that the crisis was 'a violent campaign of Muslims against Christians (which) is unprecedented in the history of our country'. In reply to this Sabo Bako, another radical scholar of the same University, argued that

The immediate cause of the crisis, whether it was spontaneous or organised, led by the so-called "northern oligarchy" or just Hausa-Fulani hooligans, was the very incident of 6 March 1987 in Kafanchan in which the 'indigenous' Christian ethnic majority descended on the Hausa-Fulani minority who happened to be the rulers and most of the property owners, by attacking and killing many of them, burned and destroyed their places of worship and religious books.

All that followed in the wake of burning churches and beer parlours in Zaria, Kaduna, Katsina and Funtua were reprisals by the Hausa-Fulani Muslims against the Christian minorities in their midst (New Nigerian, 14 April 1987).

These two explanations are inadequate. The first ignores completely the Kafanchan incident which sparked off the crisis. Secondly, while it is not incorrect to identify political manipulation as the cause of the crisis, this manipulation could only have occurred because there has been a rise of fundamentalism among both Christian and Muslim communities in Nigeria. The reply by Bako focuses only on the Kafanchan incident while ignoring all the provocations by Muslim fanatics towards the Christian community and overlooks all the political manoeuvres that formed some of the remote as well as immediate causes of the crisis. In searching for a more adequate explanation of the 1987 religious crisis in Kaduna State two principal tendencies in the Nigerian social milieu must be examined. First, the rise of Christian and Muslim fundamentalism and, secondly, the tendency of the struggle for political power in Nigeria to assume a parochial religious form.

The Kafanchan Crisis
The Kafanchan crisis may be divided into two fairly distinct phases. The first phase revolved around a quarrel between student members of the Fellowship of Christian Students (FCS) and the Muslim Students Society (MSS) over the 'Mission '87' evangelical campaign organised by the former. On 5 March the MSS protested against the 'Welcome to Mission '87 in Jesus Campus' banner hoisted on the College gates by the FCS. The school authorities intervened and the banner was subsequently removed. A decade earlier, in 1977, a similar banner had been put
up by the Scripture Union of the University of Ife in a similar 'Mission 77' programme. The question posed in the two incidents was why should a religious sect try to appropriate the campus for itself.

The following day, 6 March 1987, Abubakar's speech led the MSS to complain that he had 'deliberately misinterpreted the Holy Qur'an, chapter 3:13 and chapter 43:46, denigrated the respected personality of the Holy prophet (SAW) and called him an imposter' (Communique on the Kaduna Religious Crisis by the National Council of Muslim Youth Organisations in Nigeria, National Concord, 5 May 1987). Abubakar, a former Muslim who had become a leading member of the activist 'born again' Christian movement, had been interrupted by Aishatu Garba, a Muslim student who claimed to have heard Bako's misinterpretation of the Qur'an while reading in the nearby college library. While Aishatu Garba claimed that she merely questioned the veracity of Bako's assertions about the Qur'an, members of the Fellowship of Christian Students (FCS) present allege that she physically confronted the preacher and seized his microphone. A number of MSS members were mobilised to the scene and the affair ended in a fracas in which some students were wounded. The College authorities then intervened and settled the matter, at least for that moment. The following day, however, the MSS organised a protest march around Kafanchan town. Skirmishes occurred during the march and the mosque of the College of Further Education was burnt. Most Muslims in the area are settlers and a minority. They control political power, including 'traditional' titles, and much of the commerce of the area which is resented by the largely Christian population.

The second phase of the Kafanchan crisis occurred on Saturday 9 March when skirmishes and protests were transformed into a major conflagration. The indigenous Christian majority of the town descended heavily on their Muslim neighbours. The official casualty list as later released by the Donli Committee (see below) was twelve people and eight cows killed, one mosque burnt and four damaged, two churches and twenty-nine private houses damaged. By the close of that day it was clear that the Hausa-Fulani community of Kafanchan had had a rather thorough bashing. The reprisals came almost immediately. In swift action during the next 24 hours destruction spread through the towns of Katsina, Funtua, Zaria, Kankia, Daura and Kaduna. The total loss of lives and property compiled by the Donli Committee was nineteen people and eight animals killed, 169 hotels and beer parlours destroyed, 152 private buildings, 152 churches, five mosques and 95 vehicles damaged (New Nigerian 12 May 1987). There was also general harassment and molestation of Christians throughout Kaduna State which created a climate of fear and insecurity. Many people fled the State and economic as well as governmental activities came to a standstill for a week.

In towns such as Zaria virtually all the churches were completely destroyed and a number of Christians were forced to recite the Muslim 'Kalmar Shahada' or face death. In addition hotels and alcohol distribution points in some of these towns were burnt or destroyed. Suprisingly all hotels belonging to the Government were left untouched as if Islam makes distinction between private and public promotion of alcohol consumption. In Zaria, the town that suffered the most extensive destruction, Zaria Hotel, Zaria Motel, Kongo Conference Hotel and Samaru Staff Club and Sports and Social Club, all major government-owned alcohol distribution centres, survived. The only other survivors in Zaria were the Church and Officers Mess located in the Army barracks. The three other major centres of attack were
Funtua: 43 houses and 22 hotels; Kaduna: 34 houses and 5 hotels; Zaria: 40 houses and 35 hotels. In Funtua and Kaduna especially, the major target of attacks was, as in 1966, the Igbo community. In Funtua the Igbo quarters were destroyed and most of the Igbos were obliged to flee the town.

In his contribution to the Donli Committee the Charman of Funtua local government explained that about N20 million worth of property, mostly belonging to Igbos, had been destroyed. He made a special plea to the Kaduna State government 'to send a delegation to Anambra and Imo States to appeal to the indigenes from those states who fled at the peak of the disturbances to come back' (West Africa, 13 April 1987). This feature of the crisis, which has clear parallels with the 'Aware' movement of May and September 1966, cannot be unconnected to the controversy over the publication by General Obasanjo of a favourable personal portrait of Nzeogwu, the man who assassinated the Sardauna of Sokoto, Sir Ahmadu Bello, in the January 1966 coup. This aspect of the crisis will be discussed in the final section of the article.

The part of Zaria which suffered the most heavy attack was Wusasa. This village, just one kilometer outside of Zaria city, had been founded when Dr Walter Miller, an Anglican missionary, was allowed to start an evangelical campaign and establish a church in Zaria city in 1905, contrary to colonial policy of the time which kept Christian missionaries out of Muslim areas. After protests the church was moved to Wusasa village just outside the city. Wusasa, with its high concentration of Hausa/Fulani Christians, is therefore a sore point for many who would prefer to affirm a one-to-one correspondence between the Hausa/Fulani and Islam. Wusasa produced the first northern Head of State who was neither Hausa/Fulani nor Muslim, Dr Yakubu Gowon. Thus Wusasa suffered. There was systematic destruction of property, most of which belonged to Hausa-Fulani Christian adherents. This amounted to twenty-one houses, three churches, two hospitals, two schools, six business houses and four vehicles (West Africa, 13 April 1987).

In addition the tomb of the late father of Yakubu Gowon was desecrated along with some other graves. Certain Hausa-Fulani leaders of this Christian community were also personally sought, apparently for execution, and were lucky to escape in good time (Guardian, Lagos 14 April 1987).

It is clear that what happened was not a spontaneous religious uprising. There is evidence that a fairly complete census of churches and hotels had been compiled by the arsonists, that there were ample supplies of petrol and good logistics available and the fact that the spate of destruction continued unabated for 24 hours suggests premeditation and planning.

The Role of the Media

In explaining why the violence was able to spread so rapidly to most parts of Kaduna State the role played by the media in fuelling the crisis cannot be overemphasized. The New Nigeria newspapers and the Federal Radio Corporation (FRCN) of Kaduna, both noted for their pro-northern establishment and pro-orthodox Islamic views, played a major role. They emphasized an anti-Islamic reign of terror in Kafanchan and the necessity of defending Islam. The FRCN was reported to have broadcast regular bulletins between 9 and 11 March drawing attention to the massacre of Muslims in Kafanchan. Yet when the counter-attack on Christians occurred, the FRCN refused to report details. The pro-southern and
pro-Christian press did not help matters. The Guardian of 14 March, for example, wrote about the 'Mullahs of easy violence' whilst the Standard of 13 March and The Punch of 14 March based their reports on damages to the Christian communities while ignoring what the Muslims had suffered in Kafanchan.

The role of the media in exacerbating the religious divisions has been cumulative. In 1976-1977 the New Nigerian had led the campaign in the so-called 'Sharia Debate' in the Constituent Assembly. When in 1985 President Ibrahim Babangida called for a debate on the country's future political system the same paper again tried to redefine the debate in terms of the Sharia and the call for a work-free Friday (New Nigerian 16 December 1985). The National Concord has been championing, among others, the cause of Yakubu Musa, a former Christian who became a Muslim apparently after an alleged incident in Garkida, Gongola State, on 25 May 1985, in which an unsuccessful attempt was made by Christians to burn the Qur'an. Since then Yakubu Musa has been reported many times in National Concord to be on a campaign to propegate his new-found faith, often in a very provocative, anti-Christian manner. A final example worth noting is that just before the 1987 crisis, City Television Kano (CTV) aired thirteen episodes of a programme which discussed such questions as whether the Bible was the word of God, whether Jesus was the son of God and whether Jesus was crucified. The programme originated from South Africa. Even the diplomatic questions raised by its South African origin were of little consequence. A top official of CTV had a brief answer to that question: 'Islam transcends diplomacy' (Thisweek, 6 April 1987).

**Government Reaction**

An important element in the Kaduna events was the failure of the government to react during the heat of the crisis. Nigerian governments have been infamous for the ruthless manner in which they have dealt with the breakdown of law and order, or even just the threat of such a breakdown: for example, the Gowon's regime's 'land, air and sea operation' against demonstrating students of the University of Lagos, the organised massacre of unarmed students in Ahmadu Bello University under Obasanjo in 1978 and again under Babangida in 1986 and of peasants in Bakolori in 1980. When the Nigerian Labour Congress threatened to organise a national demonstration on 6 June 1986 to protest against the massacre at Zaria, the preventative measures taken by the government were phenomenal. The National State Council as well as the War Council with its army, navy and air force commanders met to organise the general mobilisation of the armed forces. Labour leaders were arrested, their secretariats sealed and a threat was issued that all demonstrators would be shot on sight. However in the Kaduna religious riots, despite systematic destruction of property and loss of life in at least six towns over a period of 24 hours, not a single policeman or soldier made an appearance on behalf of law and order.

Army Garrison Commander Major Wale Ademjumo told the Donli Committee that he had been instructed by his boss, Brigadier Peter Ademokhai to demand the handover from Assistant Inspector General of Police, Alhaji Mamman Nasarawa, but the police refused to hand over riot control when things got out of hand (West Africa, 27 April 1987). Professor K. Ologe claimed that the police were informed about the imminent arson before it started in Samaru village, near Zaria, and asked to give protection to the churches, yet the police did nothing. All the 28 churches in Samaru were burnt. The Anglican church, situated only 500 metres from the
Divisional Police Headquarters, was burnt at 1.30 p.m., sixteen hours after the arson attacks had begun (Bala Achi and ten others; memo by a group of concerned Netzig to the Donli Committee’, 13 April 1987). Having failed to intervene during the first 24 hours of the crisis, however, the government then moved into action. Army Commander Peter Ademokhai gave orders that arsonists and rioters be shot on sight. A strict dawn to dusk curfew was imposed from 10 to 16 March. Although the Donli Committee did not report it, there were persistent claims that many Muslims going to the Mosque for their early morning prayers during the curfew period were shot.

The President, General Babangida, still convalescing after an operation in Paris, addressed the nation and claimed inter-alia that:

In media commentaries on the riots, religious differences have been given as the ostensible reason for this unprecedented outbreak of violence in Kaduna State. However, police investigation has shown that while the fracas in Kafanchan might have been religious in origin, the wanton destruction of lives and property in Kaduna, Zaria, Funtua and other places in Kaduna State was carefully planned and masterminded by evil men with sinister motives who saw the incident in Kafanchan as an opportunity to subvert the Federal Military Government and the Nigerian Nation. What we are dealing with therefore is not just a religious crisis but rather the civilian equivalent of an attempted coup d'etat organised against the Military Government and the Nigerian nation (New Nigerian, 18 March 1987).

Behind the apparently religious crisis lie highly combustible political issues which seem to have compromised the government’s capacity to act. The two principal actors in the Kafanchan crisis, Abubakar Bako and Aishatu Garba, appear to be beyond the orbit of the security forces. Bako was said to have come back to A.B.U. for some days before disappearing into thin air. Throughout the sittings of the Donli Committee the Security Forces claimed they had been unable to locate him. Garba was in detention for some time and then released by the Magistrate, Yahaya Mahmoud, on the grounds that until offenders ‘are proved guilty under the appropriate law in our courts, they are entitled to walk about in our streets and tread on the Nigerian soil and breathe the Nigerian air as free and innocent men and women’ (New Nigerian, 28 April 1987). Meanwhile, the other 500 men and women in detention seem to have had less of this laudable right.

The Jama'atu Nasril Islam (JNI) secretary for Zaria, Alhaji Abubakar Nuhu, argued that the appointment of Donli, the Kaduna State Commissioner for Justice and Attorney General, was improper because:

1) Islam does not allow a woman to lead men on delicate issues like the disturbances in Kaduna State;
2) that the family house of the committee’s chairperson was damaged during the disturbances in Zaria;
3) that the father of the committee chairperson, Reverend Habila Aleyidino, is the Deputy National President of the Christian Association of Nigeria;
4) that the chairperson, being the State Commissioner for Justice and Attorney General, would head the panel and later sit to execute this committee’s report (New Nigerian, 8 April 1987).

Thus the ground was prepared for the rejection of the committee's findings if they turned out to be unfavourable to the JNI's cause. Even the town where the Karibi-Whyte tribunal was to sit became a political issue (Radio France International, 6 August 1987). Justice cannot but have a political character.
The Upsurge of Islamic Fundamentalism

Since the mid-1970s there has been an upsurge of Islamic fundamentalism in Nigeria. This upsurge is distinct from the Islamisation campaign launched from 1963 onwards during the first Republic by Ahmadu Bello. His objectives were more quantitative than qualitative — to increase the numbers of Muslims vis-a-vis Christians in northern Nigeria. It was clear that many of the ‘converted’ had crossed the carpet for political and economic gains and were not practising Muslims. The present movement is based upon a puritanical, ‘return-to-source’ approach aimed to save Islam from syncretist and thus un-Islamic practices. This return to source operates at two levels. First, it involves a frontal attack against remnants of traditional African religious practices still prevalent among Muslim communities. Secondly, it involves a struggle against mystical practices and the beliefs of sufi brotherhoods (Darika), mainly the Tijaniyya and Qudiriyya.

There have been struggles between and against the brotherhoods in northern Nigeria since the early 1960s. This fact disturbed Ahmadu Bello not so much because he was against Darika (after all his forbears who carried out the Sokoto Jihad of 1804 were themselves Qudiriyya) but because the conflicts tended to divide the Muslim bloc in the context of Nigerian politics. He formed the Jama'atu Nasril Islam in 1962 as a political and bureaucratic attempt to unite the Muslim community. The new struggle against the Darika, however, is a puritan theological move because they are seen as being involved in non-Islamic practices and has led to numerous clashes between the Darika and the Izala groups headed by Abubakar Gumi since the 1970s. The prelude to this struggle was the redefinition, in concert with the Saudi authorities, of Ahmadiyya Muslims as non-Muslims.

The new Islamic fundamentalism is intolerant towards non-Muslims. At the end of a seminar on ‘the role of the Ulama in the Sokoto Caliphate’ in Sokoto University in April 1986, for example, the communique released stated:

After reviewing the current situation in the country and the growing confrontation between Islam and Kufr, the seminar is confident that Islam will ultimately prevail in fulfilment of Allah’s word that “He...who has sent his Messenger with the guidance and the religion of truth, that he may proclaim it over all religions, however much idolators may detest it” (my emphasis).

A few weeks after the release of this communique supporters of a preacher, Abdulmalik Abdullahi, held up court proceedings when he was being tried for having called them to ‘rise and wage a religious jihad against non-Muslims in the country’ (National Concord, 3 July 1986).

The rise of this dimension of fanaticism and intolerance has manifested itself in a very dramatic manner over the past few years through the activities of the Maitatsine, Izala and MSS movements.

The Maitatsine: In December 1980 a self-proclaimed Muslim, Muhammadu Marwa, popularly known as Maitatsine, engaged first the Nigerian police and subsequently the Nigerian army in eleven days of pitched battles after peaceful methods of trying to uproot him and his followers from their base in Yan Awaki, Kano, had failed. At least 5000 people were reported to have been killed, including Maitatsine himself whose body was burnt to ashes in the hope of killing the movement by preventing a cult developing at his grave. Nevertheless, the Maitatsine movement refused to die. In Kaduna in 1982, in Yola in 1984 and in Gombe in 1985, followers of Maitatsine
staged repeat performances. Although Muslim scholars are agreed that the movement is un-Islamic, the followers believe themselves to be Muslim.

The Izala Movement: The Izala movement is a powerful and orthodox 'return to source' group that emerged under the leadership of Sheik Abubakar Mahmood Gumi during the 1970s. According to Gumi, 'If you say Mohammed is the last prophet then you cannot bring something new to Islam' (New Nigerian, 21 April 1986). This is why he considers the Maitatsine, Qudriyya and Tijanniyya to be non-Muslim, especially as their bid's (innovation) is not based on the Qur'an and Sunna. Over time Gumi has won a fairly large following in northern Nigeria. He holds court regularly in his house and in Sultan Bello Mosque in Kaduna as well as on the airwaves of the Federal Radio Corporation and Nigerian Television Kaduna. The Movement, which has buses and public address systems, organises regular campaigns in many towns and villages in the north and their recorded cassettes are sold throughout northern Nigeria. Gumi also has the support of a number of well placed intellectuals and administrators. The Izala Movement has a significant female membership as it holds regular classes for married women. In Zaria, it has been incorporated into the programme of the Centre for Adult Education and over one thousand married women are involved.

Gumi's fundamentalism has gradually become more and more intolerant. In a recent interview in Thisweek magazine (6 April 1987) he came out heavily against Christians:

You see the Christians are only fighting on the basis that they have seen that they are losing, because Christianity is not based on anything. I ask, “what is Christianity”? and even the Christian prophet doesn't know. All that he will say is that Christians are the followers of one who was crucified. You argue, you followed him while he was crucified and you allowed it. This means that if I became a Christian I would have nothing to do. Nothing, except on Sundays I go and sing either in Hausa or Yoruba in the church and look at good ladies.

Gumi has always been close to power. He has maintained very close relations with the Saudi authorities since the late 1950s when he was ambassador and the Sardauna's Arabic translator on voyages to the holyland. In 1962 he became the Grand Khadr of northern Nigeria. In March 1987 he got the $100,000 King Faisal International Award for Service to Islam. Like the Saudi's he is anti-Sufi, anti-Ahmadiyya and pro-business. He was known to have been a close supporter of the corrupt, Shagari-led regime during the Second Republic. Gumi's strong influence in the religious field has been enhanced by the fact that the Izala are taking control of an increasing number of mosques. He is also known to have very strong influence in the media, especially the all-powerful New Nigerian Newspapers and the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria, Kaduna. This is probably why some people think he might be working towards taking over power. Their ultimate objective would be to win over ordinary members of the brotherhoods by 'defaming their leaders' so that 'once in control of all Nigerian Muslims he (Gumi) will be able to command them with one voice as is the case with Iran's Ayatollah' (Clark and Linden, 1984: p.78).

This allusion to the Ayatollah should not be taken to imply ideological or theological parallels with the Iranian case. Gumi has come out clearly attacking the Iranian line:

Although Iran, Lebanon, Sudan claim to do it Islamically (sic) they are not doing it the right way...What is happening in Iran today is a product of unexperienced leadership and also
how to distribute money, or the wealth of the country, among the people. They call it religious revolution but in fact it isn’t. It is economic revolution (New Nigerian, 21 April 1986).

The Muslim Students Society (MSS): The MSS was founded in Lagos in 1954 as a mainly Yoruba grouping of Muslim students. It soon grew into a national organisation with branches to be found in most schools in the country. It had 400 branches by the 1970s. The MSS is an association concerned mainly with the organisation of prayers, fellowship and evangelising amongst student members. Very few grassroot members could be described as fanatics or extremists. However, since the mid-1970s a hardcore extremist leadership has arisen both in its national leadership structure and in the centres of Islamic radicalism in the Universities of Zaria, Kano and Sokoto.

The extremism of the MSS leadership in Zaria started over a very banal issue in the 1975-76 session. Dining hall cups that had been used in beer drinking parties were not properly washed before being reused and thus unsuspecting non-drinking Muslims found themselves ‘drinking’ traces of alcohol. From this issue the field of struggle expanded. The MSS began a campaign against student union funds, composed of compulsory fees paid by all students, being used for trading in alcohol in the student union bars and against the consumption of beer in student union parties. By the end of the 1970s the campaign had reached the stage of burning down all the student union bars on campus.

The politicisation of the MSS movement occurred in response to the debates over Sharia Law in the Constitutional Drafting Committee and Constituent Assembly between 1976 and 1977. The MSS took the position that:

We stand for total application of the Sharia, both as a legal system and a way of life. The Sharia is not reductible, nor can it be compartmentalised. Therefore, the Muslims would require nothing less than a total application of the Sharia and its full entrenchment in the constitution (Ibrahim Yacub, cited in Clarke and Linden, p.49).

From complaining about dirty cups to demanding an Islamic constitution the MSS has moved quite some distance.

The ‘Islamic Revolution’ of 1979 in Iran was an added impetus to the MSS mainly because it raised the possibility of 20th century jihad from the realms of theory to practice. The Iranians sponsored members of the MSS to travel to Iran for indoctrination and provided literature for propaganda against the Nigerian secular state. This radicalism of the MSS built around anti-secularism and a ‘war’ against the sale and consumption of alcoholic beverages led to a series of conflicts between them and student groups (such as the Palm Wine Drinkards), University authorities (for example, Ango Abdullahi, former A.B.U. Vice-Chancellor, expelled many militants) and state security forces (who have from time to time detained some of their militants such as Ibrahim El Zakzaky). Two months before the March 1987 crisis some members of the A.B.U. Zaria branch of the MSS had occupied the campus mosque. After their removal some of them were detained. They also organised a series of demonstrations on campus that often led to disruption of lectures. With tensions already high, the events of Kafanchan were an added impetus for action.

The important role played by universities in formenting religious fanaticism is not unique to Nigeria. In other African countries, such as Sudan and Tunisia, the universities are also centres for the activities of fanatics and fundamentalists. In
the University of Tunis, for example, they operate under the slogan that 'there is but God and Bourguiba is his enemy' (Le Nouvel Observateur, Paris, 7 May 1987). The leaders of the 'Mouvement de la Tendance Islamique' (MTI) are said to have a strong pro-Iranian network in Tunisia (Le Monde, Paris, 14/15 June 1987, p.4). In Algeria court proceedings were undertaken against 202 militants of the Mouvement Islamique Algerien, who are struggling against the Algerian state on the grounds of its 'atheism, corruption and socialism' (Liberation, Paris, 24 June 1987). The militants were accused of having organised armed robbery for money and arms to organise their jihad.

The Upsurge of Christian Fundamentalism: In Mathew 22:21 Jesus Christ was asked whether his claims to ultimate authority could cohabit with Caesar's claims to political power and control. He replied that his followers should 'render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things which are God's'. Unlike Islam, Christianity makes a clear theological distinction between the domain of religion and that of state power.* Thus, Christian fundamentalism and fanaticism do not normally extend to the limit of rejecting the post-colonial state, except as a bargaining position in response to demands for an Islamic state. There is, however, a political contention around the privileged position Christianity has enjoyed in Nigeria derived from the traditions of the colonial state. It is therefore worthwhile discussing the 'established church' before going into the character of Christian fundamentalism in Nigeria.

Christian proselytisation was one of the instruments used by the British to establish their control in Nigeria (at least outside the Emirates). Most Christian missionaries were close collaborators with colonial officials in a union between the Bible and the maxim gun. The result was that Christianity in Nigeria has enjoyed one of its fastest growth rates in the religion's 2000 year-old history. The colonial authorities reserved almost exclusively the provision of welfare facilities such as education and health care to the missions, especially in the non-Muslim parts of the country. In fact, even the Muslim Emirates were not totally exempt from this policy. Not surprisingly the percentage of Christians in Nigeria rose from 6.2% in 1931 to 34.6% in 1963.

The Christian community in Nigeria are divided into four broad categories: the 'orthodox church (Catholics and Protestants), the Spiritual (Aladura) church, the Ethiopian (nationalist) church and finally the 'born again' Christians.

Orthodoxy: Modern missionary enterprise in Nigeria started in the 1840s when a number of missions such as the Church Missionary Society, Methodist Church, the Baptists and the Roman Catholic Church established branches in the country. The term 'orthodox' is used here in its ordinary (rather than Christian) usage to indicate various branches of the Roman Catholic and Protestant Churches that established Nigerian 'subsidiaries' controlled by the metropolitan headquarters and characterised by an almost identical reproduction of metropolitan practices. It was a church that was soon to face many challenges from alternative Christian churches.

* Historically this distinction has not prevented the rise of Christian theocracies. Neither has the existence of a Muslim majority necessarily led to demands for an Islamic theocracy. In Senegal, for example, where 85% of the population are Muslim and almost entirely organised in Draika brotherhoods, there has been no fundamentalist questioning of the post-colonial state (see M.Fall, 1986a, p.64)
Ethiopianism: The term Ethiopianism is used to describe African nationalism expressed through the medium of the church. According to Ayandele (1966, p.175) 'the Christian missions who heralded British rule in Nigeria began the process of its termination, the church became the cradle of Nigerian nationalism'. In the motion that established the United Native African Church in 1891, for example, it was 'resolved that a purely native African church be founded for the evangelicanism and amelioration of our race to be governed by Africans' (Ilogu, 1975, p.512).

These Ethiopian churches, in their expression of political and cultural nationalism, played an important role in initiating the struggle for independence. By the same token, the achievement of independence in 1960 set off a process of gradual erosion. The Aladura Churches took over their popularity.

Aladura: The Aladura churches which are growing by leaps and bounds are based on indigenous liturgy that has been purged of European and American traits. It is a church of drumming and dancing, of dreams, trances and visions, of prophetic healings, divination and spiritual help. Its closeness to traditional African cultural practices, coupled with its capacity to proffer concrete material help in addition to spiritual comfort to its members, accounts for its great popularity today.

The 'Born Again': In Nigerian universities in the mid-1970s, a new fundamentalist Christian movement appeared. One of the first signs was the famous 'I've found it!' campaign. One morning residents in many university towns woke to find posters all over declaring 'I've found it' (the campaign was well timed as it was the period when 2.8 billion naira was rumoured to have been 'lost' in an oil deal and many were excited at the possibility that maybe some smart group had found the missing money). A week later the missing link was added: 'new life in Jesus Christ' proclaimed a new set of posters. This major campaign, copied from the religious wave then emerging in the United States, was clearly visible.

Its main target was the corrupt Nigerian church which was said to be based upon hierarchical power, materialism and pagan practices rather than the Bible. It campaigned for a return to source, the Bible, and called on Christians to be born again into the new, real christianity. In this sense it is an anti-establishment movement. It organises non-denominational prayer meetings aimed at going beyond the limitations of the established churches. Not surprisingly, the Scripture Union and the Student Christian Movement which spearheaded this fundamentalist approach were harassed by some of the established churches (the Scripture Union (SU) of the University of Ife learnt from the radical 'guerilla theatre' school of the same university the techniques of discrediting 'bankrupt capitalism' in favour of socialism, turned it upside down and used it to produce sketches against 'ungodly marxism').

The 'Born Again' movement is the major force behind radical Christian evangelism in Nigeria, particularly as it maintains close ties with other fundamentalist groups all over the world. In 1985, for example, it organised an evangelical congress at the gymnasium of Ahmadu Bello University where satellite discs were set up to link the congress with similar events taking place on two other continents. The movement has a national network and a regular circuit of missions of which 'Kafanchan '87' was but one episode. What characterises the movement is its high level of activism, its intolerance towards other Christians as well as non-Christians and its willingness to struggle.
The Church and the Civil War: The civil war was an important turning point for the church. The Euro-American church and, in particular the Catholic church, were highly sympathetic to Biafran propaganda claiming that this was a war between Christian Biafra and Muslim Nigeria. In relief supply operations to the rebels these churches persistently violated Nigeria's sovereignty and accorded a certain legitimacy to the rebellion (Wiseberg, p.324). In addition, there were reports that some of the church agencies were implicated in arms shipments to the rebels. Okion Ojigbo, for example, reports 'the disappointment of a Roman Catholic priest who ran the shipment of relief supplies for CARITAS when he found that a plane bound for the refugee camps was carrying nothing but ten tons of guns and ammunition (Ojigbo, 1981:p, 133). With the split between the 'Biafran' and 'Nigerian' churches, state governments found it easy to take over clinics, schools and hospitals belonging to predominantly Igbo churches in the country. After the war the takover of church schools and clinics continued in most states of the Federation and an alarmed Bishop Segun complained that 'all this takeover tends to one goal, secularisation of education, which will not do this country any good' (Erivwo, 1985, p.383). While accepting a secular state, Christian clergy were unwilling to accept secular education. In Lagos Archbishop Okogie waged a protracted battle in the media and law courts against the decision of the Lagos State government to take over mission schools. Following the implementation of the Universal Primary Education (UPE) programme in 1976, the various churches were convened at Dodan Barracks to 'seal' the government takeover of most mission schools in the country. As the churches had no all-embracing coordinating body they found themselves unable to resist the government and so from Dodan Barracks they moved directly to the Catholic Secretariat and formed the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN). This was necessary because although the Christian Council of Nigeria (CCN) had been established as long ago as 1929, it was an ecumenical body of Protestant churches and thus excluded Catholic and African churches.

CAN represents Christian unity not in a theological or even ecumenical sense but in a clear political sense: to defend the place Christianity occupies in Nigerian society. That is why CAN has systematically responded to and challenged the JNI and other Muslim organisations.

The Political Parameters of the Crisis
The intimate linkage between religion and politics in the 1987 disturbances in Kaduna State can be discerned from the summary of issues submitted to the Donli Committee. They included (1) Nigeria's membership of the Islamic Conference; (2) the secularity of the nation; (3) Sharia; (4) dismemberment of the nation; (5) religious education; (6) breaking up Kaduna State; (7) religious militancy; (8) the role of the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria, Kaduna; (9) the role of traditional rulers; (10) the role of the police; (11) recruitment into the police and army; (12) the location of places of worship; (13) the location of 'hotels'; (14) the second tier foreign exchange market; (15) the structural adjustment programme of the IMF (Guardian, Lagos, 18 May 1987).

Secularism, religion and politics: Section 10 of the Nigerian Constitution states that 'the Government of the Federation or of a state shall not adopt any religion as a state religion'. But what does this provision mean? Could it be taken to mean a secular republic? President Babangida has criticised what he called the negative
interpretation of the secular principles in our constitution, saying that ‘this approach to the issue has unnecessarily placed the state in a position of either neglecting religion outright as a factor in our national life or treating it with benign neglect’ (New Nigerian, 24 January 1986), thus placing limits as to how far the concept secular may be stretched. For Muslim fundamentalists the issue is clear: a secular state is unacceptable to Islam. Some of them see it as a sort of Christian plot. According to Ibrahim Suleiman:

Historically and in practice, secularisation is a development peculiar to Christian civilisation. It is a child, albeit a bastard, of Christianity...Secularism has become a sinister but convenient mechanism to blackmail Muslims and impede the progress of Islam and reduce it to the level of earthly concepts and ideologies (Sunday Triumph, 24 April 1986).

They also find the argument that secularism is a reasonable compromise for a multi-religious society untenable. In their memo on the political debate the MSS argued that:

The Muslims in this country though they constitute the majority have compromised enough...Islamic political system is therefore our irreducible minimum charter for the future political arrangement. The argument that Nigeria is heterogeneous is undeniable. But it is also true that Muslims have no choice but to abide by the Holy Koran and Sunnah (MSS, “Let’s try Sokoto Caliphate System”, New Nigerian, 26 April 1986).

During his acceptance speech for the King Faisal Award, Gumi declared that ‘in Nigeria where I come from, out of 100 million, 70% or 70 million people, of the population are Muslim’ (New Nigerian, 20 March 1983). The politics of numbers implicit in this unfounded assertion will be discussed below.

The leaders of the Christian community in Nigeria have usually responded to these demands by asserting the necessity of maintaining a secular state although when the campaign for the implementation of the Sharia heated up, a half-hearted campaign for the establishment of Canon Law was started. In Sudan, which is probably the only country in the world with Canon Law courts, the system was established as part of the strategy to establish Sharia law. Neither Sharia nor Canon law has solved the problems posed in Sudan. It is clear that the attack on secularism is a major threat to the foundations of the Nigerian State.

The Arithmetic of Power: The 1952 Nigerian census established a 54/46 population ratio between the northern and southern regions. This ratio was established shortly after the Macpherson constitution of 1951 had further elaborated the regionalist provisions introduced in the Richards constitution of 1946. With regionalism becoming entrenched in the body politic of the country, this population ratio was bound to develop political implications. The initial formula of equal representation for the three regions in the Central Legislature meant that the north would remain a perpetual minority which led to its very strong demands for 50% representation in the legislature. Federalism was fully entrenched with the Lyttleton constitution of 1954 and so was the principle that population should be the basis for representation. With one representative for every 100,000 persons, the 54/46 ration became a perpetual ratio of political power in favour of the north. However, this power would remain perpetual only insofar as the territorial integrity of the regions was not tampered with. This was the reason why the Northern Peoples Congress (NPC) and the British were vehemently opposed to the creation of more regions or states. The structural solution of creating Calabar, Ogoja Rivers (COR) region
out of the east, midwest out of the west and middle belt out of the north, which might have changed the course of Nigerian history, was lost.

The northern oligarchy, as it came to be known, which arose in the north at that point in time was a group destined to play a major role in Nigerian history because of what Whittaker has described as its capacity to modernise tradition and traditionalise modernity. In fact when they formed the NPC in 1951, the purpose was not to get power but to consolidate it. Most of them had been members of the Regional House Assembly since 1946 and they formed the NPC after the Macpherson elections of 1951. The slogan they chose for the NPC, 'One North, One People', was aimed at consolidating this power vis-a-vis their opponents in the north such as the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU) and United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC) as well as those competing against them for federal power, the Action Group (AG) and the NCNC. The greatest danger for the NPC was in the north itself. The north was not composed of 'One People' in the ethnic, religious, cultural or education sense. In addition even the majority, the culturally unified Hausa/Fulani were bitterly politically divided in the struggle between the NPC and NEPU.

One method of trying to create the non-existent 'One North' was to Islamicise its Christian and animist population. This was the line pursued by Ahmadu Bello when he started his conversion campaign among the Gbagii (Gwari) population of Niger province in 1963. The campaign which started from predominantly Muslim parts of Niger, Kano, Katsina and Sokoto provinces soon moved into the predominantly Christian areas of the middle belt. To understand the political necessity of these campaigns, Doi's analyses of what he calls 'the startling historical case of the rise of Christianity in a Muslim majority country' is quite instructive. Using census figures he shows in graphic manner the faster growth of Christianity relative to Islam in Nigeria in the contest for the allegiance of pagans.

**Religious Allegiance in Nigeria Showing Conversion of Pagans to Christianity and Islam**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Muslims</th>
<th>Christians</th>
<th>Pagans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>43.8%</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>45.0%</td>
<td>21.0%</td>
<td>34.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>47.2%</td>
<td>34.6%</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: A.I. Doi, 1984, p.80.*

If the tide shown by the 1963 census was not reversed the claims of the NPC to a unified Muslim majority north would be difficult to sustain. It was for this reason that Ahmadu Bello began his Islamicisation campaign. The political problem created by the rapid disappearance of formal allegiance to African traditional religions had to be resolved in his favour. The question of which group has benefited most from the conversion of the remaining pagan population since 1963 is still unanswered.

The creation of 12 states in 1967, 19 states in 1976 and finally 21 in 1987 was a major structural blow to the regional basis of Nigerian politics. The configuration of the states is bound to lead to the decline of regionalism. The problem is, however, that the ruling classes whose power and wealth had been based on exploiting regionalist politics are unlikely to give up the practice of organising politics along regional lines. In fact, in response to two stimuli, the 1987 religious crisis and the promise of a return to democratic rule in 1992, the Northern
Oligarchy has already formed an 'Elders Group' for the north (National Concord, 25 May 1987). The political arithmetic established in the 1950s remains valid. If the 6/6 north/south ratio of states was changed to 10/9 in 1978 and 11/10 in 1987, the 54/46 ratio must still be dear to the hearts of many of those people in positions of power.

This background is essential to enable us to understand recent political moves that played a central role in precipitating the 1987 disturbances in Kaduna State in conjunction with the rise of religious fanaticism. The political moves relate to the promotion of a good image of a unified and progressive north associated with the heritage of Ahmadu Bello and the attempts to expose and wreck that image and heritage conducted by political opponents.

The Battle for Political Heritage: Gamji versus Nzeogwu: On 15 January 1966 the Premier of northern Nigeria, Ahmadu Bello, the Prime Minister Tafawa Belewa and several other political and military leaders were assassinated in a coup attempt. D.J.M. Muffet poignantly articulated this tragedy for the northern ruling class. The tragedy was not so much that of the individuals killed, as much as that is always painful, but the threat posed to the whole ruling class. For as a former key northern bureaucrat complained, the problem posed by the 'Five Majors' who plotted the coup d'état was their conception that 'Nigeria had a formidable enemy in the forces of feudalism, retrogression and oppression exemplified by the northern oligarchy' (Mainasara, 1982, p.18). Mainasara argues that since that attempt to destroy the northern oligarchy the campaign has continued with the publication of Ademoyega's book, Why We Struck and Gbulie's Nigeria's Five Majors in which murdered northern leaders were maligned. This was followed by the formation of the People's Progressive Alliance which brings together veterans and giants of Nigerian politics who were 'founding members of the banned UPGA of the 1960s whose pathological hatred for anything northern was too well known to require any further elaboration' (p.62).

This is the political context which led to the creation and propagation of the concept 'Gamji' by the northern oligarchy as a rallying point to use in protecting their class interests. Gamji, a red canel tree (ficus platyphyla), was chosen as the new mobilising concept after the Sardauna's death because it is the largest shade tree in the Sahel and is thus a symbol of the necessity for pan-northern protection. It first emerged in posthumous praise singing by Hausa poets edifying the image of Ahmadu Bello (e.g. Maman Sheta's song reproduced in Paden, 1986, p.783). Its significance is that the ideas that Ahmadu Bello stood for will continue to flourish and cannot be killed. Gamji took a clearer political dimension on 26 May 1984 (in the wake of the collapse of Shagari's NPN regime) when the Gamji Memorial Club was launched at the Samaru campus of Ahmadu Bello University. Although this event took a non-political form because of the Buhari regime's ban on speeches by politicians, a number of 'intellectual representatives' of the northern ruling class participated, such as Justice Mamman Nasir, Justice Bashir Sambo and Professor Abubakar Aliyu (New Nigerian, 28 May 1984). The theme of the launching was to defend the idea of the north as a family unit created by Ahmadu Bello and donations of 13,000 naira (an enormous sum for a student group) were raised for propaganda. The Gamji Memorial Club did not remain a student club. Subsequently it established cells and branches in many parts of northern Nigeria.

On Sunday 8 March 1987, the day the Kafanchan riots actually started, the influential pro-northern ruling class paper, Sunday New Nigerian, carried a front
page banner headline about the public burning of General Obasanjo's book, *Nzeogwu*, organised by the Gamji memorial club at ABU in Zaria. The President of the club, Usman Abba, argued that the burning was necessary because the book contained an 'hypocritical and grossly naive analysis' of the events that led to the January 1966 coup. *Nzeogwu*, he said, was in bad taste, adding that the late Major Nzeogwu assaulted the late Sardauna of Sokoto because of the latter's faith in the capacity of his people. He claimed that Major Nzeogwu had regarded northerners as backward and 'unreceptive to modern ideas' whose primitive ways could only be changed by eliminating their leaders. Usman Abba also objected to the fact that General Obasanjo and Colonel Madaki had said that they would have joined the plot to assassinate Ahmadu Bello had they been in the know.* The *Sunday New Nigerian* of the fateful 8 March announced therefore that Gamji Memorial Club had set the book *Nzeogwu* ablaze, as well as an effigy of the subject, to 'kill the spirit behind it' to the cheers of 6000 supporters.

As with the *New Nigerian*, the Kano based *Sunday Triumph* carried two emotionally charged front page stories on 8 March, the day of the riots. The first was a call from the Chief Imam of Murtala Mosque in Kano, Mallam Isa Waziri, for 'Moslems throughout the country to boycott all products from General Obasanjo's companies (because of his) new book, *Nzeogwu*...' Prayers were later offered in the mosque for the reversal of what the Imam called the 'evil intentions of Obasanjo'. The second story was about the marginalisation of the Hausa/Fulani and Kanuri Muslim minority communities in Plateau State (a state ethnically and religiously similar to southern Zaria where Kafanchan is situated). It is doubtful that all this emotionally explosive propaganda could have converged on the front pages of two leading northern newspapers on the same day by coincidence.

In addition, the March edition of the conservative magazine *Hotline*, owned and operated by direct representatives of the northern oligarchy, came out on the theme of Obasanjo; 'opportunism, treason and hypocrisy'. It argued that his book was based on the tradition of political propaganda and action aimed at removing northerners from power which started with the 1964 General Strike, the formation of UPGA and the January 1966 coup and continued with the formation of 'Club 14', the Nigerian Peoples Party, the Progressive Peoples Party and the books by Ademoyega, Gbulie, Madiebo and now Obasanjo.

Northern groups opposed to the idea of 'One North' have not been sitting idle. They too are mobilising for the 1992 combat. One aspect of this is the rehabilitation of former Head of State, Dr.Yakubu Gowon, who is a potential rallying point. Professor Elaigwu has just published a book about him which is described as an attempt to dispel the notion that the Gowon regime was 'nine years of failure'. J.Clarke has published another book also described as 'hero worshipping and one dimensional' (*West Africa*, 9 February 1987). In addition there is the campaign to restore Dr Gowon's former rank as General of the Nigerian Army. He has been

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* The case of Colonel Madaki is very significant in this regard. As Governor of Gongola State he did two things the 'northern oligarchy' took very strong objections to. First he removed and deported Alhaji Umaru Tukar, the Emir of Muri, for misappropriating 2,000,000 naira compensation money meant for peasants in his domain. Secondly, he declared in a controversial interview that he would have joined the Nzeogwu coup had he had the opportunity to do so. For this he not only lost his post, but also his job in the army in 1986 (see *The Analyst* of August-September 1986).
appointed Visiting Professor at the University of Jos and 'his people' of Plateau State (a state he doesn't even know!) are building a house fit for their illustrious son. Thus there appear to be enough indications that the fears of the northern oligarchy that northern minorities are planning seriously for 1992 are justified.

It should be recalled that for the northern oligarchy the loss by their party, the National Party of Nigeria (NPN), of five out of the ten states in the north in the 1979 elections was a major tragedy. The loss of Kano and Kaduna States, the heartland of the Hausa/Fulani empire, was particularly painful. Their attempt to re-establish political hegemony through police brutality and electoral fraud in 1983 met with popular resistance and precipitated a political crisis. The military intervention at the end of 1983 was one result of this crisis. Finally it should be stated again that there is no one-to-one correspondence between Islam and the north. The northern oligarchy believe that Islam is a useful ideology for maintaining ruling class power in Nigeria. They had hoped in the 1970s, when they spearheaded the Sharia debate, that the Muslim Umma would unite under an NPN government. That hope was dashed. Undaunted they still believe they can unify the north under their leadership and thus maintain political power.

Conclusion

The March 1987 disturbances in Kaduna State are manifestations of a relatively new but serious malaise in Nigerian politics. The religious idiom is rapidly becoming politicised in a confrontation in which the state is the Nigerian State itself. There are two aspects to the problem.

The first aspect relates to a significant rise in religious fundamentalism in the country. The Islamic revival involves a concerted struggle against syncretic practices as well as against the innovations of the Darika brotherhoods. The Christian revival involves a movement away from the materialist ways of the established churches and an attempt to reconstruct a new 'born again' church. There is thus a puritanical tendency emerging in religious practice in the country which has created new political actors. The new actors are producing mutually exclusive political-cum-religious idioms in their activities. Muslim actors have created a linkage between the Nigerian secular state and Christianity and thus reject the state as it is while demanding the establishment of an Islamic state. Christian actors for their part have created a linkage between the erosion of secularism and Muslim domination and therefore demand the preservation of the secular state. These images produced by religious fundamentalists would have remained marginal but for the fact that they are being incorporated in the wider political games of fractions of the Nigerian bourgeoisie. This constitutes the second aspect of the problem.

The northern fraction of the bourgeoisie, popularly known as the northern oligarchy, has had its bases threatened by the creation of states out of the former large regions which had virtually guaranteed its monopoly of power. It has, therefore, since the Sharia debate of 1978, increasingly come to use religion as a tool to forge a new hegemonic coalition. At the same time other fractions of the bourgeoisie have tried to mobilise the 'other half' of society and it is in this context that Gamji and Nzeogwu have arisen as major political images for mass mobilisation. As political power is of such importance in the Nigerian political economy political actors, in their desperate struggle for power, become
increasingly drawn into the logic of the politics of brinkmanship so dear to the hearts of fanatics.

Editors Note
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Bibliographic Note


Debates: Questions about Democracy

We are pleased to feature four articles which raise serious questions about problems of building a democratic future for Africa. The four papers do not offer either a single perspective or a range of alternatives on such a future; nor would we wish them to have done so. Instead they are intended to highlight particular, crucial issues which need to be addressed and confronted. Earlier versions of three of the papers, those by Beckman, Boyd and Fine, were presented to the 1989 ROAPE Conference, Taking Democracy Seriously: Socialists and Democracy in Africa (University of Warwick, 22-24 September 1989). The fourth, by Sachikonye, was written for this issue. The papers by Beckman and Fine address general, systemic issues about how democracy is perceived and defined. The other two consider specific problems of central importance in the present conjuncture: the empowerment of women, the question of the one-party state, and the need to build institutions which ensure the participation of the powerless and the accountability of the powerful.

Beckman considers both the weaknesses of liberal democracy and its present relevance for popular democratic struggles. Increasingly, forces on the left in Africa have sought to defend 'bourgeois' liberties and liberal platforms (not least against the bourgeoisie itself) in order to secure the survival of popular democratic organisations and to expand the 'democratic space' available. Fine trenchantly criticises the tendency of many socialists in South Africa to accept nationalism as a given and to shape their political discourse according to its terrain. The tendency to see nationalism as the 'natural' form of opposition to apartheid overlooks the lack of coherence of much nationalist ideology, its historically recent origin and its political (rather than 'natural') construction. His argument is made all the more timely by events unfolding as apartheid crumbles. Given the record of nationalism in postcolonial Africa, his remarks also have a resonance beyond the borders of South Africa.

Boyd's important paper assesses current efforts in Uganda to empower women, an issue too seldom placed on the agenda of democratic struggles and without which 'democracy' is unlikely to represent more than pious talk. She evaluates the efforts being made, in the process of Uganda's reconstruction under the NRM, to challenge traditional power relations and gender attitudes and develop new organisational structures which seek to address the concerns of women. Sachikonye surveys the arguments about the creation of a single party state presently being debated in Zimbabwe; the opposition which government plans have excited raises key questions about the construction of the state. The debate in Zimbabwe has been broadened to include other issues relating to equality and
accountability, including problems of corruption and efforts to introduce leadership and investment codes. Again, these are issues central to the struggles of the whole continent.

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**Whose Democracy? Bourgeois versus Popular Democracy**
Björn Beckman

Authoritarianism, militarism and repression dominate the African political scene. What are the prospects and frontiers of democratic advance? Is liberal democracy a viable option under African conditions? Radical sceptics are joined by liberals who agree that it is not: Africa cannot have liberal or 'bourgeois' democracy so long as there is no proper bourgeoisie. In any case, is democracy really a priority? This essay reviews the critique developed by African radical democrats and the support it has drawn from liberal and dependency analysis. What is the radical democratic option? The primary concern is how to capture state power; the breaking of the hold of ruling classes over the lives of the oppressed. Liberal democracy has not been given much place in such strategies and processes. This, however, is changing. Increasingly forces of the left have come to accept liberal democratic platforms and alliances as means of securing the survival of popular democratic organisations and to expand the 'democratic space'. Ultimately, it is a question of constructing the popular bases from which state power can be contested.

**A Nigerian Point of Departure**
The immediate context of this review of arguments for or against liberal democracy is the current debate within the Nigerian left on the process of transition to civilian rule, the Third Republic. The first collapsed in 1965, less than five years after independence, when Nigeria entered into a period of turmoil and civil war. After almost fifteen years of military rule the Second Republic was launched in 1979. It survived only four years before groups within the military again seized power in late 1983. After some infighting within the military, a new schedule for the return to civilian rule in 1992 was presented. An elaborate process of constitution-making was initiated, including a nation-wide 'political debate', and a new constitution was promulgated. The military government dictated that there should be a 'two-party system' and reserved for itself the right to choose the two parties to be so recognised.

How have radical democrats viewed the transition? In the early stage of the 'political debate', some insisted on a 'truly democratic system' where popular and mass organisations (labour unions, peasant associations, youth and student organisations, professional bodies, the unemployed) should represent themselves directly in decision making bodies and assemblies (ASUU 1986).

This method, it was argued, would eliminate 'professional politicians who practice politics as profit making business'. Others wrote off the possibility of any meaningful political transition under the auspices of the present neo-colonial state and looked for allies among the radical factions within the military itself (on such 'military vanguardism', see Beckman in *ROAPE* 1986).
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How have radical democrats viewed the transition? In the early stage of the 'political debate', some insisted on a 'truly democratic system' where popular and mass organisations (labour unions, peasant associations, youth and student organisations, professional bodies, the unemployed) should represent themselves directly in decision making bodies and assemblies (ASUU 1986).

This method, it was argued, would eliminate 'professional politicians who practice politics as profit making business'. Others wrote off the possibility of any meaningful political transition under the auspices of the present neo-colonial state and looked for allies among the radical factions within the military itself (on such 'military vanguardism', see Beckman in ROAPE 1986).
Jibrin Ibrahim (1987) noted that many of the left wing protagonists argued that Nigeria should either have

a popular one party socialist system, some form of corporate system based on representation of popular organisations or at the very least a two party system with a conservative capitalist party face to face with a socialist revolutionary party. This situation they argued would simplify and bring to the fore the ideological struggle and thereby hasten the transition to socialism.

The Nigerian labour movement was divided over how to relate to the new round of electoral politics. Some maintained that workers should join individually whatever party they thought would best look after their interests. Others argued for the formation of a Labour Party. Such a prospective party was launched in 1989 under the auspices of the leadership of the Nigerian Labour Congress (Olukoshi 1989). As the military government pressed ahead with its plans to impose a two-party system and pick 'the most representative' parties of its own choice, debates within the left further intensified. Was the electoral process meaningful at all? What sacrifices in terms of promising the state to be of 'good behaviour' were defensible in order to be permitted to remain in the electoral game? Some sections of the left opted for more or less individual strategies inside other parties that seemed to have a better chance of state acceptance. Others decided to stand back in disgust over such 'opportunism'. The debate on 'entryism', that is, whether the left should join or stay out of populist and 'petty-bourgeois' political parties, that had divided the left during the Second Republic, flared up again (Bako 1986).

The Nigerian left debate has been marked by ad hoc responses to the manipulation of the political process by the state. The positions taken by various left groupings, however, are also informed by conflicting views of parliamentary politics and 'bourgeois democracy'.

Liberal, Bourgeois and Popular Democracy

In a recent four volume study on Democracy in Developing Countries, the editors offer an 'authoritative' definition of democracy. For them it denotes a system of government that meets three conditions:

meaningful and extensive competition among individuals and organized groups (especially political parties) for all effective positions of government power, at regular intervals and excluding the use of force; a highly inclusive level of political participation in the selection of leaders and policies, at least through regular and fair elections, such that no major (adult) social group is excluded; and a level of civil and political liberties — freedom of expression, freedom of the press, freedom to form and join organizations - sufficient to ensure the integrity of political competition and participation (Diamond, Linz, and Lipset 1988:xvi).

I take this as a formulation of the ideal of liberal democracy. If used for the purpose of characterising the system of government in most actual democracies, such a 'definition' is of course highly problematic. What is 'meaningful and extensive'? What are 'all effective' positions of power? What is 'fair' and 'inclusive'? In the context of the sharply divided class societies, such attributes need to be discussed in relation to actual social agents: meaningful to whom? fair to whom? whose freedom? whose democracy?
The gap between liberal democratic theory and democratic practices is staggering. A distinction is often made within left arguments between liberal and bourgeois democracy, where the former represents the ideal and the latter stands for the realities of 'democracy' in societies dominated by the bourgeoisie. A bourgeois dominated polity may be more or less informed by the ideals of liberal democracy. The level of bourgeois political domination also varies with the strength of the popular democratic forces. In that sense, the notion of bourgeois democracy stands for a political system where the scope for effective popular participation and control over effective positions of government is very restricted. Accordingly, the notion of popular democracy suggests a system with a wide scope in this respect. I speak of radical democrats as those who want democracy of this latter type.

I use liberal democracy to refer to the system of institutions, procedures and formal rights (parties, elections, rights of association and expression) associated most commonly with the constitutional history of advanced capitalist countries. Many on the left would insist with Shadrack Gutto that there is nothing bourgeois or liberal about free elections and therefore think we should speak of democracy, pure and simple, without further qualification. Nevertheless, as long as a significant portion of the left, in Africa and elsewhere, think of the problems of democracy primarily in terms popular power and participation within ruling socialist or socialist-oriented one-party structures, the epithet 'liberal' may still be needed to distinguish the 'competitive', multi-party variety.

The Radical Critique of Liberal Democracy
Radical democrats in Africa have strong reasons for being unenthusiastic about liberal democracy. Referring to the Uganda case, Mamdani (1987:93) notes that 'all organised parties to the public discussion were agreed regarding the essence of democracy as a multiparty system with free and fair elections'. But such a narrow conception of political rights, while important in themselves, could have a meaning only to a minority in society.

Not only does it leave out of consideration the largest section of society, the bulk of its producers of wealth, the peasantry; the resulting political competition is also limited to an arena defined by the demands of the bourgeoisie (Mamdani 1987:93).

The most common view on the left is certainly that representative democratic institutions which are capable of catering for broad popular needs and aspirations are unlikely to emerge, at least in the foreseeable future. It is more likely that systems of representation will continue to serve narrow ruling class and bourgeois interests. Whatever little 'liberal democracy' is formally in sight is bound to be highly illiberal as well as bourgeois in class terms. Even where elections are not blatantly rigged, the outcome rarely qualifies as a meaningful expressions of the 'will of the people'.

Democracy, viewed as 'free and fair elections in strictly bourgeois terms' is not the answer, according to Anyang' Nyong'o, a Kenyan scholar. Taking Nigeria as an example, he suggests that at no time has the bourgeoisie 'thought it necessary to give more content to the democratic process and involve the popular masses in politics from below (1988a:78).

It is therefore not surprising that many radical democrats fail to take liberal democracy seriously as an avenue for advancing popular democratic power.
Moreover, the sheer inefficiency of current ruling class arrangements makes the parliamentary option extremely unattractive. Bourgeois class rule seems to have little to offer in the way of national development. No 'bourgeois revolution' is in sight. So why cooperate in an electoral game that confers constitutional legitimacy on a state that is likely to remain not only glaringly unrepresentative but also highly unproductive?

Radical democrats, it is argued, should not shed tears over the failure of 'bourgeois' democracy. Does the failure not merely reinforce the case for popular democracy and for the need to smash the neo-colonial state? In much of Africa, there is not even a pretence of seeking electoral legitimation for neo-colonial class rule. Even where elections are held, the veil cannot conceal the naked face of oppression. Does not the bankruptcy of liberal democracy in Africa reflect the bankruptcy of the neo-colonial political order itself?

The Poor Prospects of Liberal Democracy
Can radical democrats in Africa be expected to take liberal democracy seriously when liberals write it off? While third world democracy, according to Sandbrook (1988:240), is again 'in vogue', as attested by an avalanche of writings and the renewed interest shown by 'the large foundations', the prospects for African democracy continue to be dim. Most African countries, says Huntington (1984), 'are, by reason of their poverty or the violence of their politics, unlikely to move into a democratic direction'. Others have emphasised how colonial practices and the process of decolonisation favoured one-party or no-party states. 'To have expected democracy to flourish would have been historical blindness', notes Chabal (1986:5). 'It is not only that hopes for democracy seem to have faded completely,' he says 'The very basis of effective government seems scarcely to obtain in Africa today' (ibid, p.2).

One is tempted, says Sandbrook, to advocate democracy as a way out of the present crisis:

Realistically, though, our analysis does not suggest that democracy has any real prospect in the limiting conditions of contemporary Africa (Sandbrook 1985:157).

The best feasible alternative is therefore, in his view, 'decent, responsive and largely even-handed personal rule'. The real choice is between Houphouet-Boigny and Idi Amin. Neo-patrimonial authoritarianism, not democracy, is the order of the day. Ulf Himmelstrand, a former President of the International Sociological Association, scolds Kenyan exiles and in particular their gullible Swedish supporters, for not realising that by African standards the Kenyan regime represents a bright spot and that the 'tutelary political leadership' and 'moral exhortation' of the Moi type 'would seem to be absolutely necessary' to break the impasse of corruption that confronts the African state (Himmelstrand 1988, 1989).

While the predominant tendency in Western Africanist circles has been to dismiss liberal democracy, some scholars see some marginal openings, pointing in particular to the experience of the handful of countries that are considered to have a significant democratic record. Sandbrook has of late revised his position in this direction. While liberal democracy seems unlikely at first glance (compare above!),
representative democracies, or proto-democracies, have survived for more than a decade in such countries as Gambia, Senegal, Botswana and Mauritius whose objective conditions seem no more facilitative of democratization than those in many neighbouring authoritarian regimes (Sandbrook 1989:35. See also Sandbrook 1988)

The economic records of Botswana and Mauritius are among the best in sub-Saharan Africa while Gambia and Senegal are not among the worst performers. This suggests, according to Sandbrook (1989:36), that liberal democracy is at least not incompatible with successful development and that it can 'not be dismissed' as a way of breaking the pattern of political and economic decay, at least in the long term.

How convincing is such evidence of the viability of liberal democracy? Not very and, as we see, Sandbrook does not make any great claims. Most of the cases mentioned have small populations, strong one-party dominance, and other authoritarian and repressive features. These tattered liberal 'success stories' are more likely to confirm those left views that suggest that liberal democracy in the African context is not a serious option.

**Democracy or Economic Development**

How important is democracy, anyway? For many of the early African advocates of one-party or no-party rule, the national development project was too urgent and too sensitive to be exposed to the divisiveness of competitive party politics, a view which gained some support from scholars in the West. Economic development, it was argued, must come first and was likely to require authoritarian government. Some scholars, like Huntington (1968), were more brutally 'realistic' than others, but 'liberals' generally were quite ready to subordinate the case for liberal democracy to other developmental imperatives: order, stability, efficiency, growth, etc. The primacy of 'development', is reflected also in the way in which those who favour liberal democracy often feel obliged to support their case with reference to economic performance.

Such subordination of democracy to development is also reflected in various attempts to theorise forms of democracy that are more 'appropriate' to African conditions or adapted to the particular 'needs' of development and stability. The advocates of one-party systems have created a vast body of such theories. We have been told, for instance, why the Kenyan system of queuing-up behind candidates in the open rather than having secret ballots is more appropriate and African.

The adaptations have met with understanding from Western scholars concerned with development. A former president of the American African Studies Association, Richard Sklar (1983) advocated in his presidential address a 'developmental democracy', a synthesis of African experiences, including Kenya's 'guided democracy', Tanzania's 'social democracy', Zambia's 'participatory democracy', as well as Inkatha-supported 'consociational democracy' in South Africa. The liberal component in the synthesis is represented primarily by Nigerian federalism. In fact, with Kenyatta, Nyerere, Kaunda, Chief Gatsha Buthelezi and Alahji Shehu Shagari all qualifying as contributors, such an alternative model of democracy becomes rather unattractive, whether from a liberal or a radical perspective.
The readiness to assign some democratic legitimacy to repressive and authoritarian regimes reflects both the view that Africa is not ripe for 'real' democracy and the 'developmental' priority. Confronted with such 'liberal' positions, radical democrats in Africa may feel that they have little reason to be apologetic about their search for alternative forms of popular representation and accountability linked to their own projects for national development and national unity.

Yet the left too is influenced by this lack of ruling class commitment to liberal solutions. In the current Nigerian 'transition to civilian rule', for instance, ruling class ideas of a state-imposed two-party system was accepted by sections within the left who entertained hopes that they might be able to capture one of the two (cf. Ibrahim 1987). In Nigeria, as in much of Africa, the need to overcome sub-national divisions of a regional, religious or ethnic character has been the one principal justification of such adaptations. The question of national development has provided another.

Occasional valiant attempts are made to argue that democracy is good for economic development. In doing so, however, the criteria of democracy have tended to become modest indeed. As a case for liberal democracy it turns out rather poorly and is more likely to be turned into its opposite. Anyang' Nyong'o argues that it is the lack of democracy that holds back African development:

At the center of the failure of African states to chart viable paths for development (or industrialization) is the issue of lack of accountability, hence of democracy as well (Anyang' Nyong'o 1988a: 72).

It is a developmental version of the classical 'no taxation without representation'. He rejects Huntington's non-democratic case for order and stability. Development, Anyang' argues, needs a strong and resourceful state capable of funding necessary public investment. It must be able to tax the people, but this is not possible if the latter are not convinced that 'their meager resources are properly used by the state.' It requires a 'culture of participation and accountability'. Democracy is therefore crucial for the surplus generating and developmental capacity of the state. Moreover, the lack of democracy, rather than being a source of political stability as suggested by Huntington and others, breeds instability and coups d'etat.

As a normative political position this sounds impeccable. As an empirical case for democracy, however, it is rather shaky. 'More participatory political systems', Anyang' suggests, have done much better in terms of economic growth than the less participatory ones. He uses Kenya and the Ivory Coast (later adding Malawi) as cases of the former and Sudan and Zaire as cases of the latter (1988a:77). This has rendered him some bashing from concerned democrats as well from those worried by the logic of such correlations (Mkandawire 1988; Gutto 1989). In response to his critics, he reasserts that in these countries (Kenya, Ivory Coast, Malawi) 'there have been more accountability of the state to its social base — however narrow — when compared to the other military dictatorships and no-party regimes'.

There is therefore a prima facie case, in the context of Africa of the post-independence period, to argue that where there has been more respect for democratic practices (however minimal) higher rates of growth and more successful models of accumulation have ensued (Anyang' Nyong'o 1988b). [emphasis added]
In a sharp rebuttal, Shadrack Gutto (1989), argues that the notion of democracy looses its meaning if reduced to 'accountability' in such a narrow sense. He recalls the record of political repression in Kenya, from where he himself has been hounded into exile. Thandika Mkandawire (1988), takes up the case of Malawi which, he suggests, is 'typical of a number of cases in which high rates of accumulation have taken place under extremely repressive regimes'. The correlations suggested by Anyang' are not only statistically dubious, according to Mkandawire, but also politically dangerous as they can easily be turned around and used in defence of authoritarianism.

No Proper Bourgeoisie — No Proper Liberal Democracy
Liberals and radicals alike see the low level of material development and strong internal divisions of African societies, ethnic, religious or regional, as major obstacles to democratisation. Both emphasise the absence or distorted nature of the classes, the bourgeoisie, the 'middle class', and the organised working class who are expected, each on their own or in combination, to provide greater social cohesion and sustain the move towards democracy. In particular, it is the absence of a proper bourgeoisie or a 'proper' capitalist society that rules out liberal democracy as a real option.

In the liberal argument, the role of the state as the primary vehicle of dominant class formation has stunted the growth of an indigenous, productive bourgeoisie.

It has also meant the absence of that class that pressed for the expansion of democratic rights and limitation of state power during the early development of democracy in the industrialized West (Diamond 1988:22).

From the radical national perspective, imperialist domination, rather than the 'swollen state' is the primary cause of the distortion of domestic class formation (cf. Beckman 1988c). At one level liberal and radical arguments converge, not least in their emphasis on the 'autonomy of civil society' (Samir Amin 1987), in elaborating the thesis of unequal development, argues that democracy presupposes a civil society with economic relations that are autonomous vis-à-vis the political (1987:2). Its absence 'renders any talk of democracy meaningless'. Democracy is impossible in peripheral capitalist societies where such civil society is feeble or non-existent. Economic life lacks autonomy in relation to state power and to the demands of accumulation at the centre. He draws support from Mahmood Mamdani's (1986,1987) discussion of problems of democracy in peasant societies (Amin 1987:2-3). The state, while appearing strong, is in fact weak which is an additional reason why 'access to true bourgeois democratisation is practically closed' (ibid:5).

Liberals show an equal but different kind of concern with the lack of autonomy of civil society (Hyden 1988; Diamond 1988). They see the release of market forces and the rolling back of the state as a precondition for both a flourishing civil society and for democracy in some distant future. For Samir Amin such a strategy of liberalisation merely reinforces the process of unequal development. It is incapable of producing a basis for bourgeois democracy. The latter, limited as it is, is possible only in the central capitalist countries. Here democracy can be prevented from developing its potentialities by a 'majority consensus', which is possible because these countries are able to exploit their dominant central positions in the world capitalist system (Amin 1987:10).
Liberals and radical 'de-linkers' agree that the absence of a proper bourgeoisie makes liberal democracy impossible. They differ in their political conclusions. The former are reinforced in their commitment to encourage the growth of a 'more authentic and autonomous bourgeoisie' (Diamond 1988:26) in order to open up the road to liberal democracy. For the latter, such a road is closed. The prospects of democracy are premised instead on the struggle for a 'popular national state' capable of de-linking from the processes of unequal development. In both cases, the democratic issue is coupled to a strategy for economic development. For the liberals the agents of democracy and economic development are the same. For the radicals, the de-linking state must be both strong and democratic in order to resist the pressures from the world system (Amin 1987:1).

Liberal Democracy and Neo-Colonialism
The radical case against liberal democracy is reinforced by the way the propagation of democracy is married to foreign economic and political penetration. The current transnational neo-liberal economic offensive to open up Africa for the 'market forces' seeks to claim in the face of strong popular opposition, that Africa is being prepared for democracy. A recent study funded by the US Congress-sponsored National Endowment for Democracy, argues that 'statism must be rolled back' if democracy is to have a chance:

In fact, the increasing movement away from statist economic policies and structures is among the most significant boosts to the democratic prospect in Africa (Diamond 1988:27).

This is hardly convincing to those who see how World Bank and IMF sponsored 'structural adjustment' programmes go hand in hand with intensified state repression against popular and democratic organisations (Bangura and Beckman 1989).

The promotion of capitalism and democracy are posited as being inseparable in this neo-liberal view because democracy requires support for 'a more authentic and autonomous bourgeoisie'. While 'the future of democracy in Africa lies primarily in the hands of the African themselves' (sic!), external assistance can help in fostering 'economic and social pluralism', including the funding of 'struggling publications' that can 'embellish the generally limited pluralism of the African press' (Diamond 1988: 26,29).

Whose 'civil society' and whose 'enabling environment' are we talking about? African left forces can safely guess whose 'struggling publications' are likely to benefit from such support. Much of the fresh interest in 'the laying of the foundations of democracy in civil society' stands out as yet another spell of foreign political intervention on the side of transnational capital and domestic ruling classes. The history of imperialist intervention under the ideological banner of democracy is intimidating. While noting that the general prospects for democracy are bleak, Huntington (1984) suggests that democratic institutions may emerge in some small countries as a result of massive foreign effort, as in the cases of the Dominican Republic and Grenada. In his view, the extension of democracy into the non-Western world has been largely 'the product of Anglo-American efforts'. Nobody should be surprised if some African radical democrats see the new Western concern for democracy as the latest stage of neo-colonialism.
Beyond Liberal Democracy: The Radical Alternatives

Mkandawire argues against an instrumentalist view where the case for democracy is staked on its usefulness for surplus extraction, stability or any other developmental cause. Democracy should be on the agenda, not because of its instrumental, developmental impact, but because it is the recognition of the legitimate rights of the African people to democratically map the destinies of their countries ... (Mkandawire 1988). No democrat would disagree, nor does Anyang' Nyong'o (1988b) in his own rejoinder. But the question remains, of course, what democracy? Although using 'minimal' criteria for the purpose of his criticised correlations, Anyang' himself certainly looks for something more than 'bourgeois' democracy. What are the popular democratic alternatives? The approaches of the left take their point of departure in the questions of national and class emancipation. Samir Amin summarises the 'essential lesson' of the failure in development of independent Africa:

the impossibility of achieving anything significant economically in the absence of a popular national state that is one that is both strong (to resist the negative pressures coming form the world system and their internal ramifications) and democratic (Amin 1987:1).

Such a state, says Anyang' Nyong'o (1987:24) must be 'a state controlled by the popular forces and accountable to them' if it is to be able to plan for 'inward-looking, self-centered and self-sufficient development'. Such a state can only be a result of a 'popular democratic revolution'.

For Mahmood Mamdani the primary task of popular struggles for genuine democracy is to break the political hold of the bourgeoisie over the peasantry by combatting 'the regime of extra-economic coercion':

This is nothing short of a demand for a transformation in production relations. Furthermore, no such changes can be effected without the democratisation of local as well as central state organs (Mamdani 1987:93).

Real democratisation, he suggests, must be from below to prevent popular organisations from being hemmed in by the factional struggles of the bourgeoisie. Unless the autonomy of popular forces can be developed, democracy will remain a sham (ibid:94).

Capturing State Power

How will this be achieved? How will Samir Amin's 'popular national state' be brought about? What is Anyang' Nyong'o's 'popular democratic revolution', and how to get there? Anyang's answer is both militant and cautious. On the one hand, he invokes Lenin, arguing that revolutionary forces cannot just lay hold on the state and use it for their own ends. The first task is therefore to smash the inherited state machinery, including the apparatuses of repression. He warns, on the other hand, against the 'impatience of left forces to get into positions of political power, rather than first build social power among the people': At the root of the strategic political mistake that the left has been making in joining military regimes is the conception of 'state power' as something that can be changed and be put to progressive use once "left personnel" occupy key positions in the state apparatus (Anyang' Nyong'o 1987:23).
A popular democratic revolution, according to Anyang', must be able to 'smash neo-colonial state power'. But he warns against excessive belief in the virtue of armed struggle as a means of achieving it. While accepting Anyang's cautionary remarks, Shadrack Gutto develops the case for armed struggle, not as an end in itself, but as a complement to other forms of popular struggles for democracy when the state, as in the Kenyan case, refuses 'to dismantle an undemocratic social system' (Gutto 1989). It would be defeatist to rule out armed struggle and to exaggerate the military and political strength of the dictators:

The neo-colonial state that is apparently "armed to the teeth" is in fact a very weak state with a very weak army. A state that is alienated from the people ... is in fact very weak when confronted by a popular well organised political and military offensive based among the people (Gutto 1989).

Gutto invokes other third world revolutionary experiences including Cuba, Vietnam and Nicaragua in support of his position. In view of their enormous costs in human and material terms, one wonders how supportive such revolutionary precedents may be of his case. How weak is the enemy really?

Anyang' does not reject armed struggle but emphasises its political base and content. The ambivalence of his position, however, stands out in his comments on the armed struggles in the Sudan and Uganda. On the one hand, he sees them as reflecting the aspirations of 'popular democratic revolutions' and are examples of 'people's struggles for a second independence'. On the other hand, he is anxious to warn against these struggles being derailed, for instance, by 'all kinds of unholy alliances in order to form a government'.

The ultimate test of their success, he says, is the extent to which they will 'smash the neo-colonial state and erect a popular democratic state instead' (ibid:24). It is not clear why Anyang' feels that these specific struggles have such revolutionary democratic potential in the first place, especially in view of his own concern to caution the left against military solutions. The reader cannot help wondering what 'minimal' criteria for considering the neo-colonial state being smashed he may have in mind. What is the popular democratic content of the new popular democratic state?

**Popular Democratic Struggles**

Radical democrats agree on the centrality of popular movements and popular democratic struggles from below (cf. Mamdani, Mkandawire & Wamba-dia-Wamba 1988). Anyang' expects 'popular rebellion' to take many forms, including alliances of students, trade unions, churches, burial societies, etc. 'Attention to these popular movements is critical in trying to understand the struggle for democracy in Africa'. The popular democratic content, he suggests, springs from the very fact that these movements come from below, so 'their goals and demands must necessarily spell the content of democracy from the point of view of the popular masses' (Anyang' Nyong'o 1988a:81).

How are such alliances of popular movements to be translated into democratic state power? 'Simply to hope that a coalition of these groups is capable of seizing political power and establishing genuine popular democracies is ridiculous', says Gutto (1989), who emphasises the need to be armed with revolutionary ideas and to be properly organised politically.
Mamdani is less directly preoccupied with the capturing of state power and the smashing of the neo-colonial state. His emphasis is on the need to build the autonomy of popular forces, thereby weakening bourgeois class rule. It suggests a gradual shift in the balance of forces rather than an abrupt change from one type of rule to another. His immediate concern is with reforming local state organs that are most directly confronted by the peasantry. He speaks of thorough-going reforms at this level as a minimum for clearing the way for further democratisation. It is part of the effort to break the political hold of the bourgeoisie over the peasantry. Without it no popular force, not even the working class, can hope to influence meaningfully the direction of political events (Mamdani 1987:94). Liberal democratic rights (multiparty system, free elections) offers no solution, according to Mamdani, because they are not relevant to the mass of the population as long the latter are not free from extra-economic coercion in the process of production.

Who is going to 'break the hold of the bourgeoisie over the peasantry'? Who will 'reform local government, local judiciary and local land allocation/control bodies'? Who is to bring about 'an end to the regime of extra-economic coercion that stifles the peasantry'? In the Nigerian context, I have argued that the most impoverished and oppressed mass strata of the peasantry are unlikely to emerge as a major popular democratic force because of their integration in a subordinate position into commercial-cum-political client relations that tie them to rich peasants, traders, and state officials (Beckman 1988a). How can the political domination and economic exploitation to which they are exposed within these relations be effectively challenged? How can the popular movements, political organisations and other agents of purposeful transformation develop, survive and maximise their impact?

In most of Africa, popular democratic forces can not be expected to fight their struggles from the vantage point of the control of state power. The state has to be fought from organised bases in society. The building of autonomous organisations is critical for whatever inroads popular forces may make into the administration of state power. It is in such a context of ensuring the survival of such organisations and the alliances required that the struggle for liberal democratic rights has acquired a new significance for a growing section of the African left.

Marxists and the Defence of Liberal Democracy
Marxists, according to Sandbrook (1988:249), reject liberal democracy because “it is only a mask for bourgeois domination”. To support the point he refers to Jibrin Ibrahim’s account in ROAPE (1987) of a meeting of the Nigerian Political Science Association where this supposedly was the left view. 'The left united with the right,' according to Sandbrook, 'to defeat a motion to recommend a return to liberal democracy.' He has improved the story. Ibrahim speaks of 'a sizable number' of right wing and left wing protagonists converging on this issue (Ibrahim 1987:38). More importantly, however, Sandbrook jumps to unwarranted conclusions. It was not the Marxist left that opposed liberal democracy. On the contrary, the Marxists were the most consistent in defence of it, including Ibrahim himself, as evidenced by his article which was presented as a paper to the conference.

Significantly, Gutto, the most militant revolutionary taking part in the debates precipitated by Anyang’s democracy paper, is also the most explicit defender of
'free and fair elections' in that debate. It is a 'popular pastime of radical populist propaganda’, says Gutto, to discuss free and fair elections as a ‘mere bourgeois trick’:

Free and fair elections are very important and must be pursued resolutely as part and parcel of the overall struggle for political rights. There is nothing bourgeois about free and fair elections. In fact the bourgeoisie fear free and fair elections ... in Africa in particular (Gutto 1989).

Ibrahim agrees: The bourgeoisie is always ready to destroy democratic rights whenever it feels its class interests are threatened. The defence of these rights therefore rests primarily on the working class and other democratic forces. The struggle for liberal democracy is important, he says, because ‘it allows the oppressed classes to put the question of alternative ideologies on the agenda’. It gives them the chance to campaign for and contest these ideologies. The material base for fully utilising such liberal democratic rights may be weak but they still help to ‘extend and widen the arena of struggle’ (Ibrahim 1987:41).

Radical democrats defend liberal democracy first of all for defensive reasons. The material basis of liberal democracy as a system of government in contemporary Africa continues to be weak. The banner of liberal democracy, however, provides a platform for advancing political rights needed in the defence of popular and democratic forces against repression. The popular forces need all the legal, constitutional and ideological protection that they can muster. For this purpose, radical democrats, despite their critique of Africa's liberal democratic experience, enter into alliances with other forces that look to liberal democratic constitutionalism either as a way of boosting their autonomy vis-à-vis the state or as a means to bring about a change of political regime.

The development of the position of the Sudanese Communist Party is instructive on this point; it gradually abandoned the 'hegemonic' political claims that seemed incompatible with broader alliances (Turok 1987:151ff; Mahmoud 1988). In the case of Ghana, a similar process can be seen, albeit in a more fragmented fashion. Despite their contempt for bourgeois party politics as ‘perpetual musical chairs in which different bourgeois factions jostle for the right to mismanage the country and plunder its wealth’ (Atim 1989), revolutionary groups reach out for alliances with some such factions in order to fight military dictatorship. 'Now the main demand of our struggle', says Nyeya Yen at a United Revolutionary Front function, 'is for pluralism, through which different political groupings could exist without one group legislating against the existence of the others' (Revolutionary Banner, 11, 1989).

Conclusions: Expanding the Democratic Space
Returning to the Nigerian scenario for the transition to civilian rule outlined at the outset, the decision by the military government in October 1989 to force its own two-party model on the nation has further undercut the liberal democratic option. The defunct attempt to form a Nigerian Labour Party, however, offers important lessons (Olukoshi 1989). Superficially, it seems as if those who would not have anything to do with 'bourgeois' electoral politics were proven right as the whole process was hijacked by the state. But the defence of democratic rights, says Olukoshi, cannot be reduced to question of electoral politics alone. He recalls the position of those Marxist groups who argued that the Nigerian workers, rather
than putting the labour movement at risk electorally, should join forces with other social groups in a broad alliance to defend the freedom of speech and association, oppose all repressive and obnoxious decrees, campaign for the release of political prisoners, ensure adherence to the rule of law and oppose the militarisation of society (Olukoshi 1989:19).

Radical democrats in Africa do not believe that the promotion of liberal democracy will bring about 'meaningful and extensive competition among individuals and organised groups (especially political parties) for all effective positions of government power, at regular intervals and excluding the use of force' (Diamond, Linz and Lipset 1988:xvi). Nor do they expect the leaders of the parliamentary game to be recruited on the basis of a 'highly inclusive level of political participation'. For the vast majority of the population the electoral process will offer no meaningful participation in the affairs of the nation. Nor is there much belief in the 'integrity of political competition' or that popular power will come through the ballot box alone. Self-seeking and unpatriotic bourgeois politicians will continue to be the immediate beneficiaries of elections and the rules of the game will remain heavily tilted against popular democratic movements. The latter will continue to face repression, frustration and manipulation.

For a growing section of the African left, however, the struggle for liberal democratic rights has become an important platform for fighting repression and for widening the democratic space within which popular and democratic organisations can survive and develop. It is a defensive strategy but no fine line can be drawn between defence and advance. The democratic space has to be protected in order to be expanded, also to provide the bases from which further advances can be made; an equivalent of the 'liberated areas' of the anti-colonial struggles.

Bibliographic Note
An earlier version of this essay was presented to the ROAPE Conference, "Taking Democracy Seriously: Socialists and Democracy in Africa", University of Warwick, Coventry, 22-24 September, 1989, and to AKUT Conference, "When Does Democracy Make Sense? Political Economy and Political Rights in the Third World", Uppsala University, 26-28 October, 1989. I owe the concept of "democratic space" to the discussions on the latter occasion. I am grateful to Olle Törnquist for detailed comments. The essay is part of a wider argument on state, class and democracy in a book contracted by Zed Books.

The Antinomies of Nationalism and Democracy in the South African Liberation Struggle

Robert Fine

In my view marxists have acceded too readily to the appeal of nationalism in South Africa, fudging the differences between marxism and nationalism and downplaying the basic fact that marxists are not nationalists. It is one thing for socialists to recognise the progressive nature of nationalism in South Africa and to accept it as a factual condition of their struggle as socialists; it is another simply to welcome nationalism as ideology and programme. The conversion of working class struggle into nationalism has been far less complete than might appear and is the result not of the triumph of reason but of a definite interplay of class forces which, though hidden beneath the surface of political life, are its real social determinants. Eric Hobsbawn’s sweeping but true observation that ‘getting their history wrong is an essential characteristic of nations’ (1989:125) should be a warning to marxists not to accept too readily the self-conceptions of the nationalist history.

If we accept the view put forward by Joe Slovo that the struggle for majority rule takes precedence over the struggle against capitalist exploitation in South Africa, the question still remains as to the political form in which the democratic struggle is waged. Racial oppression of black people in South Africa has led historically to a variety of political responses among the oppressed: different and sometimes competing forms of African nationalism (witness the historical antagonisms between the ANC and PAC), alternative forms of black nationalism (like the Non-European Unity Movement or Black Consciousness), as well as many currents of socialism and liberalism. The apparent deduction of nationalism from the struggle against racial oppression conceals the specificity of this particular political response, yet it pervades the orthodox literature to such an extent that the struggle against racism is often equated with its nationalist form, as if no other political form of opposition to racism were feasible.

This assumption pervades current political theorising about the liberation struggle. To take but one example, in a polemic against ‘workerism’, Karl Van Holdt (an editor of the influential South African Labour Bulletin) writes

workers engaged in popular struggle as a national liberation struggle since the terrain of struggle against state power is structured by apartheid...Any serious struggle has to situate itself within this deep popular current...There quite simply is no other route: it is prescribed by the conditions of the South African struggle.

What is remarkable about the reasoning behind Van Holdt’s assertion is that he attributes the hegemony of nationalism to what he sees as, on the one hand, the conditions of struggle imposed from above by the state and on the other the consciousness of workers resisting from below, as if the adoption of a nationalist framework required no political choices by the leadership itself.

We need to keep in mind what distinguishes nationalist forms of opposition to racism from other actual and possible political forms: in short, to understand nationalism, we must first stop treating it as ‘natural’. A distinction has to be made between the struggle for democracy in general and its specific nationalist form.
Popular consciousness usually appears in this paradigm dressed in the colours of nationalism. Joe Slovo (1989:5) for instance, characterises the consciousness of the masses thus

for those who have to live the hourly realities and humiliations of race tyranny...there is no issue more immediate and relevant than the experience of national oppression. This is certainly the starting point of political consciousness for every black worker.

But is the experience of national oppression the starting point of political consciousness for every black worker? The question needs to be resolved historically rather than philosophically, empirically rather than deductively. Slovo jumps, in this passage, from the undoubted experience of black workers of race tyranny to the view that this experience can only be understood by black workers as national oppression. He does not allow for the possibility that race tyranny may be understood in non-nationalist ways; say, simply as a denial of democratic rights. Although the political line of the party is portrayed as a reflection of the consciousness of the masses, in reality the relationship is reversed: the masses are decked out in nationalist colours by a party committed to nationalism.

At issue here is not only the substantive characterisation of popular consciousness but the formal categories of 'mass' and 'leadership' within which the question is posed. Drawn from outside the terrain of marxism and identified with theories of the right as well as the left, the concept of the 'mass' finds its symbiotic counterpart in the concept of the 'elite'; they are inseparable from each other. In this conceptual model, the great majority of black people appear united by a singular political consciousness whatever other social differences divide them; they enter the political stage as suffering and rebellious but not as rational individuals engaged in political dialogue and debate. Popular consciousness needs both to be addressed more concretely and to be freed from the mental associations which come from the language of the 'masses'. The starting point of political consciousness for workers may be a sense of national oppression; it may also, however, be a sense of low pay or powerlessness in the workplace or indeed of the power which comes from organised labour. Such matters are not predetermined nor historically static nor the same for all workers.

In the 1970s, for instance, the spontaneous revolt of black workers was expressed in the form of trade unionism, whose central organising principle was working class identity, as much in the form of nationalism, whether in its Black Consciousness or Congress variants. In our own historical work we have seen that the appeal of nationalism for black workers has been far more uneven than is assumed, for example, in Dan O'Meara's unsubstantiated claim that 'the political culture of Black workers over at least the last forty years has been largely moulded by “the Congress tradition”' (1985:418). This was almost certainly not the case in the class struggles of the 1940s; the Congress tradition became far more influential in the 1950s but its hegemony was also more contested in the black working class than this statement would imply; the strength of the Congress tradition among black workers in the latter half of the 1960s and 1970s was very limited; it re-emerged as a potent political force only in the 1980s.

The consciousness of 'the masses' is not simply a given; it is constructed through debate, dialogue, contestation and, not least, through the ideas of the radical intelligentsia. There are many ways in which people can make sense of their oppression; if the dominant political framework available is nationalist, then it is
of course likely that this will be reflected in popular consciousness. In reality working class consciousness is more conflictual and uneven than that ascribed to it by present orthodoxy; in the expressions of popular culture available to us, like the songs of the workers’ movement, we find an interweaving of socialist, nationalist and religious themes. The important point is to see working class consciousness dynamically in the process of its formation, not as something static and abstract.

The understanding of political parties is also set within this same conceptual framework. Ascribing to two particular political organisations, the ANC and the SACP, the ‘two complementary streams of revolutionary consciousness’ (as Slovo put it) says nothing about how adequate these organisations are as the embodiment of the currents of nationalism and socialism. It is not enough to rediscover the ideas of African nationalism and socialism in them to prove that they represent their ideal embodiment; such an explanation would merely accept the leadership of the liberation movement as it is in order to declare it rational. It leaves unanswered both the question of the representivity of these parties and the substance of the politics they espouse. Once cut loose from these controls, one is left with a purely formal notion of political leadership.

Rather than see parties as what they are, competing political organisations which put forward their own views and represent no more than part of the whole, they appear in more absolutist terms as either representing or failing to represent the consciousness of the masses in toto. We see here the roots of an idealised conception of political parties in which celebrationism and betrayal theory are two complementary aspects. The language of ‘national movements’ rather than ‘political parties’, which dominates the literature, accentuates the identification of a particular political party with the will of the ‘nation’ as a whole, concealing or downplaying the distinction between the leadership and those whom it seeks to represent. The result is that political programmes, manifestos and charters are presented not for what they are, the products of particular political organisations appealing for support beyond their own ranks, but rather as the direct expression of the will of the people (as e.g., in Kotane 1981, Tabata 1973, The Africanist 1959). The language of national movements (or of the ‘mass democratic movement’ in its recent form) enables the party to ascribe to the people a unitary consciousness in its own image and party leaders to appear as natural heads of their nation.

Let us return to the more substantive issue of nationalism. The apartheid state rationalises its division of South Africa into a number of distinct nations, presented as natural entities based on notions of primordial origin, divine mission, spiritual unity, shared culture and especially racial homogeneity; it conceives of nations as corporate units, providing the building blocks of the state as a whole. The state and its ideologues refer to the nations of South Africa in at least three different and conflicting ways. First, under the guise of refurbishing traditionalism, the state seeks to re-tribalise Africans as citizens of their own ‘national homelands’ and as foreigners in ‘white South Africa’. In this vein, the state talks of around ten national groups within the African people as a whole and organises bantustans and even segregates black townships and miners’ compounds accordingly. Second, the state accentuates, in theory and practice, the distinct identities of what it sees as four national groups: whites, Africans, Asians and ‘Coloureds’ (the earlier tendency to distinguish between Afrikaner and English-speaking whites has persisted but in a less powerful form). Lastly, the state pursues a policy of racial oppression, affecting
all black people as blacks, which magnifies the social distance between blacks and whites in general and overrides all other distinctions.

Parallel to the growth of these three forms of racialism practiced by the state, we find historically three forms of nationalism among the oppressed. One has been centered around the goal of national self-determination defined in terms of avowedly ‘traditional’ tribal loyalties. It may be illustrated by the Inkatha movement among the Zulu or the National Independence Party in the Transkei. The second has centered around what has been known as four-nation theory, which respects as its starting point the separate national identities of Africans, ‘Coloureds’, Asians and whites (sometimes five nations if whites are divided into Afrikaner and English-speaking wings). This form of organisation has been most vividly expressed in the four-spoke wheel of the Congress Alliance and the four separate national organisations which comprised it. The third has centered around the unity of all black people, regardless of all other ethnic identities, in the face of white oppression and has been expressed in the growth of movements like the Non-European Unity Movement in the 1940s and the Black Consciousness movement in the 1970s (Alexander 1979).

All these national identities have been manufactured by the state on the basis of certain real social differentiations among the people but only with the utmost use of repression and resort to totally irrational ways of thinking. The fundamental problem facing all these political forms of nationalism lies in their acceptance of one or other of the racial categories of the state as their own starting point; the limitation of the nationalism of the oppressed lies in its parasitism on the models of nationalism constructed by the oppressors. Alec Erwin neatly characterised this form of ‘national defence’ or defensive nationalism when he wrote of it:

Resort to invoking the past, be it real or mythological, becomes an important part of the political process. Whilst such a process may achieve mobilisation against a regime, it has inherent in it elements that are reactionary in that both past and existing class interests are fixed and protected by the symbolism of the nation being defined...National pride and identity is a mobilising force but it also sails very close to the winds of racial stereotypes and outright racism.

A stimulating historical discussion of these issues is to be found in Marks and Trapido. They analyse national identities as socially constructed products of an historical process and struggle, involving both external separation from other nations and internal unification of the nation across social divisions. They write that

It is not often realised how recent “national” identifications in South Africa are...Both black and white nationalism can in large measure be seen as responses to late nineteenth century industrialisation, imperialism and British “race patriotism”...For all the peoples of South Africa, new ethnic identities emerged around 1910 when the state was being constructed as a single entity out of the British colonies, the conquered Afrikaner republics and African kingdoms in the region. That this unification did not lead to a single pan-South African, pan-ethnic nationalism was the outcome of a history of regional divisions, the racism and Social Darwinism of the late nineteenth century and the specific political-cum-class struggles which were being legitimated by the discourse of nationalism (1987:2-3).

The strength of their analysis lies in their historical treatment of national identity; the weakness, I believe, lies in a tendency to teleologise and reify the outcome of national unities and divisions.
We have seen the problem vividly expressed in debates around the organisation of the liberation movement in the 1950s. The democratic vision of the future put forward in the 1950s in the Freedom Charter was that South Africa belongs to all, black and white, regardless of racial divisions. The principle of non-racialism was not, however, extended into the organisation of the Congress Alliance, the key to which was that only at the top did individuals from different colour groups come together in single bodies like the National Consultative Committee, while ordinary supporters were hived off into four separate national bodies. In response to critics who argued that such a 'multi-racial' arrangement represented 'voluntary segregation' within the liberation movement, Slovo (1977:171-5) defended it by reference to the 'group consciousness' of the masses; he wrote that while he personally had no principled objection to the idea of creating a single non-racial organisation to struggle against white rule, it would have appealed in the 1950s only to 'the ideologically advanced' and not to the 'masses'. He saw it as right, therefore, that non-racialism was not imposed by 'advanced decisions from the top', on the grounds that the multi-racial organisation of Congress was a necessary stage in the development of a fully non-racial liberation movement.

Slovo's depiction of popular consciousness in the 1950s needs to be tested historically but he too endorsed the idea that each of the 'national groups' faced its own distinctive forms of oppression in the 1950s and was therefore justified in organising separately. Slovo's characterisation of the liberation struggle as an anti-colonial movement directed against a 'special type of colonialism', the official doctrine adopted by the Communist Party and the ANC in the early 1960s, introduced the problem of nationalism in another form. In normal anti-colonial situations, national liberation stands for the democratic right of the colonised nation as a whole to independence from foreign colonial rule and national self-determination. In the South African case, by contrast, British colonial domination was abolished before the First World War as a result, in part, of the anti-imperialist struggles of the Boers; the subsequent interpretation of democratic struggles as 'anti-colonial' meant that the white section of the South African population was seen as colonisers of South Africa. This theory suggests the division of South Africa into two nations, black and white, colonised and colonisers, rather than a single South African nation belonging to all who live in it. The logic of this form of nationalism has been softened by the claim that the struggle is not against the colonisers themselves but only against the system of colonialism, and by statements declaring that white people in South Africa should not be seen as a foreign, 'colon', class; the theory of 'colonialism of a special type', however, remains as the official doctrine of the ANC-SACP leadership of the liberation movement (For a critique, see Wolpe 1974 and 1988, Alexander 1979:105-11 and 1986, Hudson 1986, Freund 1986).

Neville Alexander has been one of the most cogent critics of both 'four-nation' theory and the theory of 'colonialism of a special type'. His main argument has been that the ideology of nationalism in both these forms is in fact a pseudo-nationalism, concealing a form of 'colour-caste' consciousness; his own intellectual effort has been directed toward defining a true nationalism purged of this racial taint. Under the slogan of 'one Azania, one nation', he has argued that in the South African context genuine nationalism should be seen not in terms of separatism but rather of unification of 'nation-building'. If apartheid signifies the balkanisation of South Africa into racial groupings, genuine nationalism signifies
the unification of South Africa as a modern nation-state embracing all who live in it.

Alexander’s critique of existing forms of nationalism draws its inspiration from European nationalist movements of the nineteenth century, the crux of which, as Eric Hobsbawm (1989:119-121) has rightly pointed out, was not so much state independence as such but rather the construction of ‘viable’ states through the unification of the old principalities; in their world balkanisation was a term of abuse and petty German principalities were a joke. If nationalism is, as Tom Nairn has argued, ‘Janus-faced’, with one face pointing to the past and the other pointing to the future, Alexander has sought to define a nationalism in South Africa which points unequivocally to the future, looking to the construction of a new nation rather than to the restoration of what he sees as the largely imaginary rights of the primordial ‘nations’ of South Africa.

If nationalism of the oppressed has a tendency, as John Breuilly has argued, to be ‘parasitic’ on the nationalism of the oppressors, Alexander has sought to define a nationalism which radically breaks from the ‘national’ categories of the apartheid state. The theoretical advance represented by ‘nation-building’ over purely defensive nationalism has been well expressed by Alex Erwin. What is important in the process of nation-building, he writes, ‘is that the nation is being constructed with reference to the future rather than the past — the past being a source of division rather than unity. Attempts to build a nation give rise to a modernising tendency...a stress on education, change and adaptation’ (1985:53).

Yet in the writings of Alexander, just as in those of Slovo, there is a tension between the vision of a new non-racial nation in the future and the immediate perspectives of the liberation movement. At the same time as he argues that the immediate task of the liberation movement is the abolition within its own body of all pseudo-nationalisms based on ‘colour-caste’ categories, he also affirms that the class struggle in South Africa must take a nationalist form because of ‘the colour-caste framework’ of apartheid. He seeks to resolve the conflict by defining the nation of Azania as ‘all the people who are prepared to throw off the yoke of capitalist exploitation and racist oppression’ (1979-78); this political definition of the nation leaves unspecified the status of those who do not embrace this dual struggle, the impression being given that citizenship is a reward for being on the right side politically.

The perspective of ‘nation-building’ raises the question of why a new form of nationalism, based on a commitment to ‘the nation of South Africa still struggling to be born’, should serve as an ideal against which to assess the different historical forms of nationalism. Is not pan-South African nationalism yet another facet of the ideology of the existing state, more or less consciously articulated by the ‘liberal’ wing of the ruling class, and was it not historically represented in the person of Smuts prior to 1948? If so, can we say that this form of nationalism succeeds in emancipating itself from the nationalism of the state, where others have fallen short?

The bourgeois unification of South Africa took place long ago in the reconstruction years after the Anglo-Boer War, when the establishment of a single government, currency, legal system and transport network (the four pillars of the modern state) marked the beginnings of South Africa as an independent, unitary state. Most of its citizens were denied political rights, which was not unusual in bourgeois states,
many of which imposed gender, property or other qualifications on suffrage. What was unusual in South Africa was the form of exclusion by virtue of the national or racial status allocated to its citizens; subsequently the government of South Africa posited the myth of separate national identities and homelands but this in no way alters the historical fact that the bourgeois tasks of building a unitary state have been accomplished. The struggle now is to replace apartheid with democracy, to abolish racism and not to achieve the unification of the state; the liberation of the people of South Africa from the racialist political superstructure might well be accompanied by a growth of South African nationalism, but whether this should be encouraged by socialists is another matter. It seems to us that the source of the confusion in Alexander's work lies in an over-emphasis on the cultural aspects of nation-building at the expense of the material aspects of state formation.

The status of this pan-South African nationalism needs to be reviewed in its own right, in relation both to the independent interests of the working class in South Africa itself and to the interests of international solidarity with oppressed people beyond the existing borders of the South African state. Where will the nation of South Africa 'still struggling to be born' draw its borders? should it include or exclude Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland? how would this 'new' nationalism feed into the creation of a wider vista of political association reflected, for example, in the idea of a future United States of Southern Africa? The associations which run through Alexander's work, between, on the one side, bourgeois leadership and 'colour-caste' forms of pseudo-nationalism and, on the other, proletarian leadership and an Azanian or pan-South African form of 'true nationalism', fail to resolve the larger question of why nationalism in general should be the political form of the working class struggle for democracy.

Alexander's conception, though initially treated with hostility by the ANC, seems to be increasingly embraced by the mainstream of the liberation movement, though it tends to be fused with rather than counterposed to the more traditional form of African nationalism. We see an expression of the new thinking in the Constitutional Guidelines of the ANC which defines the role of the post-apartheid state as seeking to 'promote the acquisition of genuinely shared patriotic consciousness' and to 'forge a national identity'. This represents perhaps only a partial embrace of Alexander's theory of 'nation-building' since it seems to transfer what Alexander sees as the role of the movement to the role of the new state. The key point is whether any form of nationalism can constitute a consistently democratic opposition to apartheid. One form of nationalism provides a remedy for the defects of another: African nationalism for the defects of tribalism, black nationalism for the defects of African nationalism, pan-South African nationalism for the defects of black nationalism, left nationalism — with a programme of economic and social reform — for the defects of bourgeois nationalism. These are vital distinctions, the importance of which we do not wish to downplay; it is wrong to equate all forms of nationalism as representing basically the same political phenomenon (a tendency which somewhat undermines Hirson's otherwise acute observations, 1987); yet they do not address the fundamental defect of nationalism itself in South Africa, its failure to transcend the racial terms of reference set by its enemy.

Nationalism has undoubtedly been an enormous source of empowerment to black people but it should not be rationalised as an ideal form of political consciousness. This is not to deny the material roots of black nationalism in South African society
— the origins of which can be understood in terms of the organic differentiation of the working class, the influence of Afrikaner nationalism, the effects of the defeats suffered by the labour movement and the weaknesses of South African socialism — nor the importance of relating constructively to it; it is not simply to 'reject' nationalism, which has played a vital role in the struggle against racial oppression; it is rather to reject its idealisation in the language of the liberation movement.

The tendency of South African marxism to put itself at the mercy of nationalism is not unique; it has been reflected in many countries in which national issues dominate political debate. Writing about the Arab Middle East, Maxime Rodinson has put the matter well:

On the one hand, pure nationalism utilised justifications of a Marxist kind and recruited apologists formed by Marxism... On the other international leftism... vigorously denounced the pure nationalist regimes... But it did not give any less priority to the national struggle. The sophisticated device for justifying this consisted in the thesis that "the masses" were the ones to show unqualified loyalty to the nationalist cause in its most extreme form... Social revolution was therefore seen in what was in the final analysis a nationalist perspective. Thereby it runs the risk of subordination to nationalism (quoted in Hobsbawm, 1989:140).

Hobsbawm was right when he said that one does not have to be a Luxemburgist to recognise the dangers of a marxism which loses itself in nationalism. Lenin was referring to the clearest case of 'revolutionary' anti-imperialist nationalism when he warned his comrades at the Baku Congress of 1920: 'Do not paint nationalism red' (Roy, quoted in Hobsbawm, 1989). The warning still stands.

Bibliographic Note
The author is a member of the Department of Sociology, University of Warwick. An earlier version of this paper was presented to the 1989 Conference of The Review of African Political Economy on Taking Democracy Seriously: Socialists and Democracy in Africa (22-24 September 1989 at the University of Warwick).

Sources cited in the text (listed alphabetically by author) are:
Empowerment of Women in Uganda: Real or Symbolic
Rosalind E. Boyd

This article analyses the initiatives that have been taken affecting women within the structures of government and autonomous organisations since the National Resistance Movement (NRM) government came to power in January 1986 under the leadership of Yoweri Museveni. Are the traditional relations of power based on gender being challenged by the changes instituted under the NRM government?

Following an introductory comment on the socio-economic situation of contemporary Uganda under the NRM, this article will examine three principal government initiatives affecting women: the establishment of elected Resistance Committees with a mandatory position for women; the creation and then upgrading of the Women’s Desk within the NRM Secretariat to Directorate for Women’s Affairs; and the establishment of the Ministry for Women in Development. I shall then focus on women within trade unions and within autonomous women’s organisations. The article does not, however, look at the hidden struggles in everyday life, the non-organised forms of resistance to gender oppression that I recognise to be part of the process of women’s empowerment. Nor do I examine women’s relationship to land or the past struggles of women in Uganda.

Ugandan women, as women in all patriarchal societies, confront an oppressive, subordinate situation in the workplace, in the family and in most spheres of society. Traditional gender-based attitudes are deeply ingrained in social consciousness, limiting women’s access to and control over all spheres of life — be it educational opportunities, political participation, work or legal rights.

Coupled with that traditional culture, Uganda has a recent legacy that cannot be overlooked when we examine women’s empowerment. This is a legacy of state terror, civil strife, brutalization over the past two decades, a legacy which has done deep damage to civil life. This legacy has resulted in an increase in domestic violence (Mukasa-Kikonyogo, 1987 and 1988), suicides, breakdown of families, abandoned children, a major increase in female-headed households and major dislocations in the rural economy with far-reaching implications for rural women (Loxley 1986). The massive socio-economic devastation has been particularly harsh for women so that a fundamental re-evaluation of their condition is needed. This article, while not intended to offer such a re-evaluation, nevertheless points to changes now emerging in their situation which contribute to a process of empowerment of women.

There are some unresolved and difficult tensions that emerge from these changes, tensions that are specific to women’s struggles for empowerment within most agriculturally-based third world societies: state control versus autonomous organisations, rural versus urban bias and educated elite women versus peasant women. In contemporary Ugandan society, these demarcations are not as definite as in other societies. Urban Ugandans are generally not alienated from their rural background. Given the actual socio-economic conditions in Uganda, particularly...
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the overriding economic constraints and the legacy of two decades of civil
devastation, the initiatives by the state at this juncture appear to be in a favourable
direction for ensuring women's integration into the decision-making process.

The government initiatives that I focus on, in relation to decision-making powers
within the state apparatus, may be seen as a partial response to many years of
political agitation by Ugandan women. In that history, there are real divisions and
power struggles, often rooted in regional and religious differences. However, it
appears that the recent civil war in Uganda, almost 20 years after independence,
has brought about deeper questioning of the subordinate position of women and
given a very different political context to women's struggles.

Socio-economic Situation
Some aspects of Uganda's recent history are quite familiar: the terrorising reign
of Idi Amin from 1971 to 1979; the Ugandan Liberation Front ousting of Amin with
the assistance of the Tanzanian army; the terror of the 'Obote II regime', often
described as worse for the citizenry than Amin's dictatorship; the civil war of the
1980s, particularly within the Luwero Triangle area north of Kampala where
thousands died. In the west there has also been much fascination with the
'priestess' Alice Lakwena and Lakwenaism, and the stories of AIDS. Uganda has
had ten governments in 26 years, only two of which were elected. It is the 'unsteady
state' par excellence (Saul 1976:13); its crises had made the country an
international pariah.

But there is another reality for Uganda, one of resistance and one that began to
emerge during the 1980s civil war, leading to the January 1986 takeover of power
by the National Resistance Movement. January 1986 was a turning point in the
history of Uganda, in which women played a vital role, as they do in most
nationalist struggles (Ankrah 1987). Women were army soldiers, integrated into
the National Resistance Army (NRA). Others, 'countless ordinary village women
performed a variety of vital tasks essential to the resistance movement's victory';
they supplied food and provided key intelligence information essential for strategic
planning. While so often after the military struggle, the position of women remains
unchanged, that does not appear to be what is occurring in Uganda. In fact,
women's active participation in the NRA appears to have broken many attitudinal
barriers 'in the minds of male soldiers' (Ankrah, 1987:24). During those years in the
bush, from 1981-1986, gender questions began to be consciously addressed by the
NRA/NRM. The words and actions of the leadership of the NRA/NRM continue to
reflect a consciousness of gender-based inequality and a determination to alter it.

Shortly after coming to power, President Museveni addressed women directly in
a speech for International Women's Day, 8 March 1986. In fact he is locally referred
to by women as a 'pro-women President'. In that speech, he said that women in
Uganda had been everything in Uganda's history yet they had been disadvantaged
all through history. They had been the tractors in the field constituting 60-70% of
agricultural labour, the pumps for the water, 'the wheelbarrows, bicycles and other
beasts of burden'. Under the NRM government, he vowed to change that situation.
In 1989 he argued that 'women should draw away from traditional emphasis on
handicrafts and engage in more productive small-scale industrial activities.' He
cited as examples soya milling and jam making establishments already being run
by some women's groups. He went on to say
there is an urgent need to destroy the prevailing (self) defeatist mentality among large sections of the womenfolk, that they are less capable than men. This mentality is a result of centuries of intimidation and indoctrination and subjugation by men. This must be fought because such subservience is an obstacle to the development of the maximum potential in women.

Museveni remarked that generally subordination of women is a universal phenomenon, but that the NRM government will enhance the political and socio-economic legitimisation of the role of women in the development process. He quoted Amilcar Cabral who once raised the necessity of 'cutting off the dead branches of tradition', retaining and assimilating only those in resonance with concrete reality (Weekly Topic, 16 March 1988).

While the experiences of women in Uganda, like women elsewhere, make them cautious about possible manipulation by political forces, the actions taken by the NRM government to date suggest a commitment towards the full participation of women in rebuilding their society. Reinforcing the attitudinal change that seems to be emanating from the government is the character of the NRA/NRM and its political programme. The motivation for joining the Movement was to remove state terror, to liberate the country from military regimes responsible for rapes, robberies, murders and general terrorising of the civilian population. During the civil war, the NRA operated with a strict, almost puritanical, code in relation to the civilian population in stark contrast to the past military terror. As a result, villagers provided assistance to the NRA/NRM and often joined their ranks. In fact, although the social base of the NRA was initially from the peasantry and intellectuals from the southern regions, the NRA had sympathisers in large sections of the country by the time it came to power, although its organised political base covered only about half of the country (Mamdani, 1988:1168).

When the NRA/NRM took power, this positive relationship with the civilian population continued. Many of the first reports remarked upon the polite and respectful attitude of NRA soldiers toward the civilian population (see South, 1986 and Rusk, 1986:98). While this was not surprising to those who knew the political guerilla movement from the inside, it was a remarkable change for Ugandan civil society. Once in power, the NRA/NRM presented their ten-point programme consistent with their code of ethical behaviour vis-a-vis the population. Democracy, security and national unity were given priority; without doubt, a new feeling of peace and security has characterised their first years in power (up to the time of writing). Many of the major military challenges from the north and east have been resolved, although there are still pockets of banditry and occasional remnants of Lakwenatism, attributable in large measure to extreme economic deprivation.

Economically, however, the country continues to suffer terribly. Most of the working population is not making a living wage; government policies imposed by the IMF severely hurt the labouring population. Many live in miserable poverty. Children are being kept out of schools as parents cannot afford the fees. Clearly two decades of destruction cannot be turned around in just three years. But factories are beginning to reopen, sugar, coffee, textiles and cement being the priorities. Food production is recovering although uneven distribution still remains a serious problem due to lack of transport.

Women make up well over 50% of Uganda's 16 million population. They provide 60% of the labour force in the agriculture sector and account for over 80% in food
production. The fact that they now have a President and leadership that recognises their vital role is significant.

**Defining Empowerment**
Resistance is a way of life for women. We spend our lifetimes resisting the daily conditions of oppression and subordination in a patriarchal world system. So it is not surprising that women in Uganda, with a legacy of brutalisation, violence and economic hardship, are asserting their place within the changing context of Ugandan society. Before we focus on these changes, let me explain what I understand by empowerment, particularly in an agricultural society such as Uganda.

Empowerment, in my view, is a process by which people acquire real powers and command real resources within their locality; by that, I mean recognised power over material resources and recognised power institutionalised within the political structures. It constitutes an affirmation of confidence that one has the tools, the mechanisms and the resources to make decisions capable of solving one's own problems. At particular historical junctures, the state can facilitate empowerment by helping people in a limited way to realise their own aspirations. In other words, there are historic moments when the interests of the oppressed and that of the state correspond and the oppressed can draw advantages from that situation.

At this historical juncture, the state in Uganda needs to stabilise, to strengthen itself, to reconstitute itself after two decades of devastation; it has decided, under the NRM government, to try to do so with the institutionalised support and participation of women, traditionally marginal and subordinate within state structures. It appears that a process towards real empowerment of women in contemporary Uganda is taking place despite the traditional gender biases and severe economic hardship that militate against such empowerment.

**Resistance Councils and Committees**
The most important initiative of the NRM government is the establishment of the Resistance Committees and Councils (RCs) throughout the country, a continuation of the organisational structures that existed during the civil war in 'the bush'. The RCs are the democratic grassroots mechanism instituted to ensure popular democratic participation. There are nine elected seats on each RC with a mandatory place for at least one woman. Statutes give judicial and political powers to citizens through these elected committees and councils. Each of the 32 districts is divided into five administrative zones; that is, RC I at the village level, RC II at the parish level, RC III at sub-county, RC IV at county and RC V at district. Villagers at the grassroots, including women, thus have the power to elect their own representatives.

The existence of these committees has made mobilisation, particularly for women, easier; messages transfer more effectively between the grassroots and a given Ministry. Self-help projects are much easier to coordinate between the village and the Ministry. The African Housing Fund has provided loans via the Women's Ministry (together with the Ministries for Housing and Urban Planning and Youth, Culture and Sports) for women in Masoliita in the Luwero Triangle, to build houses which were destroyed by the war. Women and youth are now involved in
brick-making and tile-making for construction of their own houses, working organisationally through the RCs.

There are of course some difficulties with the RCs; people for so long excluded from democratic participation in the state system, and especially women, must learn how to participate. Seminars are held in various parts of the countryside to raise consciousness about the RCs and about the importance of their full participation. Traditionally, particularly in rural Uganda, women did not easily speak about their personal burdens; they did not openly participate with males, even with their husbands, in conversation. Their two decades of struggle began to change that situation and now the RCs are providing an organisational way of ensuring that women are not just seen but that their views and needs are heard and acted upon.

Other gender-based struggles emerged in interviews with women in Iganga, Mbarara, Masaka, Mbale, Jinja and Mukono. The RCs appear to provide a challenge to traditional gender ideology in the economy and in the household. It is recognised that women are the farmers of Uganda, responsible for 80% of food production. In fact, 'the great majority of African women are farmers' (Henn 1984). It is thus significant to stress that the NRM has appointed a woman, Victoria Sekitoleko, as the Minister of Agriculture, the only one in any African country. Her appointment is to be recognised as an historic one for women but particularly for African women. She is responsible for developing policy for agriculture where women are overwhelmingly affected. Mrs. Sekitoleko knows what it is to experience the world as a woman farmer from Jinja (interviews, 25 and 27 September; 4 October 1988). However she is also a highly competent professional with clear expertise, a graduate in agriculture from Makerere University who worked for several years with the Rural Credit Farmers Schemes in the bank and was Deputy Minister of Agriculture from January 1986 until February 1988 when she became Minister. Her Ministry has been accorded a high priority in terms of resources, having been given 16% of the most recent budget.

The Ministry's first priority is to feed the population with a balanced diet. Its second priority is to provide raw materials for Uganda's industries (cotton for textiles, coffee for export, sugar for local consumption etc). To some extent, these priorities can be seen to challenge traditional gender ideology which put women's food production as a less valued activity. The emphasis on a 'balanced' diet for all the population confronts another aspect of gender ideology: that is sex differentiation in food intake in favour of males. Women traditionally have less access to protein-rich foods such as eggs, chicken and goats meat. In addition to their multiple roles, they suffered from poor nutrition. Mrs. Sekitoleko has established a Food and Nutrition Council which is strongly educative; she has developed a 'women's desk' within the Ministry and is organising the overseas training of women (to Canada, the UK and Germany), particularly as agricultural extension officers — usually preserved for men by development agencies.

The appointment of Mrs. Sekitoleko indicates how real empowerment for women within the state is in process. It also demonstrates the importance of rural grassroots experiential understanding at the top levels of government, which suggests a possible working alliance between educated women and peasant women farmers. Women's empowerment, to have real meaning, has to exist at all levels of society. It is not simply enough to have grassroots organisations expressing those interests. They must have a meaningful linkage, a way of
influencing those within the highest level of decision-making within the state apparatus. It is not enough to ensure that women at the rural levels participate; they must also have mechanisms that translate their participation into policy-making within the state apparatus.

Some additional questions surface about the RCs that relate to empowerment. The RCs were until February 1988 under the NRM Secretariat, the political arm of the NRM. Since then they have become the responsibility of the Minister of Local Government which means that District Administrators are now members of the civil service. Formerly they were political representatives of the NRM Secretariat simply coordinating district RCs.

The question thus arises: to what extent, as organs of the state, can the RCs be truly expressions of grassroots empowerment? Can they be truly critical? Can they challenge corruption within the civil service or parastatals? Will they be muffled from their initial grassroots populist tendency by being incorporated into the institutional structures of the state? Are they to be organisations of the state, of the party, i.e. the NRM Secretariat, or of the people? (Mamdani 1988:1176-77).

These questions are part of the present political discourse within Uganda. However, in the present context, they appear marginal to women's gender subordination. The struggle against women's subordination and oppression will occur whether the RCs are under the control of the party, of the state or of the people. Even if we agree that the RCs, to have real democratic powers, must be vested in 'the people', women would still face struggles against their subordination within that structure.

**Directorate of Women's Affairs, NRM Secretariat**

In addition to the RCs, the other important structure of government is the NRM Secretariat, which is the political mobilisation apparatus of the party with eleven different directorates, one of which is a Directorate of Women's Affairs. The seminars explaining the workings of the RCs or addressing their problems often directly involve the Women's Directorate. The Director of Women's Affairs, responsible to the National Political Commissar, is Janette Mukwaya. She is a former magistrate who was one of the three prominent women mobilisers for the NRM/NRA during the struggle from 1981 to 1986 (personal interview, 17 November 1987). ‘Apart from the actual fighting, formulating guidelines and overseeing the courts “in the bush”, Mrs. Mukwaya took responsibility for mobilising villagers to ensure an adequate support system for the guerillas’ (Ankrah 1987:23).

This Directorate, in the early stages, was instrumental in getting the Women's Lawyers Association of Uganda to provide free legal services for women. It stresses leadership training programmes in the rural areas and recognises that men must be involved in changing gender attitudes. Although hampered by a lack of transport, mass mobilisation and rehabilitation activities in the countryside are an important part of the Directorate’s work.

**Ministry for Women in Development**

As mentioned earlier, the NRM government established a full Ministry for Women in Development in February 1988. Such an initiative, according it a full separate status and not making it an appendage of community development or social
development, gives clear formal recognition to efforts to alter gender imbalance and to consolidate resources for women's empowerment. However, it is the existence of other critical appointments and structures made in tandem with the Ministry that offset possible ghettoisation of women's concerns.

The first Minister for Women in Development is Joyce Mpanga, former chair of the National Council on Women, former Deputy Head of the Public Service Commission, and former lecturer in Education at Makerere. The Ministry is responsible for government policy on women and development projects affecting women. At present, the Ministry seeks to conduct a national survey of women's needs in order to re-evaluate women's situation throughout the country after so many years of turmoil. It has six divisions: legal affairs, research, education and training, NGOs, project implementation and communication and information. It also maintains a close liaison with the Women's Affairs Directorate of the NRM Secretariat. The new Ministry has made its first priority improving the lot of rural women in the villages (a project for training women for integrated rural development had just been developed but funds were still being sought).

Although her office is located in Kampala, the Minister and her rather limited staff constantly travel in the countryside meeting and mobilising rural women in conjunction with the RCs who, in turn, often work with various autonomous women's organisations, particularly on small-scale economic activities and self-help housing projects. The Ministry, like others involved in mobilisation work, is hampered by lack of transport and consequent lack of mobility. Yet my research suggests that women somehow do overcome this problem. Over 60 women representing eleven organisations in Mbarara district managed to assemble for a meeting with me in September 1988. About 50 women trade unionists came to Kampala for an all-day seminar in November 1987 and about 100 rural women gathered in the district of Iganga for another meeting. The organisational capacity of women at the grassroots is strengthened structurally by the Women's Ministry working in conjunction with the RCs.

Women in the countryside are organising themselves principally for small-scale economic activities such as cooperative shambas, stressing that they felt themselves participating, organising collectively and freely for economic improvement. In addition to providing needed survival income, these activities give important management experience to women and are also meaningful expressions of solidarity for them. The NRM government has put in place state structures and resources to promote activities aimed at improving the situation of women in the rural and urban localities in Uganda. In many ways, these are a response to what women had been informally attempting on their own when during the years of tragic isolation they had only their own resources to fall back on. While the resources are still very limited, it remains to be seen how deeply transformative these initiatives will be.

Trade Unions and Industry
The three principal factories visited during my research were coffee (Bigisu in Mbale), sugar (Lugazi in Mukono district) and textile (Nytil in Jinja) in which women are present alongside men in the labour process, hauling heavy bags of coffee while breathing hazardous coffee dust. Their working conditions are harsh and their pay inadequate. Not surprisingly, women workers in industry have
experienced an even more disadvantaged, hidden and subordinate position than male workers.

Only in 1987 was the women's wing of the National Organisation of Trade Unions (NOTU) recognised constitutionally by the union and ten of the fifteen unions within NOTU now have women's wings. Rank and file women workers report that they still have limited resources for organising effective workplace actions. Grievance procedure, working conditions and wages for women continue to be unaddressed problems.

Of the three unions, the women's wing of the National Union of Plantation and Agricultural Workers (NUPAW) at the Lugazi sugar factory (officially the Sugar Corporation of Uganda with 51% government ownership) appears to be the most organised. They have developed ideas for supplementing their income: handicrafts, poultry and piggery farms, and a knitting and tailoring project. Yet they must appeal to management or to the union or to organisations abroad for resources to develop these projects, rather than to local small-scale loans or credit schemes that could contribute to their self-reliance. Furthermore, there was an apparent absence of workplace agitation to improve their factory situation. However, with their organisational capacity and new structures in place, it may be just a matter of time before these women workers will assert their demands within the unions.

There is also additional potential for mobilisation, a point of intersection between women in labour, specifically within the unions of these industries, and in the state, specifically in the Ministry of Industry — which has yet to be explored. The Deputy Minister of Industry is Gertrude Njuba who was another key mobiliser for the NRM/NRA from February 1981 until January 1986. From February 1981 until March 1982, while working in Kampala as a government tax collector and living clandestinely in a crowded slum area of Kampala, referred to locally as Kikuubo, Mrs. Njuba undertook a series of important tasks for the NRA such as establishing an intelligence network and recruitment of soldiers as well as transporting equipment, food, arms and funds (personal interviews, 25 September and 3 October 1988; Ankrah 1987:24). From 1982 until January 1986, during the civil war, she lived in the bush with the guerillas where she continued many of these tasks. It is not unreasonable to think that as Deputy Minister of Industry she could be a point of intersection between the state and organised women workers of these industries to develop appropriate strategies for improving their situation. Yet, as far as I am aware, the women's wings of the trade union do not yet interact with her, with the Women's Ministry or with the Women's Affairs Directorate of the NRM Secretariat. Nor do the trade unions appear to relate in an organised way to the RCs, which are organised according to residence rather than workplace. While this makes sense in the rural villages, RCs need also to be appropriately introduced into the workplace.

Gender-related attitudinal barriers continue to exist within the trade unions. Conflicts still exist for women with domestic responsibilities. Sexual harassment in the workplace is still a major problem. While the women's wings have been established, they have not yet developed meaningful collective action in the workplace. This situation will no doubt change as women strengthen their place within the unions and assert their specific grievances. They continually stressed the importance of workers education and the need for solidarity with women within unions of other countries, both of which they presently lack. With new
structures in place and the possibility for a point of interaction with the state, women workers may be able to achieve some positive changes.

However, their problems are also tied in with the larger issue of organised labour in Uganda, that is the hopelessly inappropriate labour legislation that remains largely unchanged since the 1960s. The NRM government has recently agreed to have a tripartite meeting where the National Organisation of Trade Unions (NOTU) and the Federation of Uganda Employers (FUE) will examine with the government Uganda's current labour legislation in order to propose appropriate changes. Unionised women workers need to be able to voice their concerns within this forum as well.

**Autonomous Women's Organisations and the State**

The emergence of numerous women's organisations within Uganda parallels that of many other countries during the 1980s (Boyd-b 1988). These organisations raise questions about possible mobilisation towards an autonomous women's movement in Uganda, if indeed that is a desireable direction toward authentic empowerment of women.

As noted, the Women's Ministry has a non-governmental organisation (NGOs) division. Initially, my research, in November 1987, gave cause for concern that this division would ensure that women's NGOs would be co-opted into state activity: 'institutional or state co-opting has in a way been the dominant characteristic of the NRM/NRA government' (Boyd-a, 1988). Subsequent research in late 1988 somewhat modified this view. The proliferation of NGOs has been (partly) the result of efforts to obtain foreign funding, which is being increasingly directed to NGOs in the third world. Governments generally seek to monitor who is receiving funds, from where and for what purpose. There often arises a tension between government monitoring and control but it does not appear to be a problem at present in Uganda.

In Uganda, women's NGOs like other NGOs are not controlled by the state although some find it to their advantage to have a formal liaison. The state can be a facilitator in strengthening their activities, particularly at this juncture when resources are very limited. However, the possibility of reinforcing a dependent relationship (i.e. the NGOs depending on the state for their resources) needs to be resisted just as the state consolidating too strong a hold over NGOs also needs to be resisted.

The National Council of Women, established by Presidential decree in 1978 by Amin's regime, is an umbrella organisation for about 40 registered women's NGOs. At present it operates somewhat like a parastatal under the wing of the Women's Ministry. It has had a rather chequered history and, at one time, was accused of being controlled by various sectarian or party interests. In September 1985, the National Council organised an important peace march in Kampala which, some have suggested, began to establish its place as an independent forum for women. However, leading researchers disagree on how to interpret the place of the Council (Tadria 1987:87-89; Ankrah 1987:13-16). At the present time, the Council is active but, under the Women's Ministry, its role as an independent national forum for women continues to present problems.

Not surprisingly, the main concerns of most of the effective women's NGOs directly result from the objective economic conditions in the country. As already
mentioned, there has been a large increase in single-head households; women are estimated to be heading 40-70% of households in different parts of the country variously affected by the war (personal interviews and Tadria 1987). They are well aware of the need to develop economic activities to generate income in the absence of work or a living wage. They are determined to do so and are coming together in groups throughout the country for that purpose. Some examples are the co-operative shambas, hatcheries, poultry and piggery farms, as well as soya milling and jam making activities.

One of the most interesting research-oriented women's NGOs in Uganda presently is Action for Development (ACFODE). ACFODE was originally formed in 1985 as a pressure group to conscientize women, especially as many of them were excluded from the activities of the UN Decade for Women, which coincided with some of the most tragic years of terror and isolation for many Ugandans. ACFODE has approximately 100 members now. It is actively involved in action-oriented participatory research. It recently held a Networking Seminar in rural villages, allying itself more concretely with rural women's concerns and groups already existing there. While most of its active membership are educated townswomen, they seek to work in alliance with rural women for rural women's empowerment, a solidarity phenomenon that is increasingly characteristic of women's activities in many societies (Boyd-b, 1988:11). Some of ACFODE members are also elected representatives on the RCs.

ACFODE has also recently started a 'Job Centre' to make themselves more self-reliant and less dependent on outside funding. They also have plans to begin a women's magazine. As many of their members are Makerere staff (faculty and administrative), it is not surprising that they have been instrumental in lobbying to establish a Women's Studies Programme which will begin at Makerere University in October 1989.

Finally there are several women's NGOs with a specific interest in the welfare of children. Parentless, destitute, displaced and abandoned children are another severe consequence of the brutalities of Uganda's civil strife. One of the most prominent NGOs responding to these concerns is the Ugandan Women's Effort to Save the Orphans (UWESO). Originally founded in 1985 by a group of Ugandan women in exile in Sweden, UWESO has chapters operating throughout the country (for a comprehensive report on the situation of children, see the UNICEF study published by Nalwanga-Sebina and Sengendo, 1987).

Conclusion

In addressing the question of women's empowerment in contemporary Uganda, I have focused my analysis on questions of infrastructure, gender-based attitudes and state versus autonomous organisations as routes to empowerment. Are the new organisational structures in government, in the trade unions and in the autonomous organisations equipped and able to address the principal concerns of women? Are the traditional relations of power based on gender being challenged by these initiatives?

The establishment of the Resistance Committees, as grassroots organisations, and key ministerial appointments in agriculture, industry and a women's ministry, together with a general gender sensitivity demonstrated by the NRM and reinforced by the consciousness-raising activities of the political wing of the NRM, the
Women's Affairs Directorate of the NRM Secretariat and of pertinent autonomous women's organisations, together form the basis for a process of real empowerment of women in Uganda. Structures are in place, women are in leadership positions in the government, in the judiciary and in other organisations throughout the country, at all levels; rural women are gradually participating in the state system and real resources (though far too limited) are being made available directly to women. In the process, it appears that gender-based discrimination may be beginning to erode.

But clearly these initiatives, though significant, have a long difficult road ahead. Gender-based discrimination is still deeply entrenched. Women in Uganda are fully aware that they can never be complacent; their struggle is on-going. The empowerment of women continues to face other obstacles. The other big barrier to women's empowerment is the economic deprivation throughout the country. In spite of this, women are determined in a new climate of relative stability and peace under the NRM, to organise and assert themselves within Ugandan society as reconstruction takes place.

Bibliographic Note
Rosalind Boyd is a CDAS Associate Fellow and editor of Labour, Capital and Society, McGill University, Montreal, Canada. An earlier version of this paper was presented to the 1989 Roape Conference on Taking Democracy Seriously: Socialists and Democracy in Africa, held at the University of Warwick, 22-24 September 1989. The paper was originally presented to the 12th Annual Conference of the Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women, 'Women and Development', Laval University, Quebec City, Canada, 11-13 November 1988. It was also presented as a CDAS discussion paper in January 1989.

The paper is the result of two research trips to Uganda by the author. The first took place in November 1987 when she was the guest of the Group for the Study of Labour at Makerere University when the focus was on women active in trade unions, autonomous women's organisations and research work at the university. The second occurred in September and October 1988 and was organised by the Ministry for Women in Development. On this trip, it was possible to visit shambas, factories and small projects, attending meetings of village committees and women's organisations, and also to interview a number of government ministers and NRM leaders.

References cited in the text are:
The Debate on Democracy in Contemporary Zimbabwe
L.M. Sachikonye

There has been a vigorous debate on the forms and content of ‘democracy’ in contemporary Zimbabwe. The debate still rages. It focuses on broad but interrelated themes: the arguments for and against the creation of a one-party state and the accountability of the political leadership to the masses; the land question as the countdown towards the scrapping of the Lancaster House constitution in 1990 continues; and on the new (more liberal) investment code, particularly its strictures on labour. The significance of this debate, which the state-controlled media has failed to muzzle, is that it indicates the emergence of a resilient democratic political culture. It also points to different strands of thought on these central issues whose resolution will contribute in one way or another to the trajectory of Zimbabwean politics.

The One-Party State Debate
The debate on the one-party state began in the early 1980s and still continues. The context in which the debate emerged was one in which there were still unresolved differences between the two major parties, ZANU-PF and PF-ZAPU, both of which had constituted the Patriotic Front before independence in 1980. In that context, the arguments for the creation of a one-party state posed a threat to the continued existence of ZAPU which won most seats in Matabeleland in the 1980 and 1985 elections. However, the case for the one-party state has not been tied solely to the political objective of legislating the dissolution of ZAPU or, alternatively, its incorporation into ZANU-PF. The advocates of the one-party state have also reiterated familiar arguments about the need to achieve national unity (‘a multi-party system is a luxury and a divisive structure in a developing society’). They pointed to certain African cases where the multi-party system has ‘failed’ and where opposition parties have been used as stooges by certain foreign powers. The advocates of the one-party system also frequently refer to an unspecified African tradition which encourages the settlement of political disputes through the mediation of the ‘chief’ and extend this function to the dominant and sole political party. In summary, the arguments for the one-party system centre on its alleged superiority to multi-party states (because it minimizes internecine factionalism) and on its claimed value as an indispensable tool for national unity and the romanticization of an African tradition for consensus. There is nothing original in these assumptions. The advocates of the one-party state have been rehearsing well-worn but, it must be suggested, questionable arguments.

The critique of the case for the one-party state has been based on several interrelated arguments. One is that, rather than legislate for a one-party state (as most African states have done), why not let it emerge as a result of a political contest between freely competing parties? Nobody would question the legitimacy of a party which swept 100 per cent of the seats on the basis of its electoral appeal.
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This argument has sought to shift the terms of the debate from the necessity for a legal fiat to introduce a one-party state to the need for a political test between parties at the polls. It is an argument which casts serious doubts over the ability of ZANU-PF to win such an overwhelming victory as to displace PF-ZAPU's backing in its Matabeleland stronghold. There has been no adequate nor convincing response from the advocates of the one-party state to this simple political test.

The second aspect of the critique of the one-party system has been its historical record. Certain states in Africa, cited as models of 'democratic' one-party systems in which internal opposition is or was encouraged, have been dismissed as irrelevant for Zimbabwe. Doubts have been expressed about the democratic basis of such systems; in any case, examples exist in those same countries of the suppression in one form or another of opposition movements. Indeed, it is suggested there is nothing particularly inspiring about party machines which sustained leaders in office until death or coup d'etat. Many of the assumptions about the presumed African tradition of settling internal problems through consensus are seen to be ahistorical and empirically questionable. The authoritarianism which characterised one-party systems did not represent rule by consensus, it is argued.

The third aspect of the critique of the one-party system concerned the material imperatives which explain the desire within the ruling elite for a one-party state system. As one critic has argued:

In every society the dominant class interests have a stake in the existing arrangements of affairs and necessarily prefer the continuation and reproduction of existing arrangements. To ensure this, an institutional apparatus that conforms to and reinforces the existing arrangements is established (Moto, May 1984).

According to this argument, the one-party structure is a convenient device to perpetuate rule by a particular elite or coalition of interests. Periodic electoral tests remove the possibility of being unseated; no accounting for political and economic mistakes therefore occurs.

Finally, the critique of the one-party system accepts the argument that a multi-party system does not necessarily imply the existence of democratic representation and social rights. But neither does it accept that this observation is a sufficient argument against a multi-party system and for a one-party system. If the existence of different class forces is accepted, then that of different political organisations to express those divergent interests should also be recognised.

The significance of the debate for Zimbabwean politics has been that the argument for the one-party state has been challenged even within certain sections of ZANU-PF itself. However, interestingly enough, there was some backing, provided certain conditions were met, for the idea from within the ZAPU opposition. The unity accord between ZANU and ZAPU in December 1987 was therefore expected to usher in the one-party system. However, the continued strength and convincing nature of the critique of the one-party system has kept the issue on the agenda. In the process, several developments, including the Willowgate car scandal which forced the resignation of at least five Cabinet Ministers, confirmed the serious doubts which existed about any trend towards autocratic tendencies where the party leadership was not accountable to the electorate on a regular basis. The subsequent formation of the Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM), a breakaway from
ZANU-PF led by Edgar Tekere, and its capacity to mobilise about 30 per cent of the votes cast in the Dzivaresekwa by-election in July 1989, further weakened the argument for a one-party state. The capacity of the newly formed ZUM (which campaigned on an anti-corruption ticket) to capture this significant proportion of the vote (in spite of formidable obstacles, such as lack of publicity in the state-controlled media and restrained access to facilities to address rallies) raised further serious doubts about the efficacy of the one-party state argument.

There does appear to exist a constituency for ZUM. It challenges the hegemony of the united ZANU party. It condemns the one-party concept as undemocratic and as a protective shield for corrupt elements within the political leadership. The significance of ZUM is that it represents an alternative political tendency formerly accommodated within ZANU. Edgar Tekere, ZUM's leader, was once the Party's Secretary-General, a Cabinet Minister and Provincial Chairman. His anti-corruption and anti-authoritarian stance, both within and outside Parliament, inevitably brought on himself the wrath of the Party's senior leadership and ultimately led to his expulsion from ZANU in late 1988.

Yet there is nothing in ZUM's platform that makes it more radical or socialist than the party it seeks to discredit. The ideological position of ZUM is ambiguous and amorphous. It has sought to distance itself from the socialist rhetoric of ZANU. Whether its reading is that the prevailing cynicism about ZANU's socialist credentials would be a source of weakness if ZUM was seen to run on a socialist programme ticket, or whether it is an electoral ploy to be as populist as possible on a broad and vague platform, is not clear. ZUM represents a threat to ZANU's electoral success because it feeds on several basic grievances which are widely shared after nine years of independence. These include unfulfilled expectations symbolised by rising unemployment, a spiralling cost of living, land hunger and disillusionment with the tendencies towards self-enrichment and corruption by some sections of the political leadership.

ZUM presently articulates this disillusionment and cynicism; yet it also reflects aspirations for a cleaner government under a political leadership responsive to the masses. We have observed that it has no coherent ideology (save its aspersions against all-isms) nor a political programme. This may yet prove its major weakness even if it may have broad short-term electoral appeal across the political spectrum. But it cannot continue 'to be all things to all men'. There is no guarantee that its broad-based populism will be more effective in achieving the material aspirations of the masses than did ZANU's socialist rhetoric.

However, the significance of ZUM lies more in changing the terms of the debate on the one-party system. It has shown it can mobilise considerable electoral support, thus undermining the claim that the preconditions for a one-party system already exist in Zimbabwe. In spite of the enormous obstacles put in its way, it has posed a significant challenge to ZANU's hegemony and indeed to the argument for a one-party system. At the level of theoretical argument and political practice, it has been demonstrated that the one-party system is neither necessary nor inevitable.

Accountability of the Political Leadership
The second major area of debate has focused on the accountability of the political leadership to the masses. This has been an on-going issue since 1980 and relates
to the Leadership Code drafted in 1984. This is a code of conduct — relating to limits on the acquisition of wealth which the political leadership is expected to abide by. It excludes party leaders (central committee, provincial, district and branch leaders) and government leaders (from ministers to senior civil servants) from receiving more than one salary, income from rented property, owning more than 50 acres of agricultural land and establishing businesses as avenues of accumulation. The need to draw up a Leadership Code was itself an admission of the propensity of some of the party and government leadership to utilise its power and influence to accumulate wealth. There was nothing unnatural about the growth of such a tendency towards capitalist accumulation amongst the petit or nascent bourgeoisie. The naive assumption was that the Leadership Code would succeed in nipping in the bud such a tendency where it had failed in such states as Tanzania and Zambia. At the same time, nevertheless, the appearance of the Code dovetailed with the expressed socialist objectives of the government and reflected the disquiet of the masses over the acquisitive tendencies amongst some leaders soon after independence.

Significantly, the debate over the accountability of leaders never questioned the need for a Leadership Code. Even acquisitive leaders did not argue publicly against it. It was a Party instrument to limit rampant corruption and aggressive accumulation by this emergent bourgeoisie. However, it is also generally clear that the Code was never taken seriously by some of the leadership. It was a weak if not a toothless instrument. The observation was made that the demands that were being made on the leadership in terms of the Leadership Code remained essentially on the moralistic level and excluded, at least by implication, all those who were not leaders in the party. There was, therefore, no real structural challenge to the capitalist system as a whole (Mandaza, 1986:53).

A great deal of ‘voluntarism’ on the part of the leaders was assumed, somewhat naively. In reality, only a few leaders adhered faithfully to the precepts of the Code. In 1987 and particularly in 1988, criticisms of some leaders’ appetite for accumulation reached a new crescendo. University students demonstrated against ‘corruption in high places’. Inside and outside Parliament, Tekere denounced the graft and abuse of office by certain leaders.

The ‘Willowgate’ car scandal in which several Cabinet Ministers were implicated involved the misuse of office in acquiring cars which were then resold at higher prices. It was a clear case of profiteering from the sale of the famous ‘Toyota Cressidas’. However, the findings of the Sandura Commission, which probed the scandal, raised additional issues apart from the motive of profiteering by unscrupulous political leaders. Firstly, it underlined some of the limitations of state owned companies (of which the Willowvale plant is one): they can be vulnerable to pressure from politicians. Their efficiency and allocation system become compromised in the process. Secondly, the conditions of shortage of cars provided the context in which some powerful politicians profiteered by selling vehicles at prices above the controlled prices. The removal of such shortages may well be the long-term solution. As the Sandura Commission observed it is necessary to make available a far larger allocation of foreign currency than is granted at present for the importation of motor vehicle kits and spares (Sandura Commission, 1989:11).
The roots of the Willowgate scandal should be sought not only in the greed of certain politicians but also the shortages which put a premium on the cars. The recurrence of such greed and profiteering in other shortage areas cannot therefore be discounted in future.

Thirdly, the findings of the Commission showed the growing web of ties between some politicians and the business class. The latter includes also individual white and Asian businessmen, multinational and local companies. These were all involved in the corruption-based profiteering which occurred either over lending money to the politicians concerned or over buying cars at exhorbitant prices. The web of corruption was thus indicative of the emergent post-Independence political economy. While the scandal tainted the politicians concerned in a spectacular fashion, the other accomplices within the bourgeoisie and their abettment of corruption should not be overlooked.

Finally, the Commission's conclusions confirmed fully the fears and suspicions which the masses and students had expressed about the acquisitive practices of politicians in recent years. It was a case of 'we told you so'. The huge crowds at the Commission's public hearings, to which the politicians (Cabinet Ministers) were summoned to testify, was a rare spectacle of democracy. The legal overtones of the hearings did not dampen their political significance: the masses could express publicly their contempt at the corruption and profiteering by some senior ministers. Even the arrogance displayed towards them and immortalised in the famous retort, 'one fool at a time', to refer to the people in the public gallery could no longer obscure the fact that the politicians did indeed need to account for their misdeeds. The authoritarianism couched in arrogant mannerisms no longer sufficed. One minister would later be reminded of his oft-quoted remark: 'who is this little Nyarota', in reference to the newspaper editor who first broke the Willowgate story. The subsequent debate whether or not the ministers should be acquitted on perjury charges also reflected concern at the use of presidential powers.

We have referred to two debates and events which illustrate the desire for democratic structures and practices which encourage, rather than inhibit the expression of different political tendencies and accountability of politicians to the electorate. There are two other debates in contemporary Zimbabwe which relate not so much to the form of 'democracy' but rather to its substantive content. These concern the land question and the recently introduced Investment Code.

The Land Question
The debate on the land question has been infused with greater urgency in the run-up to the scrapping of the Lancaster House constitution and the general election of 1990. Although the land issue has not been ignored in political discussion during the past nine years, there has been an awareness that prior to the abrogation of the constitution there were limits to possibilities for a broad agrarian reform programme. The debate has therefore long simmered rather than being as intense and emotional as it has now become. In the first few years of independence, the resettlement programme for displaced and landless peasants was the centre-piece of agrarian reform. Although it had been premised on the resettlement of 162,000 of them, only about 52,000 have been provided with land to date. The major obstacles to the programme have been financial and logistical.
The resettlement programme has its critics even now: some white MPs in Parliament, some fractions of the bureaucracy, the agrarian bourgeoisie and more privileged strata within the peasantry (the master farmers). Yet the programme also has supporters within ZANU, some sections of the bureaucracy and amongst the peasantry. These contending interests have differed over whether or not more land, especially under-utilised land from the settler sector, should be redistributed amongst peasants in increasingly land-short communal areas (CAS). Much of the argument during the early 1980s was about whether or not such redistribution would lead to the collapse of production in the capitalist agrarian sector. Such a collapse, it was argued, would undermine food security and undercut the foreign exchange earning capacity of the sector. This was the major argument of the agrarian bourgeois lobby and its intellectual and political supporters. However, it proved an unconvincing (and therefore, politically weak) position because there was a significant amount of under-utilisation of land in the capitalist agrarian sector. Careful redistribution of land could occur without touching the productive parts of the farms and estates and therefore without undermining output and the resultant foreign exchange earnings. More significantly, however, peasant output of food and cash crops such as cotton, enjoyed a manifold increase after independence. The argument against land redistribution because of fears over food security proved groundless. Peasant cotton and coffee became significant foreign exchange earners.

The point here is that the terms of the debate over the land question have shifted significantly since the early post-Independence years. The argument is no longer whether more land should be redistributed amongst the peasantry. Even the agrarian bourgeoisie agree that there should be such redistribution. The current debate focuses over the terms and magnitude of such redistribution. This is the context in which the imminent scrapping of the Lancaster House constitution which laid down stringent conditions for the purchase of land from the capitalist sector is being discussed.

Several strands in the current debate can be identified. The first takes a radical position which stipulates that, in view of growing land-hunger amongst the peasantry, the government should redistribute underutilised land whether or not the land owners concur. The opening salvoes in this debate were fired — and significantly so — by Senior Minister Nkomo and President Mugabe. What partly explains the renewed emphasis on agrarian reform via land redistribution is the imminence of the general election in 1990. Peasant grievances over land have not been resolved. The veiled warnings to the agrarian bourgeoisie to make available more land for the peasants is presumably aimed at ‘softening’ them up but also to deflect popular pressures for significant land redistribution. The demands by the leaders for more land for the peasantry are often qualified by the disclaimer that the state does not intend to grab land from the bourgeoisie.

The agrarian bourgeoisie no longer argues against land redistribution but it stresses the problems the government has had in resettling peasants. A favourite argument is that some of the land bought by government has not yet been utilised for resettlement. It turns out that most of this land is located in agro-ecologically unsuitable parts of the country. In some ways, it is a rearguard argument. However, this agrarian bourgeois lobby should not be underestimated. Nor is it without support amongst Western countries and international financial and donor agencies.
Yet another strand within the debate observes that an emergent black bourgeoisie now has a vested interest in the existing status quo in land ownership. This bourgeoisie has been a major beneficiary of the stymied land redistribution programme. It has become a land-owning class and has no intention of giving up that ownership nor of supporting a significant redistribution amongst the peasantry. There would then be few differences if any with the established white agrarian bourgeoisie. Significantly some of this emergent bourgeoisie includes government ministers and politicians. A representative of this critique is Tekere who has argued that too many farms are already owned by too few chiefs (top government officials). He (Dr. Nkomo) should start in Cabinet, at party leadership meetings, to begin reversing the trend that was set in motion in 1980, before he goes to the commercial farmers (Quoted in the Financial Gazette, 21 July 1989).

This argument, of course, plays into the hands of the agrarian bourgeoisie. Yet it would also reflect or explain the cynicism amongst the peasantry with respect to the commitment of the political leadership to making significant agrarian reforms. Indeed, an element conspicuously missing from this debate over land is the peasantry which stands silently in the wings. This reflects their organisational weakness. The National Farmers Association of Zimbabwe (NFAZ) which represents the richer peasantry forcefully argues the case for the allocation of more land to its ‘master farmer’ members. Yet the muted silence of the peasants must not be confused with their restiveness and frustration over land; squatting continues. In the 1990 elections, their powerful argument for agrarian reform may yet be the peasant vote.

Finally, also missing from the debate on the land question is a discussion of the concrete features which the reform should involve and the question of the unfolding social relations amongst the peasantry. This is virgin territory. The question of social differentiation and its contradictory character are absent from the agenda. On the political level, though, the emergence of a black commercial agrarian and small-scale agrarian bourgeoisie (not to speak of the upper peasant stratum) has received expression in their respective contributions to the debate. At the theoretical level, the divergent interests of these classes (and their contradictory implications) require future evaluation. This debate has relevance for understanding the democratic content or otherwise of agrarian reform in contemporary Zimbabwe.

The Investment Code and Labour Conditions
The fourth and final area of interesting debate in Zimbabwe concerns the recently introduced Investment Code and its implications for national economic control and labour conditions. The pressure for the drawing up of a code which sets out more liberal conditions for foreign investors has been building up during the past few years. Indeed, such international financial institutions as the World Bank and the IMF, have been pushing for even greater liberalisation than that envisaged by the Code. However, the significance of the Code relates to an awareness that few foreign companies have invested in post-independence Zimbabwe. In spite of the government’s lukewarm commitment to socialism, it has not been terribly enthusiastic about liberalising conditions for foreign investors. The economic
nationalism within the government and the bureaucracy should not be underestimated.

However, the structural constraints under which the economy operates have influenced the debate in terms of the desirability of foreign investment. The current shortage of investment funds and foreign exchange and growing unemployment impose difficult choices on the government, despite its concern about the costs of foreign investment. In addition, external pressure forced the government to consider becoming a member of the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA) and to work towards 'mutually satisfactory terms to be embodied in bilateral investment treaties with those governments whose nationals are likely to invest in Zimbabwe' (Zimbabwe Government, 1989). Furthermore, there was in the Code an awareness that price and income controls had 'contributed to the high level of unemployment and Government is conscious of the concerns of investors in relation to constraints imposed on enterprises by the operation of these controls. Government further recognises the need for a more rational and market-oriented method of determining prices and incomes' (ibid). The relaxation of these controls has sparked criticism from the unions and students. They argue that the deregulation of prices and labour conditions will hit the working class harder than any other classes. Let us examine more closely the different strands in this debate. The first, espoused by unions and students, argues that

the Code represents both "capitulation" and the "growing contradiction" within the state. It continues to pronounce socialism as the ultimate objective yet it has made it more difficult than ever to attain it (ZCTU, 1989).

It also stresses that workers' rights would be adversely affected by the implementation of the Code. The union have warned that

the workers' position hangs precariously, particularly in view of the implicit strategy to liberalise the process of wage determination (ibid).

Similar fears are expressed over the greater flexibility which the Code imparts to investors with respect to current labour regulations dealing with the termination of employment. The overall critique contained in this strand of the debate concerns the likely erosion of the democratic rights of workers to employment security and minimum wages. The relevance of the debate on the Code to the discussion on democracy lies precisely in the content of existing democratic rights which will be vulnerable if existing labour laws are revised.

The second strand of the debate argues for the need for realism and adjustment in attitudes both to foreign investment and to controls over wages and prices. Unless such a readjustment occurs, Zimbabwe will continue to be less than attractive to foreign capital. Unemployment will therefore reach graver proportions; the economy will continue to grow at a sluggish pace. Concessions to foreign capital are not necessarily a zero-sum game. Zimbabwe will benefit from an expanding economy fuelled by foreign capital; there will be more jobs created. The local bourgeoisie will also grow and national control over the economy need not necessarily be curtailed due to foreign investment.

These contrasting views have given rise to a heated debate. On one of the radio channels the critique of the Code articulated by one university teacher led to his detention for a few days and the suspension of the broadcasters who interviewed
him. The opprobrium heaped by some government leaders on university students for their criticisms underlined the sensitivity and uneasiness which the debate has generated. Criticisms that the government was trampling on the individual rights of the concerned journalists and lecturer also came from within ZANU-PF itself, the church, university teachers and students. A ZANU-PF parliamentarian, for example, argued that

I take this view that my own liberties and freedom are safe as long as my neighbours'. We are our brothers' keepers just as much as our brothers are also keepers in issues of our liberties, freedom of the press, right to inform and right to be informed and the right of speech. Individuals should not be detained at the whim of a individual person (Hansard, 5 July 1989:87-89).

The question of democratic rights — including the freedom to criticise the government — is clearly perceived not as a 'bourgeois luxury' but as fundamental to the democratic process. Hence the jealous guarding of any possible erosion by government or other state institutions of such rights.

This brief survey has shown how contested the interpretation of the democratic content of social rights is in Zimbabwe. Certainly the monopoly of the state in defining these rights has been challenged on key issues. The existence of a civil society whose institutions periodically question the hegemony of the state on specific questions relating to democracy is widely perceived to be an insurance against an unmitigated slide into authoritarianism and autocracy.

Bibliographic Note


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Women and War: Eritrea
Doris Burgess

The struggle of Eritreans for self-determination has, from the outset, been a struggle against external domination imposed on them by imperialist interests. It is a struggle which is steadily moving to a successful conclusion as a weary and demoralised Ethiopian army of occupation loses ground. And it is a struggle in which women have played a significant part, one that will surely change their social and political power significantly once victory has been achieved.

Article 23 of the Treaty of Paris after World War Two stipulated that the fate of former Italian colonies was to be determined jointly by the US, USSR, France and Great Britain. The four could not come to a decision and so a UN Commission was appointed to decide the fate of Eritrea. In 1950, the UN General Assembly voted, under Resolution 390 that Eritrea should become an autonomous state federated with Ethiopia, thereby reflecting a compromise between 'the wishes and welfare of the government ... the interests of peace and security in East Africa and ... the rights and claims of Ethiopia, including in particular Ethiopia's legitimate need for adequate access to the sea' should be guaranteed. In 1952, John Foster Dulles, the US Secretary of State stated 'from the standpoint of justice, the opinions of the Eritrean people must receive consideration. Nevertheless, the strategic interest of the United States in the Red Sea basin and considerations of security and world peace make it necessary that the country be linked with our ally, Ethiopia.' To that end, in exchange for this 'deal' on Eritrea, the US agreed to manoeuvre the UN into arranging a 'federal' solution to the 'Eritrean question' absorbing it into Ethiopia and ending its autonomous status. In return, emperor Haile Selassie agreed to send a battalion of troops to fight with the Americans during the Korean war and to allow them to set up, under a 25 year lease, the Kagnew military and communications base in Ethiopia which was a major CIA listening post in Africa and the Middle East.

Such external links and interests continue. In late 1989 the Israelis established diplomatic links with the Ethiopian Dergue and, in early 1990, it comes as no surprise to learn that they are beginning to supply them with cluster bombs designed like baseballs, with deadly barbs which rip human beings apart. Their ships unload tanks and artillery in the port of Massawa and have access to the naval facilities and ports in the Dahlak Islands. Ethiopia has now purchased 15
fighter planes from Israel and 300 military 'experts' have been transferred from Addis to Asmara (Washington Post, 18 February 1990).

Although the Dergue is losing the struggle for Eritrea, and knows it, hopes of peace remain in the balance. The Carter-initiated peace talks (a 'private' initiative but with the endorsement of the State Department) that began last September are progressing too slowly to stop the bombing around Massawa and the fighting around Keren. As for the Soviets, although they unofficially profess to be weary of supplying arms to Ethiopia for a war that everyone agrees cannot be won militarily, they nevertheless are continuing to supply the Dergue with guided anti-tank missiles and T-62 tanks.

Meanwhile, the Eritreans continue to dig miles and miles of World War I-type trenches deeper into the area once controlled by the Dergue. They are extremely competent and efficient militarily as they have proved by their continued on-the-ground initiatives and by their control of 85% of the countryside. And this is the strength of the Eritreans — the mobilisation of the people in countryside. The long-term strategic planning of a guerilla war has necessitated the support of the people in a grassroots initiative via education and health campaigns. These have been, in the process, a vital ingredient in the empowerment of women who now make up 30% of Eritrea's fighting force.

Their increasing role in the struggle has brought some important advances. Thus eight women were, in 1987 at the EPLF's Second Congress, elected to the Central Committee. This was no mere token gesture but evolved out of the democratic process of nomination and elections taking place in the grassroots-based 'People's Assemblies'. This is where the political processes have enabled women to become involved, to learn their alphabet, have access to medical facilities, participate in the running of their villages. This hasn't happened overnight and in many areas is still in the embryonic stage. While perhaps it was intended originally as a 'numbers game' — that is, to win a war everyone must fight (to parallel the Zimbabwe and Nicaragua examples), in Eritrea the women have their own autonomous 'government department' and are highly organised. They will continue to go from strength to strength and not, as in Zimbabwe, be marginalised when re-construction begins. They will continue to participate and are planning for the day of peace.

In the advanced training programmes at the Cadre School people are chosen from their units. Tactics are discussed in seminars with the emphasis being on the experienced gleaned from various battles (the EPLF film unit sends cameramen and women into battle specifically for the purpose of recording the battles and then using the film for teaching purposes). Basically, though, the advanced training is about 'skill-sharing' exercises, from basic map reading to discussions about tactical manoeuvres and strategy. They then return to the front line to pass on what they've learned to their units.

Basic equipment for fighters weighs about 10 kilos and consists of two hand grenades, torch, batteries for radio, 30 x 3 ammunition clips, water bottle, notebook, pen, sanitary napkins and Kalashnikov. Some fighters carry hand guns.

My own trip to Eritrea began in Khartoum; from there to Port Sudan on the Red Sea and then by Toyota Land Cruiser down through the dusty Tokar Plain, crossing the river which could either be a trickle or a torrent — in which case the Eritrean 'navy' stands by to ferry you across; then, climbing almost vertically through the moonscape-like mountains into Eritrea by night to the 'towns' which make up
what is called the ‘base area’. There I was able to speak with a number of women about many aspects of their lives, including how war has touched them. Below are outlined just three such experiences by way of allowing the women to speak for themselves.

In August 1986 Philomena arrived in Eritrea after spending four years in Italy — two years working as a cashier in a restaurant and two years learning to be a beauty therapist. Philomena had ‘come home’ to see her mother and one of her three brothers. Her two other brothers stayed in Italy with their Italian father. Philomena was born in Keren and went to the Italian school there up to the 5th grade. She then continued her education in Asmara where she completed the 8th grade before going to Italy.

I arrived in Khartoum with some of my friends who also wanted to visit their families. We all went up to Port Sudan and then overland into Eritrea, suitcases full of Italian clothes and presents. We wanted to see the revolution for ourselves, see our friends and most of all our relatives. We travelled around for a month and then went back to Khartoum on our way back to Italy. But when I got to Khartoum I couldn’t make up my mind what to do — it seemed to difficult to go back to Italy. I stayed in Khartoum six weeks and then decided I was being irresponsible going back to Italy, that after seeing my friends struggling I knew my future was in Eritrea, in the armed struggle. Everybody was worried about me and they were all surprised when I arrived back — ready to start my six months military training. I’ve been here in the military training camp three months and have another three months before I finish. I’ve just learned how to take my Kalashnikov apart, clean it and put it back together again. I’ve also learned how to use the M14 rifle. I love the training and if given the choice I would like to go to the front line, but I will go wherever I’m assigned. I sometimes think about fighting and dying and know that I could kill someone to defend not only myself but our cause.

In Italy men just want you to be a traditional woman, you know. Wash their clothes and do work in the house; you are not free. Here in the ‘field’ there is a big difference. I saw men baking injera (bread) and even washing their own clothes. When I was a girl in Keren, my mother and I would work in the house and wouldn’t accept a man doing baking or washing. I have no plans for my future and live only for the day of peace.

Adasher is about 23 and born in Asmara. In 1986 she became a platoon leader.

In 1975 when I was a student in the 5th grade there were riots all over; the Dergue was killing and setting fire to villages; they made it impossible to go to school and our teachers topped coming from Asmara to the villages to teach. I saw my friends beaten up; in 1976 I decided to join the ‘mass organisation’. I helped the fighters in bringing to the trenches supplies from the towns; the fighters would give me money to buy what they couldn’t find in the rural areas like sugar, coffee, tea and grain. The people in the towns would also give materials, wash clothes and act as informants. In 1978 I joined the army. I had to hide my age so I could become a fighter; it’s common, isn’t it? women always hide their age. I did my military training and was assigned to the front line during the 3rd Offensive but because I was so new I didn’t actually go into a battle until the 4th Offensive. After visiting the trenches while in the mass organisation, I saw what it was like as a fighter so when I was assigned to the front line I really wasn’t afraid. I just wanted to use my Kalashnikov to kill the Amhara. At first my male colleagues were unsure of us women. We were new and they were trying to help us and show us the best way of protecting ourselves and killing the enemy. As far as any underestimation of us, we were on their side, doing what they do. They had no grounds to underestimate us. Among the women, though, some are tough and some are weak; but it is the same with the men. So this is not something that you can say “men can do this or woman can do that; there are weak and strong all over”.

For a while I was assigned behind the enemy lines and then I participated in the battle in the northeast Sahel when all the parachutes came out of the sky. Antonov’s kept dropping more and more parachutes. In Barentu it was very different. We knew there were a lot of Ethiopian forces — heavy artillery supplied by the Soviets — so we didn’t expect to take it
that easily. Tactically, the enemy tried to defend the outskirts of Barentu while we split them by attacking from the side and into the centre. At first there was a lot of resistance but then it got easier; the Ethiopian fighters started running away leaving their big guns and tanks to us. I captured 10 Amhara. When they realised they'd been captured by a woman, they showed their chauvinism and were reluctant "to give their hands"; they said, "ha, this is a woman, I won't give my hand to a woman" and they tried to attack me. I ordered them to stop or I'd shoot them with my Kalashnikov. They stopped.

When we entered the town it was filled with dead Amhara's; seeing all those bodies gave
me courage — it made me hope that it's very easy to win a battle with the 'Dergue'.

I've been wounded four times but still have had time to get married to another fighter. We'd like to have a child but not under these conditions. When I know we're going to meet at a regular time I start taking the pill beforehand; but there are other times when we meet by chance and so have to rely on my 'cycle' and have to keep details of my menstruation. But this isn't a problem — menstruation doesn't prevent us from doing anything. The sanitary towel factory in the 'base area' provides us with supplies and is even hoping one day to supply the civilian population. What we're short of though and desperately need is soap. It would be nice to have a bath.

I'd like to see the war finish so that people who are suffering can live peacefully and those who are refugees can come back to their families and live an honourable life.

Adasher has had advanced military training but began in the military training camp with the very 'basics': learn to separate and clean weapons; to load bullets quickly; to throw hand grenades; to attack and retreat; to assess the enemy's strengths and weakness.

What is different about the 'towns' of Eritrea is that you see plenty of people but no buildings in the 'base area'. The Eritrean's have become experts at camouflage. During the day, movement in the open is restricted for fear of MiGs bombing; at
dusk, as in everywhere in liberated Eritrea, the roads and rocky hillsides seem to come alive.

The ‘base area’ houses various government departments including the longest hospital in the world — almost six kilometres long. From a few hundred yards you would never guess that the shipping containers dug into the hillside, the semi-underground operating theatres, long rows of wards nestled under acacia trees backing into the hillside not only treat everything from varicose veins to napalm burns, but provide sophisticated reconstructive surgery. It is here where the training programmes are held; a pharmacy which manufactures its own infusions and tablets but also the unit which provides the support for the Eritrean Public Health Programme.

Meriam Habte Mariam is 23 and worked in the hospital as a barefoot doctor before joining the EPLA. She did her six months of military training and was then sent to the front line. From what appeared at first glance to be an impenetrable wall of rock, rubble and trees, emerged a parade of captured T-55 Soviet-built tanks from their camouflaged ‘hide-out’. Meriam explained from a cramped tank turret that after my basic military training, I did a further three months learning about the T-55 tank. While all the instructions inside the tank were in Russian, the books that we also captured explained what everything was for. We then taught ourselves enough of the language to master the use of this equipment. Everything that we use, from some of our clothes to the miles and miles of T55 tanks, anti-aircraft guns, ammunition boxes, the handbooks you see here [in Cyrillic] were captured. These 100 mm shells were also captured and the used ones collected, sent to the workshops and re-cycled to be used again!

However, not all the equipment was Soviet. Meriam had an American handgun, captured in 1974 when the Selassie was overthrown and the newly emerging ‘Dergue’ did a massive see-saw by switching sides — to the Soviet Union.

There are five members of Meriam’s tank crew. Strategically when engaging in a battle four tanks and their personnel form a unit. Meriam is responsible not only for her specific tasks with her tank but for the health care of the entire unit. Her husband is also on the front line and their three-year old son is in the nursery. They see him once every three months and like all married couples, have a month together once a year.

Meriam finished the eighth grade in Asmara but many of her colleagues were not so fortunate are now trying to catch up, continuing their learning in maths, geography, history and English but also learning to read and write in their own language. Texts and notebooks come from the printing unit in the ‘base area’ and are as valued as their basic military equipment. It is an extraordinary sight to see an entire front-line battalion sitting on a hillside, Kalashnikov’s at their side, taking the ‘end of term’ exam!

Yet it is a physically hard existence, made even more difficult in years of drought. While some military units try to grow some vegetables to supplement their diet the basic rations are the same for everyone with the exception of those in hospital, pregnant women and malnourished children. Even the thousands of Ethiopian prisoner’s of war get the same ration as the fighters.

While the morale of the Eritreans continues to defeat the war-weary Ethiopians, there can be no doubt for women like Philomena, Adasher, Meriam — fighters on the front line — as well as the fighters behind the scenes — Worku, Adhanet,
Negisty, Tsegga, Lul and Askalu — there will be no going back. The empowerment of the Eritrean women will continue to be very much on the agenda and the structures and experience of participation being forged will give them a voice in their country's future.

* * *


David Seddon

The Polisario Front was formed in the Spanish-occupied western Sahara in May 1973 as ‘the unique expression of the masses, opting for revolutionary violence and the armed struggle as the means by which the Saharawi Arab African People can recover its total liberty and foil the manoeuvres of Spanish colonialism’. Over the next two years the Polisario staged a succession of hit and run operations and established itself as a genuine popular liberation movement. A United Nations mission which visited the territory in May 1975 recognised the role of the Polisario Front in the development of the nationalist movement among the population of the ‘Spanish Sahara’ as well as the ‘overwhelming consensus among Saharans within the territory in favour of independence and opposing integration with any neighbouring country’. In October 1975, immediately after the UN mission reported its conclusions (that the majority of the Saharan population favoured political
independence and the end of Spanish colonial rule), the World Court at the Hague ruled in favour of self-determination for the Western Sahara and against integration into Morocco, which had obtained its independence in 1956 and claimed the Western Sahara as part of Greater Morocco.

In November 1975, however, King Hassan of Morocco staged a dramatic 'peaceful' Green March into the Western Sahara and followed it at once by an armed invasion. In the same month, Spain concluded a pact with the two neighbouring countries, Mauritania and Morocco, to administer the territory jointly prior to Spanish withdrawal in February 1976. The Moroccan armed forces continued their blitzkrieg through the winter and by February were in control of much of the northern part of the territory. The Polisario fought back, but faced vastly overwhelming firepower, and large numbers of Saharawis fled as refugees to Algeria. In February, the Polisario Front announced the formation of the Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR).

Since then, the Polisario Front and its military wing, the Saharawi People's Liberation Army (SPLA), has been engaged in a bitter war in the desert with Morocco. At the same time, the SADR has endeavoured not only to survive and to maintain the social and economic as well as the political and administrative functions of an independent state, but also to gain diplomatic and material support throughout the world in its struggle to achieve effective sovereignty (see David Seddon, 'Morocco and the Western Sahara, ROAPE no.38, pp.24-47).

Today, after more than a decade of war, the Polisario and the SADR remain committed to their struggle for independence. But the military struggle appears to have become secondary to the diplomatic and political campaign for support, particularly over the last few years, as the Moroccan strategy of building massive 'defensive walls' to enclose the greater part of the Western Sahara has reduced the level of military activity. What follows is essentially a chronology of developments at the political and diplomatic level.

Winter 1987
In November and December 1987 a United Nations mission visited the region to assess the potential for a UN orchestrated peace plan. The mission considered both the military and civil dimensions of the conflict in the Western Sahara, visiting the Moroccan-occupied territories and the refugee camps near Tindouf in southwest Algeria and holding various discussions with the Mauritanian and Algerian governments, the Moroccan authorities, the Polisario Front and the SADR ruling council. The visit coincided with a vote in the UN General Assembly calling on Morocco and the Polisario Front to undertake direct negotiations (something long refused by the Moroccans) over a ceasefire to enable a referendum on the future of the Western Sahara to take place. The resolution was passed unopposed (90 for, 0 against, 50 abstentions). Meanwhile, contacts between Morocco and Algeria intensified during the latter part of 1987 as a consequence of Algeria's concern to develop a framework for Maghreb unity which could include Morocco. The Moroccan foreign minister, Abdellatif Filali, made an official visit to Algiers in November and appeared on Algerian television; two days after his visit, a delegation from the Algerian foreign ministry flew to Rabat. The meetings were secret but it was known that preparations were being made for an inter-ministerial meeting to deal with the restoration of normal relations between Morocco and
Algeria, broken off by Morocco in 1976 following Algeria's recognition of, and support for, the SADR.

The Polisario had observed a unilateral truce during the UN mission's visit, but this came to an end in mid-December with a wave of attacks by the SPLA on Moroccan positions; these were followed by further fighting in January 1988. The end of December, Albania became the 70th state to recognise the SADR and the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) decided to increase its humanitarian aid to the Saharawis in the camps as well as pushing for full cooperation with the UN over the organisation of any referendum. In February, the secretary-general of the Polisario Front and president of the SADR, Mohamed Abdelazia, met with Colonel Qaddafi and President Chadli Bendjedid to discuss the role of the SADR in relation to Algeria's efforts to create a structure for Maghreb unity as an extension of the Treaty of Friendship signed with Tunisia and Mauritania in 1983.

Summer 1988

In May 1988, after six months of intense unofficial diplomatic exchange between the two countries, it was announced that diplomatic relations between Algeria and Morocco were to be restored. The official communique issued simultaneously by both parties on 16 May announced that one reason for the resumption of diplomatic relations was the mutual desire to find a 'just and lasting solution to the Western Saharan conflict by way of a free referendum on self-determination'. If this statement seemed unambiguous, it was soon clear that the two sides remained far apart, however. The SADR foreign minister, Omar Mansouri, was quoted on Algiers radio on 17 May as 'expressing satisfaction' with these developments which, he claimed, were an important stage in relaunching the work of building a Greater Maghreb — a view which was repeated by SADR president Mohamed Abdelaziz in a speech on the occasion of the 15th anniversary celebrations of the formation of the Polisario Front. But the Moroccan prime minister was adamant that his vision of regional unity had no place for an independent Western Sahara within it; during an interview he declared that 'Morocco considers the Sahara as an indivisible part of its national soil'. And on the day the restoration of diplomatic relations was announced there were clashes between Moroccan troops and the SPLA.

In early June, two days after the reopening of the frontiers between Morocco and Algeria, King Hassan of Morocco arrived in Algiers (for the first time since 1973) for a special Arab League heads of state summit meeting. On 10 June, following the Arab summit, the heads of state of the five Maghreb countries (Mauritania, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya) met together informally — for the first time in 25 years — to discuss future regional cooperation. It was agreed to establish a Maghreb commission to draw up a framework for the progressive economic and political integration of the Maghreb. The commission met for the first time in mid-July in Algiers and discussed a wide range of issues, including the conflict in the Western Sahara which, it was agreed, should be resolved through a referendum held under UN auspices.

In a major interview published in July in the French daily Le Monde, King Hassan of Morocco expressed his support for a referendum on self-determination for the Western Sahara but also made it clear that, for him, self-determination did not necessarily imply independence. He presented his vision of an 'autonomous'
Western Sahara within the Moroccan state. Although he continued to refuse formal direct negotiations with the Polisario Front a Moroccan delegation, including a member of the royal family, visited the Saudi city of Jeddah during July and were undoubtedly involved in discussions with Polisario representatives under the auspices of King Fahd.

During August there was heavy fighting as the Polisario forces (the SPLA) mounted a series of assaults on Moroccan positions. At the end of the first week of August the UN Secretary-General, Javier Perez de Cuellar, made a formal proposal to the Moroccan foreign affairs minister and to senior representatives of the Polisario Front for bringing an end to the war in the Sahara. The proposal included a ceasefire and a referendum for all citizens of the Western Sahara, including those in the refugee camps near Tindouf. These proposals were formally accepted 'in principle' by Morocco and by the SADR at the end of August, although both sides attached certain qualifications.

**Autumn 1988**

At the beginning of September, the Polisario Front expressed the view that, if certain remaining issues could be settled, a ceasefire could be arranged before the end of the year but that the continued refusal by Morocco to enter into direct negotiations constituted a major obstacle to progress. This view was broadly shared by the political commission of the ministerial conference of the non-aligned movement which met in Cyprus in early September. On 20 September the UN Security Council authorised the Secretary-General to appoint a special representative to supervise the proposed peace process. The Polisario delegation at the UN welcomed the decision as marking a new stage in the struggle of the Saharawi people to self-determination and independence, but repeated their support for the UN General Assembly's reference to 'direct negotiations' between the two parties to the conflict. Government re-shuffles of the personnel of the SADR were made in mid-August and September as part of the preparations of Polisario in response to the proposals for a ceasefire and subsequent referendum. The new executive committee of the Polisario Front, while reiterating 'its full and complete availability to cooperate with the UN and the OAU to reach a just solution to the conflict in Western Sahara', also expressed the hope that 'the good offices of the UN would be successful when all the obstacles which the Moroccan army and administration are creating are removed and direct consultations begin between the kingdom of Morocco and the Polisario Front'. In mid-September there was heavy fighting around the Oumm Dreiga section of Morocco's defensive-wall system.

In October, the Uruguayan lawyer Hector Gros de Espiel was appointed as the UN Secretary-General's special representative for the Western Sahara. The Polisario Front's foreign relations representative, Bashir Mustapha Sayed, declared that Mr de Espiel 'enjoyed the respect of both parties to the conflict and the confidence of the Polisario Front'. He also, however, drew attention to a series of difficulties and problems which remained, emphasising that while Morocco and the SADR had accepted two points among the seven which made up the UN Secretary-General's peace proposals, five other points were still in dispute. These concerned the presence of Moroccan armed forces and administration in the Western Sahara, the existence of colonial settlements of Moroccan citizens in the occupied territory, the operation of Moroccan laws introduced during the
occupation, the procedures for the electoral campaign during the transition period between a ceasefire and a referendum and, finally, the question of direct negotiations. He drew attention to the resolution on the Western Sahara due to be considered at the 43rd session of the UN General Assembly, pointing out that it retained the essential elements of earlier resolutions on the Western Sahara (such as General Assembly Resolution 40/50) including an emphasis on the need for dialogue between the two parties to the conflict. The two points agreed included the means of identifying those eligible to vote in a referendum (the Spanish census of 1974 would serve as a basis, after having been updated by means of investigations carried out in situ by disinterested parties) and the question to be asked in the referendum (which would be 'would you prefer independence or integration into Morocco?'). The UK representative of the Polisario Front, Lamine Baali, declared in September that the Polisario ‘utterly rejects all formulations of autonomy, federation or confederation’ and it appears to have been agreed that there would be no mention in the referendum voting papers of the ‘third way’ favoured by King Hassan involved Saharan ‘autonomy’ under Moroccan sovereignty.

**Winter 1988**

The vote of the UN General Assembly in November in favour of a resolution calling on Morocco and the Polisario Front to undertake direct negotiations was supported by Spain; this prompted a bitter comment from King Hassan (in an interview with the Spanish newspaper ABC) that the Spanish government had acted in a manner that was 'unfriendly and gratuitous' and a decision to cancel a visit to Spain planned for November. Throughout November and early December discussions and negotiations between UN officials and representatives of the two parties to the conflict continued, with the involvement of Algerian and Mauritanian diplomats.

Early in December King Hassan announced his willingness to meet Saharawi representatives, while emphasising that such a meeting would involve discussions and not negotiations. Late in the same month, the Polisario Front announced its decision to send a delegation to meet the King in Morocco; and at the end of December the official Algerian press agency (APS) reported that the Polisario Front had declared a truce in order to facilitate talks. During the first week of January 1989 a delegation from the Polisario Front and the SADR met King Hassan and Moroccan officials in Marrakesh. Reports of the meeting said little in detail but were guardedly optimistic. On 10 January the UN special representative, Hector Gros de Espiel, arrived in Casablanca and was quoted as saying the 'the future is open for a very positive development towards a lasting peace in the region'. He subsequently visited Moroccan-occupied territory in the Western Sahara as well as the Polisario camps near Tindouf and held discussions with Polisario leaders, King Hassan, President Chadli Bendjedid, and the heads of state of Mauritania and Mali -the last being chair of the OAU. In a press conference held on 19 January, the SADR President Mohamed Abdelaziz, stated that conditions for a settlement were now 'encouraging' and that the visit of the UN special representative came at a propitious moment. He remarked that 'the meeting in Marrakesh was an important gain for the Polisario Front, for Morocco and for the Maghreb'. He added that the issue of the Western Sahara would be on the agenda of the Maghreb summit in
Marrakesh in February and declared a unilateral truce effective from 1 February for one month.

Spring 1989
The summit of the five Maghreb heads of state which took place in Marrakesh ended on 17 February with the proclamation of an Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) linking Mauritania, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya in a form of association designed to improve economic relations within the Maghreb and to move towards closer cooperation in other fields as well. The Moroccan national assembly unanimously welcomed the formation of the AMU at the end of February, after hearing a speech by the foreign minister, Abellatif Filali, on the objectives of the new union, within which relations between Morocco and Algeria would be crucial. The Moroccan communist party newspaper, Al-Bayane welcomed the creation of the AMU, arguing that it heralded the end of Polisario's hopes for the establishment of an independent state.

The 49th session of the council of ministers of the OAU in Addis Ababa adopted a resolution in February, inviting the Polisario Front and Morocco to continue the dialogue begun in Marrakesh earlier in the year. Also, the European parliament in Strasbourg confirmed its support for Saharawi self-determination and independence, calling for an urgent resolution of the conflict in the Western Sahara and identifying direct negotiations as the only way in which the war would be brought to a halt. But, on 2 March, President Mohamed Abdelaziz of SADR announced that, in view of the lack of progress in the peace process and Morocco's failure to pursue direct negotiations, the Polisario had resumed military operations following a month-long truce. The Polisario Front was particularly disappointed not to be directly involved in discussions on the Western Sahara at the Maghreb summit. UN officials visited Rabat in early March for talks with the Moroccan government about the number of Moroccan troops to be allowed in the occupied territories during the run-up to the referendum and towards the end of March, the UN Secretary-General stated that he was prepared, if necessary, to visit the region himself to try to speed up the peace process and bring an end to the conflict.

Summer 1989
Supporters of discussions with Morocco were strengthened by decisions taken at the 7th Congress of the Polisario Front, held at the end of April, which called for a strategy of dialogue and negotiation. The Congress welcomed a statement of solidarity by the Secretary-General of the Algerian FLN, Abdel Hamid Mehri. His message was clearly designed to counter growing concern that Algeria's closer relations with Morocco in the context of the AMU went hand-in-hand with a reduction in Algeria's commitment to the Polisario Front and the Saharawi cause. Algeria's support remains, as it has been ever since the early days of the war, crucial to the Polisario's effectiveness in all domains (military, economic, political/diplomatic). In an interview broadcast by Algerian radio at the beginning of May, SADR President Mohamed Abdelaziz referred to his expectation that a second meeting between Morocco and the Polisario Front 'would take place in the near future'. A few days later the Polisario representative in Rome, Mahfoud Ali Beida, indicated that, although no date had been agreed, a meeting was expected to take place 'after Ramadan'. In mid-June Moroccan sources announced that 'no date has been agreed for a royal audience with the Polisario Front' and the Polisario
representative in France, Sayed Baba, issued a statement deploring the ‘constant postponement by the Moroccans of meetings planned between the two parties’ and declaring that the Polisario Front now regarded the prospect of direct negotiations in the immediate future as unlikely.

In mid-June the UN Secretary General flew to the Maghreb in an effort to rescue the negotiations. His journey included discussions of the Western Sahara with King Hassan and then with Polisario leaders. Speaking in Algiers at the end of his visit the Secretary-General declared himself ‘confident’ that the peace process would achieve substantial progress ‘in the near future’. He also expressed the belief that King Hassan was prepared to meet the Polisario representatives for a second time, ‘shortly’. One tangible result of Perez de Cuellar’s visit was the establishment of a technical commission to consider, together with the two parties to the conflict, the detailed arrangements to be made for a ceasefire and the proposed referendum. But the Polisario Front was clearly not convinced that adequate progress was being made or that Morocco was genuinely committed to dialogue and a military communique issued on 22 June in Rabat reported an attack by Polisario forces on a Moroccan patrol in the region of Amgala. The military conflict continues as the discussions and negotiations drag on. According to a statement made by Hector Gros de Espiel at the beginning of June, the referendum is likely to be held some time around the middle of 1990; and this, he indicated, was an optimistic view, based on the assumption that several contentious issues still outstanding could be resolved.

The Polisario are clearly concerned to encourage the speedy resolution of the conflict. They announced in May that they planned to release 200 Moroccan prisoners, as a gesture of goodwill, but in June the International Red Cross in Geneva confirmed that it had been unable to comply with the Polisario’s request that it organise the transfer of the prisoners because Morocco had refused to take them back, on the grounds that ‘this did not form part of the UN peace proposals’. The Polisario Front has also indicated that it might be prepared to compromise on what has proved to be a particularly contentious issue. Early in July, Polisario representative Bashir Mustapha Sayed stated in Algiers that the Polisario Front might be prepared to reconsider its demand that all Moroccan forces withdraw from the occupied territory while the referendum is under way; but, he added, this would only be possible if Morocco were prepared to reach a political agreement with the Polisario beforehand. A subsequent ‘clarification’ of this statement, however, suggested that the withdrawal of Moroccan troops and administration remained an important precondition for a free and fair referendum, as did the withdrawal of Moroccan settlers from the occupied territory, the abolition of the current emergency laws and the agreement of the two parties on a common procedure for establishing a ceasefire. Mr Sayed also criticised Morocco’s efforts to ‘freeze’ the SADR out of the OAU as part of the preconditions for its (Morocco’s) return to the organisation.

Meanwhile, the technical commission established after the return of Perez de Cuellar from his visit to the region met in New York in July for the first time to discuss the detailed preparations for a referendum. While the United Nations machinery continues to grind slowly towards the implementation of the referendum, the Organisation of African Unity provides general support for its peace proposals and more specific support for the SADR in its efforts to achieve self-determination and independence. Algiers radio reported, in July, a statement
made by the Polisario Front that the SADR had been unanimously elected secretary of the meeting of the OAU ministerial council being held in Addis Ababa in advance of the OAU summit.

During July, Morocco sent envoys to several African states on secret visits almost certainly connected with the forthcoming 26th meeting of the OAU and the question of Morocco's re-entry to the organisation. It is evident that Moroccan lobbying has had some effect and that opinions within the OAU are once again divided, as they were in the early 1980s, with regard to the position to be adopted towards the two parties concerned prior to a referendum and resolution of the conflict. For example, in remarks broadcast by Radio France International in mid-July, OAU Secretary General Ide Oumaroum declared that the vocation of the OAU was to bring together all African states and expressed his wish for Morocco to return to the organisation as soon as possible; he believed that 'the moment is perhaps not far away when Morocco will return to its seat in the OAU'. The OAU President, Moussa Traore of Mali, also announced in June that 'Morocco could return of its own accord'. But the president of Gabon, Omar Bongo, showed himself considerably more partisan when he expressed his reluctance to see the SADR remain a member of the OAU. On the other hand, the July summit of the OAU saw the election of the SADR's foreign minister, Muhammad Sidati, to the position of Reporter of the Foreign Affairs Council. Clearly, until further progress is made towards a referendum and settlement of the Western Sahara conflict, the OAU will be posed with a considerable dilemma regarding its attitude to Moroccan membership.

On 10 August the Moroccan press agency announced that Omar Hadrami, a leading member of the Polisario Front and its representative in Washington, had 'returned' to Morocco 'in response to King Hassan's call in November 1988 to members of Polisario to give up their struggle and accept Moroccan sovereignty'. Polisario have labelled Hadrami a 'collaborator' and 'infiltrator', but his views on the advisability of some kind of compromise with Morocco, such as accepting the 'autonomy' deal proposed by King Hassan in his interview with Le Monde, were well known within the Polisario Front. They may well have been behind his effective demotion from the position of charge of foreign affairs and military security after April's Polisario Congress in Algiers. Hadrami's defection led some observers to speculate that the Polisario Front might be starting to break apart, but such an interpretation is based largely on Moroccan propaganda and is precisely the objective of the Moroccan campaign to persuade Polisario members to abandon their cause. That some have been so persuaded is not in doubt. Later in August, the Moroccan daily Rissalat al-Umma reported that another three members of the Polisario Front had 'returned to Morocco'. According to the report, one of the men was the former director of the department of external information in the Algiers office of the Polisario Front. In his speech made on the occasion of the 36th anniversary of 'the revolution of the King and the people', King Hassan referred to these and other potential defectors as 'lost sheep' whom he encouraged to return home at once and not await the outcome of a referendum. But, in a recent report from Tindouf, George McCorckle suggests that 'speculations that the independence movement is crumbling have little basis. The Saharawis remain resolute in their determination to form an independent state and, in contrast to other independence movements worldwide, there exists a very strong sense of unity' (Middle East International, no.358, 8 September 1989, p.12).
As if to underline this fact, Polisario forces launched an attack on a Moroccan observation post in the region of Dahlou towards the end of September. The attack came as King Hassan began his visit to Spain (postponed earlier because of Spain's position on the Western Sahara conflict) and was clearly timed to have maximum impact. At the beginning of October, the SPLA launched a major offensive on Moroccan positions in the Guelta-Zemmour area and were reported to have pursued Moroccan troops 25 kilometres inside their defensive lines. They also occupied the positions taken, which included the command headquarters of the 1st Light Security Group (GSL) of the 4th and 5th Rapid Intervention Force (DIR) of the 1st Regiment, as well as the base of the 2nd battery unit of the 4th Royal Artillery Group and the supply base of the sector. This attack was the first significant military engagement in the war since September 1988; it was followed almost immediately by a second clash in the Hauza region as a result of which, according to a Polisario Front communiqué issued in Algiers on 12 October, the SPLA captured six bases and observation posts. In an interview given shortly afterwards to the Spanish newspaper, *El Pais*, the Polisario Front's chief European envoy, Ahmed Bujari, observed — referring to King Hassan's evident reluctance to hold a second meeting with Polisario representatives — that 'you cannot maintain a veto over the diplomatic process and expect indefinite military peace'.

The renewal of military operations on this scale, after an effective cessation of hostilities for nearly a year, indicates the profound frustration of the Polisario Front at what they see as King Hassan's intransigence in refusing a second round of talks. It is also aimed at putting pressure on the UN technical mission, set up in August to implement the proposed UN/OAU peace plan. During September, the leaders of the Non-Aligned Movement met in Belgrade and unanimously affirmed their support for the joint UN OAU 'peace initiatives'; the Spanish government repeated its insistence on direct talks between Morocco and the Polisario Front during King Hassan's visit to Spain, while King Juan Carlos called for a peaceful solution to the conflict that included guarantees for the Saharan people. The Spanish Parliamentary Group, Peace for the Saharawi People, expressed its concern over the abuse of human rights in the Moroccan-occupied territory, and encouraged the Polisario Front to believe that continued and visible commitment to their independence struggle, in the form of renewed military activity, is likely to increase pressure on those publicly committed to 'a just and lasting settlement' ensuring that the 'peace process' does not falter irretrievably at this stage.

Morocco's King Hassan, who has undoubtedly been stalling for some time in the hope that divisions within the Polisario would grow and their capacity to maintain an effective war of independence would be progressively reduced, will now be subject to increasing pressure from the UN and the OAU, and also from Algeria and Spain.

Speculation in the western press that the Polisario Front has come under increasing pressure from its major backer, Algeria, to make compromises in order to reach a settlement with Morocco, while plausible, lacks hard supporting evidence. The fact that the attacks on Moroccan positions in Guelta-Zemmour were apparently launched from within Mauritanian territory is no proof that operations from the northeast are critically impeded by lack of Algerian support for continued struggle; they certainly have a clear military and logistic rationale. The subsequent assault on Moroccan positions in Hauza, in the north, appears to
support the argument that the Polisario still receives effective backing. Algeria reaffirmed its support for the Polisario Front at the Polisario's 7th Congress and, although inevitably constrained by the constitution of the new Arab Maghreb Union (which forbids any member to tolerate activities detrimental to the security of another) and deeply involved in economic and political reforms, is more likely to press Morocco to move towards direct negotiations than to undermine the position of the Polisario Front.

A Moroccan agency report suggested that contacts had taken place between Morocco and Algeria at the beginning of October, at the request of president Chadli Bendjedid and following representations by the UN Secretary-General, to prepare for a meeting between King Hassan and a Polisario delegation. But the King openly refused to meet any Polisario representatives in the light of the attacks on Guelta-Zemmour and Hauza.

At the beginning of November, the Polisario Front emphasised its continuing concern to pursue the dialogue with Morocco initiated in January 1989. It also expressed its satisfaction at the resolution adopted, for the first time with international consensus, at the Fourth Commission of the UN General Assembly, calling for 'the continuation of the direct dialogue between the Saharawis and the Moroccans and 'the removal of the obstacles confronting the efforts of the UN Secretary-General and the current Chairman of the OAU and impeding the implementation of the joint UN-OAU peace process'.

Shortly thereafter, however, Polisario forces followed up the attacks made on Moroccan positions during September and October with a major assault on the Moroccan forces stationed near Amgala. On 8 November the SPLA attacked Moroccan positions and engaged Moroccan troops in a four-and-a-half hour battle. The SPLA overran 22 kilometres of the defensive 'wall' system and penetrated deep into the occupied territory behind it. This sector is defended by elite troops of the 4th Battalion of the Moroccan Parachute Regiment and functions as a crucial link between the norther headquarters of the Moroccan army based at Hauza and the southern sector commanded from Guelta-Zemmour. The Moroccan airforce intervened in the battle and a Mirage F-1 strike aircraft was shot down.

The intensification of military activity has been explained by Polisario sources as a direct consequence of King Hassan’s failure to enter into negotiations with the Polisario Front. The fighting near Amgala came only two days after the 14th anniversary of the 'Green March' when, on the orders of the King, 350,000 Moroccans entered what was at that time Spanish colonial territory to 'reclaim the Sahara'. King Hassan marked the occasion with a speech in which he praised the Moroccan army for having 'completely mastered' the military situation in the Western Sahara. Polisario spokesmen said that the attack was in part a response to this speech and this claim. In a statement made at the beginning of December, SADR foreign minister, Bachir Mustapha Sayed, declared that 'Polisario is ready to talk without preconditions and what we want above all is to leave behind the cycle of attack and response which has created such an appalling situation'.

The upsurge in military activity by Polisario, while designed to put pressure on King Hassan and to speed up the UN-OAU mediated peace plan, effectively dashed hopes for an early agreement on the terms for a ceasefire and referendum by the two parties directly involved. But King Hassan, who has persistently refused to engage in serious negotiations with his opponents, is apparently not too concerned
by the prospect of a lengthy period prior to a referendum. Towards the end of November he announced a proposal to postpone the national elections planned for 1990 for a further two years, 'until the conflict in the Western Sahara is resolved' thereby gaining more time and to forestall the difficulties of holding elections in the part of the Western Sahara occupied by Morocco before further progress is made towards a 'settlement'. His proposal was put to the Moroccan people in a rapidly organised national referendum on 1 December who voted overwhelmingly in favour of the proposal to postpone elections 'to permit more time for a satisfactory resolution of the conflict in the Western Sahara'.

The UN General Assembly agreed in mid-December, once again, that all efforts should be made to bring about a satisfactory end to the conflict. But the year ended with no real prospect of a 'just and lasting settlement' in sight, and clear indications that both sides are prepared to prolong the conflict in order to achieve their own objectives: the effective incorporation of the Western Sahara and its population within the Moroccan state, on the one side, and the achievement of self-determination and national independence for the Saharawi people, on the other. The struggle continues.

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The Security Situation and the Transfer of Power in Namibia
Colin Leys

This briefing is based primarily on four weeks of travelling and interviewing in Namibia, from 25 August to 21 September 1989, plus press reports and other documentation. It aims, first, to describe the security situation as it was on 30 September 1989 in relation to the provisions of the UN Independence Plan, and secondly, to raise questions about the significance of that situation for the transfer of power in Namibia.

Military Forces

Military forces in Namibia consisted, and still consist, primarily of South African Defence Force (SADF) units, and South West African Territory Force (SWATF) units. Both types of unit (at least as far as infantry are concerned) are commanded by professional white South African officers with white conscript troops (in the case of SADF) and black volunteer troops (in the case of SWATF). The SWATF units were recruited on a tribal basis and are referred to in the UN Plan documents as 'ethnic units'. They came under the command of the SADF brigade commanders in their respective Sectors, of which the most important were Sector 10 (Kaokoveld and Ovambo) and Sector 20 (Kavango and Caprivi), covering the northern border, with headquarters at Oshakati and Rundu respectively. There were/are also 'area forces' or 'commandos', reserve units composed of (mainly white) volunteers from civilian life, serving on a part-time basis.

SADF

Under the terms of the UN Plan for the implementation of the Security Council's successive resolutions aimed at making Namibia independent, SADF forces were to be progressively reduced to a maximum of 1500 men, confined to two bases,
by the prospect of a lengthy period prior to a referendum. Towards the end of
November he announced a proposal to postpone the national elections planned
for 1990 for a further two years, 'until the conflict in the Western Sahara is resolved'
thereby gaining more time and to forestall the difficulties of holding elections in
the part of the Western Sahara occupied by Morocco before further progress is
made towards a 'settlement'. His proposal was put to the Moroccan people in a
rapidly organised national referendum on 1 December who voted overwhelmingly
in favour of the proposal to postpone elections 'to permit more time for a
satisfactory resolution of the conflict in the Western Sahara'.

The UN General Assembly agreed in mid-December, once again, that all efforts
should be made to bring about a satisfactory end to the conflict. But the year ended
with no real prospect of a 'just and lasting settlement' in sight, and clear indications
that both sides are prepared to prolong the conflict in order to achieve their own
objectives: the effective incorporation of the Western Sahara and its population
within the Moroccan state, on the one side, and the achievement of self-
determination and national independence for the Saharawi people, on the other.
The struggle continues.

* * *

The Security Situation and the Transfer of Power in Namibia
Colin Leys

This briefing is based primarily on four weeks of travelling and interviewing in
Namibia, from 25 August to 21 September 1989, plus press reports and other
documentation. It aims, first, to describe the security situation as it was on 30
September 1989 in relation to the provisions of the UN Independence Plan, and
secondly, to raise questions about the significance of that situation for the transfer
of power in Namibia.

Military Forces

Military forces in Namibia consisted, and still consist, primarily of South African
Defence Force (SADF) units, and South West African Territory Force (SWATF)
units. Both types of unit (at least as far as infantry are concerned) are commanded
by professional white South African officers with white conscript troops (in the
case of SADF) and black volunteer troops (in the case of SWATF). The SWATF
units were recruited on a tribal basis and are referred to in the UN Plan documents
as 'ethnic units'. They came under the command of the SADF brigade commanders
in their respective Sectors, of which the most important were Sector 10 (Kaokoveld
and Ovambo) and Sector 20 (Kavango and Caprivi), covering the northern border,
with headquarters at Oshakati and Rundu respectively. There were/are also 'area
forces' or 'commandos', reserve units composed of (mainly white) volunteers from
civilian life, serving on a part-time basis.

SADF

Under the terms of the UN Plan for the implementation of the Security Council's
successive resolutions aimed at making Namibia independent, SADF forces were
to be progressively reduced to a maximum of 1500 men, confined to two bases,
Oshivel and Grootfontein, with twelve weeks of the formal cessation of hostilities on 1 April 1989, a process which was to be monitored by the military component of UNTAG; this has occurred. There are, according to UNTAG, 900-950 combat troops at Oshivel and 400-450 HQ and support unit troops at Grootfontein. Their equipment includes field artillery and support weapons (mortars, etc.) plus small arms (machine guns and automatic rifles) and vehicles (including a specialised mechanised unit). The UN plan makes no reference to aircraft. There are said to be SADF jets (Mirages) in underground hangars at Grootfontein. SADF have ‘leased’ two helicopters with their pilots and technical support staff to the South West Africa Police (SWAPOL) at Oshakati. UNTAG monitors movements in and out of the Oshivel and Grootfontein bases and is satisfied that these troops are effectively confined to them.

South Africa also has a mechanised unit of about 1000 men at Walvis Bay, which was excluded from the negotiations which ultimately led to the agreements on implementing Resolution 435, notwithstanding the fact that the Security Council’s earlier resolution 432 of 1978 had declared that Walvis Bay was an integral part of Namibia. UNTAG therefore has no mandate to monitor SADF forces in Walvis Bay but was nonetheless invited by South Africa to inspect it. The above figure of about 1000 men is based on this inspection.

There are also about 900 SADF personnel (white conscripts) performing civilian functions inside Namibia, mainly as teachers in schools, but also as doctors, etc. UNTAG military monitors are responsible for ensuring that they stick to these tasks, until such time as they can be replaced, or until the end of the ‘transitional period’ (Further Report of the Secretary-General S/20412 of 23 January 1989, para 43(c)).

SWATF
There were eight ‘ethnic’ battalions in October 1988, with a total of 21,900 men. Under the terms of the UN Plan the military component of UNTAG was to ‘monitor the dismantling of the command structures of ... ethnic forces (now known as “full-time forces” and including the South West Africa Territory Force (SWATF)), the withdrawal of all SADF personnel attached to those forces, and the confinement of all the arms and ammunition of such forces to agreed locations’ (S/20412, para 43(d)). This document does not refer to ‘demobilisation’, but para 8(c) of the letter of the ‘Contact Group’ (S/12636 of 10 April 1978), which was approved in Security Council Resolution 435 of 29 September 1978, and which the UN Plan is intended to implement, does. On the other hand the Annex to the latter document, setting out inter alia the ‘arrangements with respect to other organised forces in Namibia’ (i.e. other than South African forces, C.L.), envisaged the ‘dismantlement of command structures of citizen forces, commandos and ethnic forces...AG (Administrator-General) to ensure that none of these forces will drill or constitute an organised force during the transitional period except under order of the AG with the concurrence of the UNSR’. This would appear to envisage something less than the disbanding and termination of the employment of the troops concerned. The significance of these terms and phrases becomes clearer in the light of what has actually happened, which seems to be as follows.

32 Battalion, the so-called ‘Buffalo Battalion’, consists of former troops of Roberto Holden’s FNLA forces in northern Angola. In effect it is a mercenary unit that was
used on several occasions to fight in Angola with UNITA forces against the FAPLA forces of the MPLA government. It has been moved to South Africa, with its arms and equipment. It would seem to have been treated as a SADF unit. The other battalions include an Ovambo battalion (101 at Ondangwa) which recent press reports allege is actually 'comprised largely of mercenaries and Angolans' (see Namibia Reports, 12 October 1989).

In all cases the soldiers are being paid and will continue to be paid until 1 November 1989 (5 days before the elections, scheduled to begin on 7 November). Payment takes place monthly, but lasts several days. At Ondangwa, for instance, each of the six companies of 101 Battalion parades on successive days to be paid, while in Kaokoveld, a pay team travels round the area paying the troops in widely dispersed locations. The payments are made, in the case of 101 Battalion, by a team of seven, headed by the Battalion Commanding Officer, and the Battalion CO is believed to be in charge in all the other cases too. It is not a normal part of the duties of a commanding officer to take pay parades, UNTAG monitors have noted; the natural inference to be drawn from this is that their involvement symbolises to the troops the continued de facto existence of the command structure. The officers involved, however, no longer use their former titles but are known as 'DAAs'. Presumably these arrangements are meant to satisfy formally the requirement that the command structures should be dismantled, and the requirement that all SADF personnel attached to these units should be 'withdrawn'.

As for SWATF's arms and ammunition, UNTAG was informed that only those that had been bought with South West African government funds would be handed over. The total number of weapons represented as belonging to SWATF at Ondangwa, for example (where 101 Battalion, a force of 3000 men, was stationed), was 270. It would seem that the total number of weapons handed over to UNTAG by the six battalions stationed in the north, comprising at least 16,000 men, was 1349 small arms — a 'token amount', as one UNTAG monitor put it. All other weapons, including support weapons, were said to have belonged to SADF (i.e. they were said not to be the arms 'of SWATF forces, whose 'confinement' UNTAG was to monitor) and were removed, presumably to Walvis Bay or South Africa.

On the other hand, UNTAG monitors understand that before 1 April most if not all of the men made applications for licences to possess firearms and were allowed to purchase them at nominal prices (the weapons in question being shown, in cases where the application forms have been seen, as formerly belonging to SADF). It is not known whether these weapons include automatic weapons, though SWAPOL, which is responsible for issuing firearms licences, includes automatic rifles in its definition of 'small arms'. It seems unlikely that all the weapons now owned individually by these troops are hand guns.

SWAPO Forces: the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN)

The assumption of the UN Plan, to which SWAPO was not a party, was that all 6-7000 PLAN forces were outside Namibia — in Zambia or Angola; and the Geneva Protocol (which was only made public by South Africa on 4 April 1989) provided that Angola and Cuba would ensure that these forces would withdraw north of the 16th parallel following the withdrawal of South African troops from Angola, and the cessation of hostilities in Namibia. According to SWAPO's representative in Europe, Peter Manning, in March 1989 SWAPO raised the question of what would
happen to PLAN forces inside Namibia on three separate occasions with Marrack Goulding (in the UN Secretary-General's Office) and with Mr. Marti Ahtisaari and General Prem Chand of UNTAG, but without success. This became a critical issue when PLAN forces which were either already in Namibia or which entered Namibia on the eve of the cease fire of 1 April, were attacked by SADF, SWATF and Koevoet forces. Subsequently, following the Mount Etjo agreement of 9 April, PLAN forces withdrew north of the 16th Parallel.

Thereafter UNTAG's mandate under the Plan has been to monitor their confinement to base in Angola and Zambia, and the closure of these bases one week after the certification of the election results (Annex to S/12636 and S/20412). PLAN forces may leave their bases and return home but the SA administration refuses to admit them unless they enter under UN supervision, which in practice has meant under the auspices of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. Most, but not all, PLAN forces have probably returned in this way. What is to happen to PLAN forces still restricted to base, when their bases are due to be closed following the certification of the election, is not spelled out in the Plan documents; the assumption seems to be that they would at that point be disarmed and disbanded by the governments of Angola and Zambia, monitored by the UN.

**SWAPOL and Koevoet**

In October 1988 the UN was informed that 'the total number of police in the Territory, including counter-insurgency forces, had risen to approximately 8300. Of these, the counter-insurgency unit, known as Koevoet, was said to number approximately 3000 personnel' (S/20412 para 42). The Secretary-General noted that 'monitoring the disbandment of counter-insurgency units, including Koevoet, will be the concern of the military component of UNTAG' (ibid, emphasis added), thereby going notably beyond the concept of 'dismantling command structures' described above in relation to SWATF and Commando units, a distinction that has subsequently become very important. On 22 December 1988, the Secretary-General's Report continues, the South African Foreign Minister told him that South Africa 'intends to reduce the size of the existing police force to 7100. I was thereafter informed by South Africa of a further reduction to 6000'. These figures appear to constitute the only public data on the size and composition of SWAPOL and counter-insurgency (COIN) forces. This is significant in itself, given the importance of such information for the monitoring function of UNTAG, above all in relation to the 'disbandment' of Koevoet. What follows is a brief survey of fragmentary information which may throw some light on this issue.

In February 1989 the incoming officials of UNTAG were informed that the total numbers in SWAPOL had been cut to just over 6000, half of the COIN forces having been retired or having left the service between October 1988 and February 1989. They were further told that half of the remaining COIN forces were support personnel including reservists, labourers, interpreters, guards and the like, and that the other half had been reassigned to regular police duties. Later, however, on the eve of the Security Council meeting at the end of August 1989, when influential representations were being made to the Council about the continued activities of Koevoet, the AG announced that 1200 members of Koevoet would be 'confined to base'. He stated that 'this number represents the remnant of the counter-insurgency component re-integrated in SWAPOL following the incursions of SWAPO on 1 April' (*The Namibian*, 16 August 1989). This statement is not very
clear but it seems to suggest that they were members of Koevoet who were excluded from the total figures of the police given to UNTAG in February, when all Koevoet members were said to have been reassigned as regular members of SWAPO. They do not appear to have comprised large numbers of labourers, interpreters, etc. According to Mr. Rwambuya, the UNTAG Director for the Northern Region (Kaokoveld and Ovambo), General Dreyer (the former commander of Koevoet, now commander of SWAPO in the north) stated that SWAPO's forces in the region totalled 1800 of which 1500 had been in Koevoet.

It seems likely that the numbers have been changed by reclassifying personnel in various ways at different times. The total force may also have been reduced slightly, to perhaps about 7700, by men leaving Koevoet for political reasons, by retirement, and so on. Of these, 1200 Koevoet members, who were 'reintegrated' into the regular police after 1 April, were put back in Koevoet uniforms and 'confined to base' at Oshakati, and later (on 30 September) 'demobilised'. As for the rest, until SWAPO discloses its full personnel records (as it has so far declined to do), the only reasonable guess is that the remainder of Koevoet, perhaps numbering now about 1500 (i.e. the original 3000, less the 1200 and less perhaps 300 who may have left, for whatever reasons), are still on active service in police uniforms (roughly 500 in Kavango-Caprivi, and roughly 800 in Ovamboland and Kaokoveld).

The importance of the figures is less their absolute numbers, than the fact that the South Africans have clearly sought to obfuscate them, evidently with a view to avoiding the 'disbanding' of Koevoet provided for in S/20412. The military component of UNTAG has not monitored the disbanding of Koevoet as provided for in the UN Plan. Nor did it monitor those members of Koevoet who were 'confined to base' at Oshakati. No such confinement was provided for in the Plan, and the military component of UNTAG declined to accept responsibility for it. The Special Representative's spokesman, Fred Eckhard, stated that UNTAG had agreed to monitor the confinement, and discussions were begun about the conditions for this, with the military component insisting that the Koevoet troops should be fully confined, in a fenced camp, south of the 'red line' (i.e. within the former 'police zone', like the SADF troops), and 'with a view to disbanding them' (interview with Brigadier Opande, UNTAG Force Deputy Commander). The 'confinement' actually undertaken by the AG, by contrast, involved a restriction to base of only some Koevoet personnel, and only between 8 and 4 p.m. At 4 p.m. they were free to leave the base and many of them were taken in their 'casspirs' and in uniform, to their homes up and down the main road. Moreover, after the first week the confinement quickly became more lax and uniformed Koevoet in 'casspirs' could often be seen on the main road and elsewhere between 8 and 4 p.m. in the third week of September. It was also made clear by the Administrator General, in announcing the decision to confine these Koevoet members to base, that they would be released if 'the situation should in any way deteriorate in Ovambo or elsewhere (The Namibian, 16 August 1989). Disbandment was evidently not contemplated in any circumstances, and the 'demobilisation' undertaken from 30 September is presumably a 'stand-down' analogous to that of the SWATF units, not a disbandment. In effect, the provisions of the UN Plan in relation to Koevoet continue to be flouted, in spite of the Security Council's Resolution 640 of 31 August 1989, which reaffirmed these provisions.

The significance of this is that Koevoet, the main counter-insurgency unit of SWAPO, were recruited in 1978 not as policemen but as Special Constables, who
were to form a specialised para-military unit under white officers (some of them recruited from the Selous Scouts in Rhodesia) for fighting PLAN guerillas. As such they were extremely effective, being responsible for a large part of the annual toll of about 500 PLAN guerillas claimed as killed by the South African authorities in the mid-1980s, not to mention civilian casualties. The officer in charge of Koevoet training at Oluno testified to the O'Linn Commission on Intimidation and Election Malpractice that they were recruited on the basis of fitness alone. In the words of the O'Linn Commission, 'that the vast majority of black Koevoet members are illiterate or quasi-illiterate, inadequately trained for normal police duties and perhaps untrainable is beyond doubt' (Windhoek Observer, 2 September 1989).

Their methods of interrogating members of the public believed to have information about guerillas, their treatment of wounded guerillas and of the bodies of those they killed, and their general commitment to violence, combined with a strongly inculcated hostility to all SWAPO supporters, have made them feared and hated, above all in Ovamboland. The continued existence of Koevoet, however disguised, is taken by most Namibians as a sign that the South African authorities intend that the state should remain committed against SWAPO and its conception of what independence should mean. The failure to disband 'counter-insurgency units, including Koevoet', as provided for in paragraph 42 of S/20412, is evidently a breach of the UN Plan provisions, and the failure of UNTAG to secure this is a corresponding failure to fulfil its mandate.

The attention which has necessarily been focused on Koevoet should not be allowed, however, to divert attention from the problem of SWAPOL itself. There is a CID in SWAPOL and the force contains policemen who have seriously investigated crimes committed, among others, by members of Koevoet. But the general record of SWAPOL is that of a repressive force, primarily concerned with enforcing political control rather than crime prevention, and one which has regularly used violence, especially against SWAPO supporters. The UN Secretary General himself has in the past expressed concern about the continued employment of officers responsible for abuses of power prior to 1 April 1989. For this reason the Special Representative was also called on 'a) to satisfy himself that the Administrator General ensures the good conduct of the police force; b) to satisfy himself that the Administrator General takes the necessary action to ensure the suitability of the police for continued employment during the transition period; c) to make arrangements when appropriate for United Nations personnel to accompany the police forces in the discharge of their duties' (S/20412, para 40).

The presence of UNTAG police monitors is credited with a marked reduction in the level of police attacks on SWAPO supporters, but has not been able to prevent it entirely, as numerous complaints, some of them validated by the O'Linn Commission, have shown. The main reasons for this have been a) the fact that UNTAG police monitors have no power to intervene, but only to observe and report any abuse of police powers (reporting to SWAPOL itself, as well as to the Special Representative); b) the fact that the UN has not had enough personnel or equipment to follow SWAPOL patrols; and c) the failure of SWAPOL in some cases to notify UNTAG of impending operations.

Auxiliaries
In July 1989 a number of headmen in Ovambo and Kaokoveld petitioned the courts for protection, SWAPOL having declared that it did not have enough manpower
for this. The Court then required SWAPOL to provide this protection and authorised them to appoint auxiliaries for this purpose. A total of 215 auxiliaries were appointed, for approximately 20 headmen. Their duties were to guard the headmen and their property. They were given a 'short' initial training, according to a senior SWAPOL officer; it is generally thought that they are all former members of 101 and 102 battalions. The argument that SWAPOL lacked sufficient manpower looks implausible in light of the subsequent 'confinement to base' of 1200 Koevoet members who had been 'reintegrated' into SWAPOL after 1 April. These auxiliaries, though appointed and paid by SWAPOL, were not considered by UNTAG to fall within its mandate to monitor SWAPOL. In one instance, however, at Ombalantu, four auxiliaries who were reported to SWAPOL by UNTAG for threatening or harassing people in the vicinity were summarily dismissed by the SWAPOL officer responsible for them.

**Weapons in Private Hands**

No information is available on the numbers of weapons in private hands in Namibia. Mr. Rwambuya, the UNTAG Director for the northern region, complained to General Dreyer about the amount of shooting taking place at night early in May, involving machine guns as well as other weapons and was told that the General had no way of controlling it. During April he had 'opened the armoury, anyone could take guns and ammunition, there was no accounting', but that when the situation stabilised he would see what he could do (but that night the shooting dropped by 90%). SWAPOL does not release any figures on licences issued or weapons held, even to UNTAG. It is in general prepared to issue a firearm licence to anyone who is trained in its use and makes a case that it is necessary for his or her protection; a farmer, for example, might legally own a considerable number of weapons. SWAPOL claims that it observes complete political neutrality when deciding on licence applications. 'Small arms' for which licences are issued may include automatic rifles as well as rifles and revolvers, and there are no restrictions on carrying legally owned weapons. It seems likely that very large numbers of weapons are legally held. The UNTAG Director of a district in Ovamboland containing some 45,000 adults over 18 said he understood that there were about 3000 shotguns in the district and perhaps 300 rifles and rather more revolvers. Other weapons are no doubt held illegally.

**The Ombili Foundation and ‘Secret Bases’**

Early in September the Namibian press began publishing reports of 'activities' on former SADF bases in northeast Ovambo (See e.g. *Namibia Today*, 9 September 1989 and *The Namibian*, 14 September 1989). These reports identified the Ombili Foundation as being responsible. Mr. Von Stittard, a Tsumeb lawyer and a director of the Foundation, was quoted as confirming that it had been established in 'March/April this year' to help the people in these areas whose livelihood was threatened by the army's withdrawal. Mr. Von Stittard stated that 'the Ombili Foundation gets sponsorship from groups in South Africa, Namibia and Germany' and denied that it was aided by the SADF in any way, contrary to the suspicion of local people that the foundation's activities are aimed at 'keeping a “foothold” for the SADF in Ovambo' (*The Namibian*, 14 September 1989). UNTAG efforts to investigate have been obstructed and have failed to uncover any signs of military use of these bases.
Similar reports have been received by UNTAG from Caprivi, notably about the activities of an organisation called Kopano Ya Tou, also said to be concerned with 'Bushmen'. SWAPO's Rundu office reported that the commander of the Finnish Battalion of UNTAG at Rundu had found a UNTA camp at 'Delta' base in western Caprivi, containing 'about 5180 men'. On 30 September 1989, it was reported in The Namibian that Delta Base did contain 5000 people, but they were stated to be civilian refugees from the 'Cuban Communists' in Angola. The camp's residents had recently begun to receive 'rations' from the DTA, according to the report, at about the same time that the camp headman had consented to the residents being registered as voters.

In the absence of better information, it is not possible to say much about the potential significance of these reports. The most plausible interpretation is that there is a South African-backed project to deny the use of these smaller bases and camps near the border to SWAPO, and to keep open the option of remobilising former SWATF personnel in the area, by channelling some funds to them under the supervision of former SADF personnel. If the Ombili Foundation had no political significance it would presumably make no difficulties about allowing UNTAG to inspect its work. The claim that the bases are now private property and that it would be 'harassment' by UNTAG to keep them under surveillance seems absurd and it is hard to understand why UNTAG should appear to have accepted it.

Lest it appear that stories about 'secret bases' and sinister foundations may be only the product of the fevered imaginations of partisan rumour-mongers, it should be pointed out that (a) South Africa is still giving assistance to UNITA which controls the Angolan side of the border as far west as central Ovambo, the region around Caprivi and northern Kavango being one in which a good deal of unofficial or illegal activity (military, trading, etc.) goes on, beyond the effective reach of any government except Pretoria's; (b) Koevoet personnel developed various activities of a business nature, from liquor sales to cattle trading, according to local informants in Ovamboland, the existence of camps or farms or 'bases' whose ownership and activities are mysterious being a fact of life in Namibia; (c) in general, there has been a blurring of the lines between the South African state and the anti-SWAPO parties through the lavish funding of many of them by (most notably) the Namib Foundation, financed from South Africa, and through the open adherence to the DTA of many SWAPOL and other state personnel, including many members of SWATF; and (d) there have been a number of violent incidents attributed to the 'White Wolves', a self-styled white vigilante organisation, including the assassination of SWAPO Central Committee member Anton Lubowski in Windhoek in September 1989, and the bombing of an UNTAG office in Outjo in August 1989. In general, it is not far fetched to postulate the existence of an actual or potential 'secret state' apparatus in Namibia.

**Commentary**

Hitherto public attention has been focused on the security situation in Namibia largely in terms of the question of intimidation of electors before the November elections. The fact that Koevoet, SWAPOL and members of SWATF have harassed, threatened, injured and even killed SWAPO supporters has been sufficiently documented elsewhere (see especially the various reports of the O'Linn Commission for scrupulous assessments of the evidence in some of these cases). The fact remains that while such harassment contravenes the UN Plan and may
have prevented many SWAPO supporters from registering and, provided that the
ballot is seen to be secret, it seems unlikely to prevent them from voting as they
wish. Since the Special Representative has made the issue of 'free and fair elections'
the touchstone of his success, it is unlikely that the election proclamation when
it is finally approved will leave any doubt about the secrecy of the ballot. Therefore
the significance of the security situation concerns what happens after the election,
not just what happens before it.

Here it is important to recall that Resolution 435 'reiterates that its [the Security
council’s] objective is the withdrawal of South Africa’s illegal administration of
Namibia and the transfer of power to the people of Namibia with the assistance
of the United Nations in accordance with Resolution 385 (1976)’. The Contact
Group’s proposals referred to ‘the transfer of authority in Namibia to an
independent government in accordance with Resolution 385’ (S/12636). Subsequent
documents have focused primarily on the conditions for the ‘free and fair elections’
through which independence is to be achieved, and the UN document entitled
‘Informal Summary of Proposed United Nations Transition Action Group
Operation’ issued to the public in Windhoek even goes so far as to state that
UNTAG’s ‘basic duty is the supervision and control of free and fair elections in
Namibia for a Constituent Assembly’, and makes no reference to the UN’s
responsibility for ensuring the transfer of power to the people of Namibia. It is in
this context that the current security situation needs to be interpreted. How far is
it compatible with the transfer of power to a SWAPO government, should SWAPO
succeed in winning a majority of the votes cast in November?

One possible interpretation is that South Africa intends to prevent a SWAPO
government from taking office, or at least from exercising power, unless it agrees
to work within the existing political, administrative and economic status quo.
SADF spokespersons have publicly speculated on the possibility that SWAPO
might resort to force following the elections, indicating that they were preparing
to intervene in that eventuality. South Africa could create an incident to provide
the pretext for such intervention. Not only do the SWATF units and Koevoet
continue to exist as paid forces, their command structures are also effectively
intact, as was demonstrated very clearly when they were mobilised within 24 hours
on 1/2 April 1989. It must also be borne in mind that in Angola and Mozambique,
South Africa is already pursuing a policy of destabilisation by supporting armed
forces against the government, in spite of its undertakings not to (notably the
Nkomati Accord of 1984). There can be no presumption that South Africa will
respect the sovereignty of the elected government of Namibia either.

What seems more immediately likely, however, is that South Africa is staking out
the strongest possible position from which to resist the effective transfer of power
by less dramatic means. This could well include resistance to any attempt by the
incoming government to create a new security apparatus free from South African
influence — which might well seem a necessary condition for genuine
independence. The new government might be thought entitled, for example, to
create an army and a police force loyal to the new state, and to dispense with all
those elements which have been trained and used to oppose and destroy the
national liberation movement. Not only does the UN Plan perpetuate the existing
apparatus but the way in which it has been interpreted, and in some respects
flouted, appears to pose serious obstacles to such a basic change.
Moreover paragraph B(7) of the 'Principles concerning the Constituent Assembly and the Constitution for an Independent Namibia' set out in the letter of the Contact Group to the Secretary-General of 12 July 1982 (S/15287), states, inter alia, that 'provision will be made for the balanced structuring of the public service, the police service and the defence services and for equal access by all to recruitment of these services...assured by appropriate independent bodies'. This was agreed to by SWAPO. It is easy to see that any radical change proposed by a SWAPO government in the structure or composition of the security services is likely to be held by South Africa to be in breach of this principle.

In 1984 a South African general met with the SWAPO leadership in Lusaka to propose that SWAPO participate in the initiative that resulted in the 'transitional government of national unity', saying that it was conceded that SWAPO had majority popular support and that it was time for the people of Namibia to move forwards towards self-government without being held up by the 'linkage' issue (the US demand for Cuban troops to leave Angola before Namibia became independent). This was refused because of its obvious tendency to legitimate South African control without conferring real power on SWAPO. It is evident that such an outcome remains South Africa's goal. In July or August (I have not been able to verify the date but am confident of the substantial accuracy of the report) General Gouws, the SWAPOL commander, told military correspondents in Pretoria that Koevoet would not be disbanded because it stood between anarchy and peace in Namibia. It is in the context of such thinking on the part of South Africa, which it has taken little trouble to conceal, that the perpetuation, in practice, of the South African controlled SWATF units and Koevoet, and the effective monopoly of arms by people aligned with the South African regime, assumes its true significance. It is also in this context that one must assess UNTAG's willingness to accept the South African interpretation, and in some cases open disregard, of the UN Plan provisions affecting the security forces.

Endnote
This briefing is an abridged version of a report prepared in September 1989 for 'Supporting the Peace Process in Namibia', a joint project of Oxfam - Canada, WUSC, the United Church of Canada and the Canadian Council for International Cooperation. Colin Leys wrote the report after a month of travelling and observing the situation on the ground in Namibia. We have retained his use of the present tense to convey his sense of what he found; in any case, the observations contained here have a relevance which continues into the present. We have edited the briefing to highlight the key points brought out in the original, sacrificing detail but seeking to preserve the issues of concern which the security situation warrants.

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The Namibian Election Process: Just about 'free and fair'
Ray Bush

This second article details observations of the Namibian electoral campaign during October and early November. It describes efforts to interfere in the electoral process and undermine voter self-confidence through intimidation and seeks to assess Pretoria's motives in the pattern of political activity that occurred.
Moreover paragraph B(7) of the ‘Principles concerning the Constituent Assembly and the Constitution for an Independent Namibia’ set out in the letter of the Contact Group to the Secretary-General of 12 July 1982 (S/15287), states, inter alia, that ‘provision will be made for the balanced structuring of the public service, the police service and the defence services and for equal access by all to recruitment of these services...assured by appropriate independent bodies’. This was agreed to by SWAPO. It is easy to see that any radical change proposed by a SWAPO government in the structure or composition of the security services is likely to be held by South Africa to be in breach of this principle.

In 1984 a South African general met with the SWAPO leadership in Lusaka to propose that SWAPO participate in the initiative that resulted in the ‘transitional government of national unity’, saying that it was conceded that SWAPO had majority popular support and that it was time for the people of Namibia to move forwards towards self-government without being held up by the ‘linkage’ issue (the US demand for Cuban troops to leave Angola before Namibia became independent). This was refused because of its obvious tendency to legitimate South African control without conferring real power on SWAPO. It is evident that such an outcome remains South Africa’s goal. In July or August (I have not been able to verify the date but am confident of the substantial accuracy of the report) General Gouws, the SWAPOL commander, told military correspondents in Pretoria that Koevoet would not be disbanded because it stood between anarchy and peace in Namibia. It is in the context of such thinking on the part of South Africa, which it has taken little trouble to conceal, that the perpetuation, in practice, of the South African controlled SWATF units and Koevoet, and the effective monopoly of arms by people aligned with the South African regime, assumes its true significance. It is also in this context that one must assess UNTAG’s willingness to accept the South African interpretation, and in some cases open disregard, of the UN Plan provisions affecting the security forces.

Endnote
This briefing is an abridged version of a report prepared in September 1989 for ‘Supporting the Peace Process in Namibia’, a joint project of Oxfam - Canada, WUSC, the United Church of Canada and the Canadian Council for International Cooperation. Colin Leys wrote the report after a month of travelling and observing the situation on the ground in Namibia. We have retained his use of the present tense to convey his sense of what he found; in any case, the observations contained here have a relevance which continues into the present. We have edited the briefing to highlight the key points brought out in the original, sacrificing detail but seeking to preserve the issues of concern which the security situation warrants.

Colin Leys is in the Politics Department, Queens University, Kingston, Canada

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The Namibian Election Process: Just about ‘free and fair’
Ray Bush

This second article details observations of the Namibian electoral campaign during October and early November. It describes efforts to interfere in the electoral process and undermine voter self-confidence through intimidation and seeks to assess Pretoria’s motives in the pattern of political activity that occurred.
Anyone visiting Namibia before the implementation of UN Resolution 435, and then again before the elections of November 1989, would have been surprised by many scenes of change, especially in the north where the war had been fiercest. Where there had once been a curfew and heavy South African military occupation in Ovambo and Kavango, there was now evening revelry and easier mobility for a population eagerly seeking political information and education. Political parties were active during the election campaign and the flags of SWAPO and Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA) could be seen everywhere, fluttering above tiny township houses in Oshakati and Rundu.

Yet this surface tranquillity and the seemingly 'free and fair' ballot in November masked a tide of political violence and unrest which made the success of SWAPO all the more remarkable. While one senior UN official considered the levels of violence during the 1989 campaign to be 'an acceptable unacceptability', there was nevertheless a constant pattern of intimidation — overt and covert, passive and active — of eligible, usually SWAPO, voters from the beginning of April onwards. In late October, for instance, after SWAPO President Sam Nujoma had addressed some 50,000 well-behaved supporters at a rally in Oshakati, vigilantes from the opposition DTA threw eight grenades into two schools. Incredibly, they killed only one security guard and inflicted extensive burns and shrapnel wounds on more than twenty pupils (a local doctor remarked that he had seldom treated such wounds, even at the height of the war in the north). UNTAG police, called to investigate the incident, were stoned and a rocket exploded close to one of their vehicles. The perpetrators of this atrocity were DTA thugs who were also members of Koevoet, the South African trained counter-insurgency para-military force.

Such terrorism was not new to northern Namibia. For a decade, Koevoet and the ethnic battalions 101 and 202 had operated there, assassinating, maiming and torturing rural people thought to have assisted SWAPO and PLAN. These elements persisted in their violent behaviour despite the presence of UNTAG and the agreement to implement Resolution 435; it remains to be seen whether or not their activities will persist during the transition to independence and beyond. UNTAG was unable to confine Koevoet to base or demobilise it in Oshakati until just days before voting. As a result, while some 1205 soldiers had officially been demobilised, they continued to roam the streets in civilian clothes, menacing the population. In addition, another 1800 of them were Integrated into SWAPOL, becoming responsible for maintaining law and order! In Kavango, Koevoet was not demobilised at all but remained a separate unit within SWAPOL. They continued to use casspirs armoured vehicles, ostensibly according to the SA authorities, to deter poachers. Incredulity was further stretched by the use of Koevoet members to operate roadblocks and, in police uniform and without UNTAG monitors, to patrol the streets of Rundu and its neighbouring areas.

Many Koevoet were/are DTA supporters. They were responsible for countless instances of intimidation, particularly in isolated areas where people were coerced into supporting DTA for fear of their lives. DTA supporters were paid in cash and in kind (with food and clothes) which encouraged many to sport the party's colours without intending to vote for it in November. Koevoet continued to occupy barracks in Oshakati right through the elections, openly wore DTA colours and gave that party's 'V sign' — something they had done when returning from engaging PLAN forces on April 1. Flares, grenades, incendiary devices and automatic weapons, used in wild nights of violence in Ovambo towns and villages, originated
from Koevoet supply depots. UNTAG tried to inspect these depots when Koevoet was partially demobilised in October but were informed that the soldier with the key was away on holiday. Nor was there any way of checking Koevoet numbers against the quantity of arms held in the armoury.

The continued presence of this unit constituted a major challenge to the prospect of the voting being free and fair in November. Sworn statements lodged with the SWAPO office in Rundu, for example, attested to the extensive harassment of prospective voters by Koevoet members who regularly visited remote rural areas to threaten and to disseminate disinformation about SWAPO intentions after the elections. Typically they announced that they knew who the SWAPO supporters were (not difficult given the display of flags on houses) and would return to deal with them if SWAPO won. Many people were ordered to join DTA. Koevoet thugs
would often return at night, firing their weapons indiscriminately to create an atmosphere of tension and fear. This pattern was widespread and, while some of it seemed spontaneous — a case of Koevoet and ethnic battalion members continuing to behave as they had done for years — it is also clear that much of the violence was coordinated.

It seems to be more than coincidence that, after a leading DTA organiser in Oshakati had predicted an increase in violence and intimidation during an interview in late September, DTA supporters increased their attacks on SWAPO targets. Another DTA organiser in Oshakati had been a captain in battalion 101 and the DTA second-in-command in Rundu had been a major in battalion 202. This latter individual, whose exploits against PLAN were notorious in the area, indicated proudly that four of the five local headmen supported DTA (though it was a clear source of anger that the fifth, his uncle, refused all inducements to move away from SWAPO).

Alongside the open harassment of voters was a process of 'passive', more covert intimidation. In many areas, for example, voter registration was conducted by officers known to be or have been Koevoet members and noted for their part in previous terror campaigns, and was overseen by armed SWAPOL personnel. Thus, an already frightened electorate was reminded, if there was any need to do so, that the repressive apparatus of the occupying power remained in place. While such intimidation may not ultimately have deterred many from registering, it nevertheless served to heighten insecurity and uncertainty, creating the potential for disruption of the transitional process if the 'need' arose. This was in keeping with the South African posture and strategy throughout this period; Pretoria kept its options for renewed intervention, and for aborting the process, open throughout. Thus the SA Administrator General sought to frustrate and delay every UNTAG effort to keep the election process within the agreed time frame. Equally, SWAPOL often would not cooperate with their UN monitors, refusing to give UNTAG their patrol schedules and sometimes preventing UN personnel being present when they interrogated people in their custody. Close links between SWAPOL and Koevoet resulted in the civilian police often acting to frustrate political meetings by DTA opponents by pedantically insisting on written notice at least three days before each and every meeting.

Many of the parties contesting the elections were suspicious of South African motives and delaying tactics. They were also frustrated by the continuation of SA authoritarianism and its supporting climate of intimidation and provocation. The continuing presence of Pretoria and the activities of its functionaries and stooges were resented by many Namibians. One 22 year old SWAPO supporter returned home in Rundu to find that the DTA had stuck their flag on the telephone pole outside his house. He took the flag down and destroyed it. A magistrate in Kavango decided that this 'crime' deserved 60 days imprisonment; a 17 year old 'accomplice' received corporal punishment. SWAPO supporters resented not only such treatment but also the fact that no such penalties were imposed on those who destroyed their property.

This kind of passive or indirect intimidation extended also to the SA enclave of Walvis Bay — a part of Namibia not included in resolution 435 and retained by Pretoria as a means of strangling the Namibian economy. This gives Pretoria enormous leverage against an independent Namibia and against individual Namibians living and working in the port. While the DTA has an office in Walvis
Bay, SWAPO has not been allowed to operate there. In September, some 10,000 Namibians travelled to Swakopmund to attend a SWAPO rally. On their return, they were subjected to an SA Police inspection of all identity cards, a delaying procedure not normally required from regular commuters between the two towns; the silent threat was quite obvious.

In trying to influence the transition to independence, the police and SA state have not had it all their own way. Some SA authorities were, in fact, cooperative. Others were confronted by zealous and astute UNTAG officials. In contrast to the largely ineffective UN Special Representative, UNTAG officials in the countryside generally interpreted their monitoring role actively, seeking to bring communities of opposing political persuasions together and sometimes managing to get obstructive police officers moved (no doubt to continue their troublemaking elsewhere). Even in Outjo, a town infamous for its neo-nazi ‘white wolves’ graffiti and a bomb attack on UNTAG offices in August, they had some moderate success. This required incredible patience and fortitude in the face of aggressive racist prejudice, threats against their lives for ‘meddling’ in matters which ‘should not concern them’ and accusations of bias in favour of SWAPO. Often the pretext for this aggression was some relatively unimportant issue, such as a UN request for information about arrangements for farm workers to register to vote or for a political meeting to be held on a farm.

Despite, or perhaps because of, the relative success of UNTAG in its monitoring role, it too became a target of selective political violence. In one incident in a southern town, a drunken Afrikaner farmer drove to a UN building and brandished an automatic rifle. He was confronted by a group of Kenyan monitors who aimed their weapons at him. Violence was avoided when the farmer’s friends in SWAPO persuaded him to put his rifle away. The farmer then apologised: he had driven to the wrong building, he said; his intention had been to attack the office of the UNTAG regional director!

It was not surprising that UNTAG personnel became the target of abuse and intimidation. In some ways this was made inevitable by what appears to have been a restricted, rather than an extensive, interpretation of the UN role adopted by Ahtissari, the special representative. Unarmed UNTAG police monitors trailed SWAPOL patrols and, when they observed incidents of misconduct, took notes for later reports rather than being able to intervene directly. There were instances where individual officers did act, sometimes courageously, but they should not have been put in such a position at all. And the pattern led to strong feelings on the part of Namibians that, as before, Koevoet and SWAPOL could act illegally and with impunity.

Now that the election has been completed and SWAPO has won, despite all the pressures imposed on the electorate, it is important to consider the purpose of all this violence, not least because it is important in giving us some clues about likely effects and events to come. If the violence and intimidation was, indeed, orchestrated more often than it was random and spontaneous (as the evidence strongly indicates) the question occurs about why South Africa should first accept Resolution 435 and then seek to promote instability. At least three possible explanations suggest themselves.

The first is that Pretoria wanted the election cancelled. The excuse for cancellation would have been mounting disorder and violence 'or the entry of PLAN fighters
into the north from Angola as had occurred on 1 April. Pretoria announced an incursion from Angola on 1 November and was promptly discredited for a piece of blatant disinformation. This strategy was always difficult to envisage given the presence of UNTAG on the ground, and given the fact that Pretoria had invested international credibility in 'biting the bullet' by agreeing to implement 435. It may be questioned that anyone in the west would have criticised SA for reneging on the agreement, but it was difficult to manufacture a crisis of sufficient proportions to justify such action.

The second, more feasible, scenario, would have been to delay the election. Mounting violence, followed by the rains which would have made balloting in many rural areas difficult, might have provided a period of delay in which Pretoria could cobble together a version of independence in which it retained considerable political and economic ties. A delay might also have split SWAPO and pushed many PLAN fighters into action, thus making the first scenario more likely.

The third, most limited, scenario — and the one we now know to have been followed — was to impede and undermine the election and transition process as much as possible. This was the pattern throughout 1989. Koevoet was disbanded only partially and very late at that, much of its corps continuing to operate within SWAPOL to this day. The SWAPO exiles were allowed to return late and the start of the election campaign delayed. The final details of the voting procedures were published just hours before polling began. South Africa assumed that a frustrated and impeded electoral process would serve it in at least three ways. The first was to lay down a marker, to demonstrate to the international community and Namibians that Pretoria remained a power in the region and had the power to act in Namibia, independent or not. Second, such a course also set out clearly that South Africa had important allies in Namibia, that it would support them and that its withdrawal nevertheless left these Namibian agents in a strong position. Third, Pretoria sought to prevent SWAPO obtaining a two-thirds share of the votes and seats in the constituent assembly (a result which would give SWAPO the ability to impose its own constitution and bill of rights on the country). The final result denied SWAPO this percentage although its majority was still clear cut. It also left the DTA with an important minority of seats and the likelihood that SWAPO would have to accommodate it and the far right Aksie Christelik Nasionaal (ACN) to some extent.

If South Africa could not deliver a cancelled or delayed election, it nevertheless prevented SWAPO gaining a two-thirds majority. It will make it more difficult for an independent Namibia to curb white power and racism and to address questions of economic justice. It may even mute Namibia's commitment to change in South Africa itself. The strategic nature of Walvis Bay will be another powerful lever. So will the existence of an armed white population and the continued survival of vigilantes and thugs; the possibility that death squads might be activated in future remains.

Events in Ovambo and Kavango since the voting would indicate that there is no guarantee that the violence will diminish when independence comes. Many observers fear that the transition to independence in April 1990 could be marked by considerable violence. This will be all the more likely if the law enforcement apparatus preserves its command structures and membership and if demobilised paramilitaries are not separated from access to weapons before being assimilated into civilian jobs and rural communities. The DTA, too, will have to decide where
its future is: as a party of political opposition or as an organisation which incorporates some of the more sinister elements of Namibian society.

Endnote
Ray Bush is in the Politics Dept., University of Leeds

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Namibia Postscript: The Election Results
Lionel Cliffe

In the event, and despite the electoral manipulation and intimidation noted by Leys and Bush in the previous Briefings, SWAPO won a convincing majority and there were jubilant celebrations in Windhoek and elsewhere. They obtained 57.3 per cent of the popular vote in this single list, proportional representation election, giving them 41 out of 72 seats in the Constituent Assembly, which has been meeting in the months since. The Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA) which had been the leading element in the internal government set up under South African control in the eighties, expectedly finished up as the main opposition, winning 21 seats. Five other small parties each obtained four or less seats.

The SWAPO celebrations should have been more muted. There will be a SWAPO-led government and a reasonable chance of peace after years of fighting in the north. But the Constituent Assembly is required to have a two-thirds majority to approve a constitution, necessary before independence can be achieved. So SWAPO will have to do deals to get the support of seven other Assembly members to get any constitution through.

Its victory was achieved through a great show of strength among the Ovambo people, based in the far north and also found among workers throughout the country, who make up almost half the total population. Among them the heavy DTA/South African intimidation just did not deter people and may even have been counter-productive. SWAPO had a reasonable majority in one of the other northern war-torn areas, Kavango, but elsewhere did less well. The towns were divided. The white-owned farming areas, with their workers trapped in semi-servile conditions, could hardly be penetrated by SWAPO. It also suffered from a series of marginal but in the end significant manipulations of registration (allowing South Africans and Angolans onto the voters' roll), media campaigns, party financing and delays in administration of the elections. Its showing in the rural 'reserves' of the south-centre was not strong. One factor in these Herero, Nama and Damara areas that told against SWAPO was its treatment of its own detainees who were, it seems, mainly from these regions. 'Detainees' thus became a code-word for ethnic appeals and SWAPO must do a great deal of fence mending here.

Given the detainee issue, many parties and fronts will extract a price in the form of constitutional guarantees against one-party rule and to entrench 'human rights'. But given that DTA and the even more reactionary, all-white Aksie Christelik Nasionaal (ACN) have one-third of the seats between them, one short of a blocking veto, the rights entrenched are likely to be those relating to private property, making land reform difficult, as in Zimbabwe. SWAPO state that such a price is worth paying in the short run if these opposition groups are thereby induced to
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worth paying in the short run if these opposition groups are thereby induced to
play the constitutional game rather than use destabilisation tactics — though how far this is so will depend ultimately on South Africa.

### ELECTION RESULTS

**Compiled by Stanley Katzao and Werner Tjipueja**

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**Tendered Votes:** A TOTAL OF 96 281 TENDERED BALLOTS WERE COUNTED

**Grand Total:** 23728 2495 191532 10452 984 5344 10693 3161 384567 37874

**Number of seats:**

|            | 3    | nil | 21  | 1    | nil | 1   | 1   | nil   | 41  | 4   |

* A TOTAL OF 670 830 VOTES WERE CAST
* THERE WERE 8 532 SPOILT BALLOT PAPERS
* EACH PARTY NEEDED A QUOTA OF 9 317 VOTES TO GAIN A SEAT IN THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY
US FOREIGN POLICY AND DESTABILISATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA
George V Wright

The foreign policy pursued by the Reagan administration in southern Africa was, particularly from 1981 to 1985, congruent with its assumed role as an imperial state exercising global hegemony in defence of capitalism. The Reagan presidency interpreted all foreign policy in terms of global considerations of US rivalry with the Soviet Union. The conflicts of the region were understood not in their own terms but as extensions of superpower competition and responses were formulated accordingly. The Reagan years saw support for South Africa, hostility towards African demands for self-determination, obstruction of a Namibian peace settlement and tacit approval of Pretoria's attacks on neighbouring states. The Bush administration has started more cautiously but indications of continuity with the Reagan years are already emerging and there is cause for concern that pressure on South Africa through sanctions, however limited, will not be maintained.

Reagan, Cold War and Southern Africa
The Reagan administration took office at the start of the eighties with US foreign policy beset by numerous crises. The recession of the mid-seventies reflected a process of declining profit rates for capital, inflation and unemployment. It was accompanied by the so-called 'Vietnam syndrome', a domestic climate of opinion resistant to international interventions following the defeat in Vietnam. Meanwhile, the seventies brought a string of reverses for clients and allies in the third world, most critically in Iran.

Such reverses undermined the influence of those in the foreign policy establishment who viewed third world conflicts as having some degree of autonomy from cold war considerations. These so-called 'regionalists', who had been prominent in the early period of the Carter regime, became increasingly marginalised. It gave renewed prominence to the 'globalists', those who reduced most regional or local conflicts to the terms of cold war strategic competition and thus evaluated them in terms of US — USSR national interests rather than on their own merits.

Thus, the Reagan foreign policy apparatus was packed with 'globalists'. Moreover, the globalists it attracted supported an aggressive, imperial foreign policy. It was full of people who wanted to resume the US role as global policeman which had operated before 1968 and to revive the strategy of 'containment militarism' which had been the bedrock of postwar anti-Soviet policy. This perspective was strengthened by the elements of capital, both domestic and multinational, which supported Reagan.

This is not to suggest that these globalists were always united on policy; many differed over specific strategies throughout the Reagan period. Moreover, Washington's European and Japanese allies did not always share its aims or interests on specific issues. And, despite Reagan's political popularity, it was not possible to completely reverse the 'Vietnam syndrome' which limited covert and overt intervention abroad. The administration could not obtain consistent Congressional support for third world interventions. The fervent anti-communism
of the Reaganites thus needed a strategy organised within the limits imposed by such constraints.

The result was the 'Reagan Doctrine', linking regional problems to cold war considerations throughout, but employing a range of different tactics designed to suit different contingencies. In the Philippines, where there was little alternative, Washington did orchestrate a 'managed transition' of power in favour of some level of bourgeois democracy. For the most part, however, popular protest was met by some form of military response at the heart of which was the counter-insurgency model called Low Intensity Conflict. As noted by Nesbitt (ROAPE 41, 1987) this called for active intervention to take advantage of conflicts in order to promote US clients, to 'roll back' perceived Soviet interests or to 'punish' movements seeking greater independence and opposing imperialist interests. It was variously employed overtly or covertly, depending on the political climate, and where government-sponsored intervention could not be justified or sustained, private contractors or surrogates were employed, domestically or abroad.

In southern Africa, the policy aimed to preserve western hegemony in the region and to support the government in Pretoria, ensuring that it would be allowed to define the pace and character of change in South Africa. Thus Reagan's obsession with the Cuban presence in Angola linked Namibian independence to a Cuban withdrawal although the two issues had nothing to do with each other originally. Equally, the Reagan policy of Constructive Engagement was premised on the idea that the US and Pretoria had a set of common interests, including the prevention of 'Soviet expansionism', maintaining access to strategic raw materials and protecting the sea lanes round the Cape.

The US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Chester Crocker, the originator of Constructive Engagement, argued that Washington should work closely with Pretoria rather than ostracising it. By doing so, he held, the SA government would be more readily induced to reform apartheid and leave Namibia. Writing in Foreign Affairs (Winter 1980/81), Crocker laid out his hopes for keeping change under US control:

... without western engagement in the region as a whole, it will not be possible to insure that South Africans are permitted to build their own future. The American stance must be firmly supportive of a regional climate conducive to compromise and accommodation ...

Rather less 'compromise and accommodation' was evident over Angola. Here, said Crocker, the US would insist on linkage of the Namibian issue to the Cuban presence in Angola:

African leaders would have no basis for resisting the Namibian — Angolan linkage, once they are made to realise that they can only get a Namibian settlement through us.

The policy gave a green light to Pretoria to accelerate its 'Total Strategy' of destabilisation of the region and increasing repression at home. Throughout the eighties, Pretoria was able to keep up a devastating campaign of military intervention against Angola and Mozambique, to provide essential support for UNITA and Renamo, to maintain a military occupation and repression in Namibia, to exert economic and military pressures against Zimbabwe, Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland, and to strike regularly against targets necessary for SADCC area regional cooperation.
The hard line adopted was also evident in Crocker's call in 1981 for the repeal of the Clark Amendment (which had ended Kissinger's clandestine adventure in Angola in 1976 and forbidden further adventures) so that support for UNITA could be resumed. The globalists saw the MPLA victory in Angola in 1975 as a symbol of a US 'failure of nerve' in confronting Moscow and were keen to reverse the setback. Although Reagan administration officials did hold frequent talks with Angolan counterparts between July 1982 and May 1985 (Bender, 1985) these regularly foundered on the insistence that normalisation of relations be linked to a Cuban withdrawal. Meanwhile, even before the repeal of the Clark Amendment, it allowed South Africa to attack southern Angola and to revive UNITA (which had almost collapsed by 1980).

Savimbi had long been a favourite of the far right in America. He was brought to Washington in 1975 to testify to Congress against the termination of covert assistance to UNITA. His visit was sponsored by the American Security Council, an organisation of retired military officers and corporate executives, especially from the largest military contractors. The ASC has been described as 'the personification of the military-industrial complex'. In 1981 Savimbi visited the estate of the director of ASC, where he met Secretary of State Haig and some Congressional leaders. UNITA was also supported by other organisations linked to the ASC, including the Conservative Caucus, which lobbied against the Clark Amendment and even sought to force Gulf Oil to leave Angola. Jane Hunter (1987) reports that, in June 1985, Lewis Lehman, a director of the Heritage Foundation, a 'new right' think tank, organised a conference at UNITA's Angolan base of Jamba. The meeting was also attended by representatives of the 'democratic resistance movements' supported by the US in Laos, Afghanistan, Nicaragua and Cambodia — to discuss coordination! It was also reported that Savimbi had been recruited to the World Anti-Communist League, an organisation containing several extreme, bizarre and ultra-right groups. The WACL was linked to the ASC through its affiliation to the latter's Coalition for Peace Through Strength. More respectable right-wing support came from senators like Jesse Helms and Robert Dole and representatives like Jack Kemp.

The repeal of the Clark Amendment in 1985 led to another visit to the US by Savimbi in early 1986, sponsored by the ASC and Heritage Foundation. He met Reagan who agreed to resume support for UNITA and in February 1986 some $15 million worth of weapons, including Stinger missiles, were channelled through the CIA to Savimbi. Both Schultz and Crocker asserted that the aid was merely to increase pressure on the MPLA for a political compromise; it was in the interests of 'national reconciliation'. The decision was a problem for Chevron Oil, however. It had taken over Gulf in 1984 and its oil facilities were a target for South African and UNITA destabilisation. But there was little sympathy from the Reaganites and even increased it's efforts to try to force Chevron to leave Angola.

Hard Times for the Reagan Doctrine
From 1986, containment militarism and low intensity conflict became somewhat less popular in the US. In part this was because of the thaw in relations with the Soviet Union. More immediately, the administration was discredited by the Iran-Contra scandal which revealed that White House officials had carried out policies at variance with the public postures of the regime (and quite possibly illegal). The episode did not help Constructive Engagement in southern Africa
either. Already, from 1984 the policy was being increasingly challenged in Congress and in public for its lack of effectiveness. Intensifying protest and repression in South Africa from August 1984, sparked demonstrations and calls for sanctions and disinvestment from black leaders in Washington in November 1984. This demand became even stronger during 1985 as the SADF attacked oil installations in Angola, raided Botswana and set up a puppet regime in Namibia; at the same time Botha rejected any idea of fundamental change. Between late 1984 and mid 1986, 19 states, 70 cities and counties, and over 100 colleges put through disinvestment decisions, affecting over $10 billion of investment. Banks called in loans, resulting in South Africa having to freeze repayment of $14 billion in principle owed. During 1985-86, US multinationals began to withdraw from South Africa as well. The actions were often largely symbolic but they had a marked effect on political opinion. Even Leon Sullivan, the black director of General Motors, put aside his earlier resistance to advocate sanctions in 1987.

With the administration in disarray, Congress passed bills in 1985 calling for sanctions against South Africa. Recognising the strength of feeling, Reagan sought to defuse it by issuing an Executive Order imposing limited sanctions.

The bills were withdrawn but the conflict within South Africa intensified and renewed sanctions demands. Reagan denounced sanctions in July 1986 and attacked the ANC for 'calculated terrorism', claiming that Pretoria had a right to 'defend itself'. Undeterred, Congress passed the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act in 1986 and overrode Reagan's veto (despite a Republican majority in the Senate). The Act was limited in scope, prohibiting some forms of investment in, trade with and imports from South Africa. Yet, the fact that it was passed by the same people who had repealed the Clark Amendment indicated the pressures on the administration.

In October 1987 Reagan reported (as required under the Act) that there had been no significant progress but insisted that sanctions would not work and called for a continuation of constructive engagement to allow

a period of active and creative diplomacy to bring the peoples of South Africa together for meaningful negotiations leading to the building of a democratic society.

When the South African government prohibited television filming of protest under its state of emergency, the troubles disappeared off American television screens and by 1988 anti-apartheid fervour had almost completely disappeared in the US. This served the administration and the political right well. Thus when Ron Dellums, a California Congressman, sought to extend the sanctions imposed against South Africa in 1988, the so-called Dellums Bill did not pass the Senate. Pressure for action against apartheid was therefore not sustained beyond the life of the Reagan administration but, while it lasted, it had shaken the confidence of apartheid's supporters.

The Reagan strategy in southern Africa also suffered some setbacks in its efforts to manage the Angolan and Namibian issues. As noted, numerous contacts between US envoys and the MPLA government in Luanda from 1981 had foundered on US insistence that Namibian independence be linked to the withdrawal of Cuban forces from Angola. Angola consistently rejected linkage, Pretoria's destabilisation and US support for UNITA; it restated the position that the Cuban presence was necessitated by destabilisation and external support for UNITA. The repeal of the
Clark Amendment and the resumption of overt aid to UNITA, coupled with Pretoria's destabilisation, caused the MPLA-WP to end its discussions with Crocker and his representatives.

In November 1987 Pretoria sought to establish a new base for UNITA at Cuito Cuanavale in southern Angola. In response, Cuba increased its forces in the country. Victoria Brittain observed that

The South African offensive ... was the most ambitious operation since 1975 ... It aimed at capture of Cuito Cuanavale and a completely new strategic base for UNITA to attack central Angola. At the same time, FAPLA was facing myriad attacks from an estimated 20,000 UNITA forces ... well equipped by South Africa, funded by the US and increasingly trained in Morocco ... and the Israeli-aided UNITA facilities in Zaire.

The Cuban and FAPLA forces committed themselves to the defence of this area and a major battle continued through late 1987 into May 1988 around Cuito Cuanavale. By then it was clear that South Africa had lost clear control of the air in southern Africa for the first time, that it had suffered heavy losses and that it had been decisively defeated. For the first time in twenty years, South Africa could not do what it wished in the region. It was necessary to negotiate a withdrawal and to seek non-military solutions.

The negotiations began in May 1988 with the US, represented by Crocker, as the mediating force. By August a ceasefire had been agreed and SADF forces were able to begin their withdrawal from southern Angola. By December 1988 South Africa, Angola and Cuba formally signed an agreement to i) implement Resolution 435 opening the way for Namibian independence and ii) a timetable for Cuban withdrawal linked to South African withdrawal from Namibia. (See also the Briefings on Namibia in this issue).

Pretoria had other reasons for seeking a peaceful settlement. The American presidential election campaign had led the Democrats to commit themselves to declaring South Africa a 'terrorist state' if they won the election. Pretoria was concerned not to risk such an eventuality and to establish itself as a 'partner in the peace process'. In addition, the South African economy was faced with slow growth, high inflation, a rising foreign debt, increasing unemployment — all of which were exacerbated by domestic unrest and the diminishing enthusiasm of foreign investors.

Events thus showed that even the limited sanctions applied, coupled with the recession and the decline of foreign investment, had had a marked effect. Pretoria was finding it difficult to pay for apartheid, domestic repression and regional destabilisation all at once. As John Battersby observes:

an 11-year-old UN arms embargo has prevented South Africa from updating its air defence and producing the sophisticated weaponry needed to sustain supremacy over Soviet-backed Cuban and Angolan forces.

He also notes that an annual contribution of $200 million to the Namibian budget and $500 million to the Namibian war had further drained the economy. The consequence was that Pretoria lost its enthusiasm for the militarist regional destabilisation pursued since the late seventies. This is not to suggest that Pretoria will not use force in the future; certainly its behaviour throughout the election
period in Namibia would indicate that destabilisation and force have not been abandoned so much as put in reserve.

The willingness of the US to sponsor such a settlement was clearly linked to the fact that its primary objective, the removal of Cuban forces, was conceded by Angola. In addition, the Soviet leadership's desire to de-escalate cold war competition provided a major inducement. Gorbachev advocated a resolution of 'regional conflicts' in the third world through negotiated settlements, the extraction of superpower involvement, the curtailment of support for proxy forces, and 'national reconciliation'. He argued that 'these conflicts should not be used to engender confrontation between the two systems'. As superpower negotiations of arms reductions proceeded, so this perspective found favour in Washington. Cooperation between the US and USSR on the Angola-Namibia settlement was an important element of their agenda.

Nevertheless, the cooperation was largely on US terms. A Cuban withdrawal was linked to an end of Pretoria's involvement but not to an end of UNITA violence. Thus only part of the reason for the Cuban presence was resolved. Nor did the US 'mediator' agree to end its support for UNITA; on the contrary, it reasserted it. Despite the outcome at Cuito Cuanavale, the US could publicly congratulate itself on the negotiations and claim that they represented a victory for constructive engagement, for linkage and for Reagan's support of UNITA. Thus the US signalled its determination to continue policies aimed at destabilising the government of Angola.

Restoring Consensus to US Foreign Policy

As the Reagan presidency came to its end, certain figures in the foreign policy establishment sought to influence the incoming regime to take a less brutish, more sophisticated direction. In an article entitled 'Bipartisan objectives for American Foreign Policy', Henry Kissinger (Secretary of State under Nixon and Ford) and Cyrus Vance (Secretary of State under Carter) advocated the need to reestablish a bipartisan foreign policy supported by both main parties. (Foreign Affairs, Summer 1988). This article brought together the leading spokespersons for the 'globalist' and 'regionalist' perspectives, and did so in the pages of the leading establishment foreign policy journal (Foreign Affairs is funded by the Rockefeller-financed Council on Foreign Relations, the pre-eminent 'Eastern Establishment' policy forum).

Kissinger and Vance explained that the US was entering a new era and did not have the same global power that it had enjoyed in the fifties and sixties. Global political constraints and economic crisis had constrained its influence. The authors argued that 'the national purpose must at some point be fixed' in order to maintain global hegemony. They claimed that in the eighties the country had lacked a consistent foreign policy and that its power would decline if it did not reestablish a consensus about how to deal with the rest of the world. There could not continue to be an oscillation of policy 'between exaggerated belligerence and unrealistic expectations'. They also considered the assertive role of Congress in foreign relations, as in the case of its anti-apartheid legislation, as an obstacle to such an objective. Congress, they stated,

must be well informed about the plans and actions of the executive branch, and no foreign policy is sustainable if a majority of the Congress, reflecting public opinion, is adamantly
opposed. At the same time, Congress should not manage the tactics of American foreign policy...

Although Kissinger and Vance did not mention southern Africa as a priority area for policy formulation, others have addressed the question of what a post-Reagan foreign policy there should include. In the same issue of *Foreign Affairs*, for instance, Michael Clough, a Senior Fellow for Africa at the Council on Foreign Relations, argued that the US should 'craft a coherent and sustainable policy toward southern Africa' on the basis of a 'broad bipartisan consensus'. He urged that such a policy needed to avoid overestimating the willingness of Pretoria to reform apartheid or underestimating the determination of black people to resist white domination. Arguing that both 'engagement' with Pretoria and sanctions were ineffective, Clough proposed an alternative approach which he called 'black empowerment'. This could be achieved, he suggested, by establishing a wide range of personnel and institutional ties with, and financial assistance to, blacks in South Africa — including the ANC. The premise of Clough's approach is that a negotiated solution is inevitable but that blacks presently lacked the organisational and economic leverage to force the Pretoria government to negotiate a transfer of power. It is clear that this plan would be a sophisticated means of co-opting blacks and managing change to conform with US interests.

Clough was openly critical of Pretoria's regional destabilisation and Reagan's complicity in it. His article called for regional 'restabilisation' involving a five-point programme: i) opposition both to cross-border military raids and insurgency; ii) cooperation with Western allies to aid SADCC; iii) support for the SADCC states in defending their territories and interests; iv) promotion of internal accommodation and reconciliation agreements; and v) dialogue with the Soviet Union and Cuba to minimise the risks that regional conflicts could escalate into international confrontations. Clough opposed support for UNITA and felt that sanctions which dissuaded South Africa from destabilising its neighbours might be more effective than those aimed at domestic changes. Clearly Clough spoke for the enlightened wing of the foreign policy establishment, concerned to establish and defend US hegemony and to achieve policy aims through a strategy of cooptation and consent.

This was the climate when George Bush became President. It is important to ask what influence such views are likely to have on his southern Africa policy. Will he introduce changes or follow the Reagan line? After only a year in office it may still be too early to evaluate Bush's strategy, but several trends are beginning to emerge.

**George Bush and Southern Africa**

Although Bush campaigned for the presidency as an unabashed right-winger, he is actually closely tied to the Eastern Establishment. He was born into a New England family of wealth and status, graduated from Yale and was a member of the Trilateral Commission (along with Carter and Vance) in the seventies; he was also a Director of the CIA. Most of his administrative appointments share similar establishment links and a globalist outlook. James Baker, his Secretary of State, was Ford's campaign manager in 1976 as well as a member of the Reagan cabinet. His National Security Adviser, Scowcroft, held the same position under Ford. He is a Kissinger protege, as is Lawrence Eagleberger, the Deputy Assistant Secretary...
of State, who also served in the Reagan State Department. A number of Bush’s appointments have foreign service experience rather than being ‘new right’ ideologues. Zbigniew Brzezinski, Carter’s National Security Adviser and an establishment hard line globalist, saw the Bush appointees as ‘solid, experienced’, ‘centrist’ and ‘tough-minded’.

Bush’s Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs is also a career foreign service officer. Herman J Cohen joined the State Department in 1965, specialising in African affairs and served as an ambassador to Senegal and the Gambia. In 1987 he became senior director of African Affairs for the National Security Council. It is likely that his views are very similar to those of Crocker and he was a member of the negotiating team dealing with Namibia and Angola from 1987 to April 1989.

Thus, despite the leaning towards the eastern establishment, there is also a great deal of continuity with the Reagan years, especially for the southern African region where Bush’s policy should differ little from Reagan’s. Bush’s administration also opposes sanctions arguing that they have not worked and, in fact, have made things worse. Officials point to the state of emergency in South Africa, detention and bannings. Bush has been unequivocal:

To hasten the change process, Congress voted a series of sanctions to compel the South African government to end apartheid. While well-intended and morally self-satisfying, sanctions have proved counter-productive in practice.

I do not support further sanctions in South Africa. To imagine that we can impose a solution by taking further drastic unilateral measures shows a lack of understanding of South African realities. We need a more effective diplomatic strategy.

The new administration clearly feels relief that there is no longer the Congressional enthusiasm for sanctions that existed in 1986. Instead it seeks to pursue ‘new positive measures’ including some elements of the ‘black empowerment’ idea discussed by Clough. The Agency for International Development (AID) is to pump some $35 million into black groups in South Africa. It will be directed at legal aid agencies, trade unions, community groups and academic scholarships. The policy was initiated under the Reagan administration and is to be administered by officers in the US Embassy in Pretoria who have contacts among the black population.

Bush has also announced his intention to continue support for UNITA. In January 1989 Bush wrote to Savimbi assuring him of ‘continued US military and diplomatic backing’ and stating that

UNITA is to be congratulated for its courageous demonstration over more than a decade that solutions to Angola’s problems cannot be found through repressive military force. [1]

While some conservatives fear that Bush is less than wholehearted in his support for UNITA and consider that leaving the organisation out of the Angola-Namibia peace formula amounted to selling Savimbi out, there is very strong support for the movement grouped around the President. Cohen is known to support UNITA while Lee Atwater, Bush’s campaign manager and the new chairman of the Republican Party, was previously a lobbyist for UNITA.

Interviews with State Department officials in 1989 yielded the information that the US still sought to force the MPLA-WP to negotiate with UNITA and that Bush would only contemplate recognition of Angola after ‘reconciliation’ between the two parties and after all Cuban forces had left. This would seem to contradict
reports that an unwritten part of the agreement over Angola and Namibia required the US to end aid for UNITA and recognise the Luanda government. It is also interesting that in 1989 reports of UNITA atrocities began to appear in US newspapers, which might imply that the ground is being prepared for a change in policy. It has been reported that the MPLA has agreed to ‘reconciliation’ with UNITA if Savimbi is excluded. This has not sat well with Savimbi and it is difficult to know how Bush would handle the far right if he were to change course along such lines. Meanwhile, Bush has made clear that he would not continue the pressure on Chevron to leave Angola although he has requested that the company recognise the US ‘national interests’ involved there.

An indication of ‘new right’ suspicion of Bush’s intentions came during the 1989 transition in Namibia. A number of right wing Congressional figures sought to link UNITA’s interests to the implementation of resolution 435. They sought to withhold a $128 million payment to the UN Peace Keeping Account unless it was linked to support for UNITA. Dennis DeConcini and Jesse Helms demanded ‘further assurances that the United States will continue to support Jonas Savimbi’s Angolan movement’ and DeConcini also demanded detailed plans to ‘end Soviet aid to the Angolan government’.

While such manoeuvres failed to check the administration’s policy, they were a clear indication that it is likely to prove difficult to resurrect bipartisanship or to reassert the dominance of the eastern establishment in policy formulation. The far right which flocked to the Reagan banner will not disappear, despite the new superpower relationship. And the anti-communist network fostered around the world by the Reagan regime will continue to operate in and against much of the third world. In fact, many individuals in the Bush administration are compromised by links with those interests.

Should Bush seek to change policy in southern Africa (and there is little indication of such a desire) he would face a major challenge from these forces. Continued support for UNITA is one issue on which they will press the administration. Sanctions against South Africa is likely to be another. They, and Bush, are likely to respond to F.W.DeKlerk’s reform speech of February 1990 to press for sanctions to be reduced or even abandoned. The British government’s evident determination to use DeKlerk’s speech as a pretext for dismantling sanctions and rallying to the South African government, might further assist such a change. Given Bush’s own views on the matter, he is likely to have little difficulty in leaning rightwards on this issue. Despite some change in style and perhaps in tactics, the Bush presidency seems likely to continue the essential elements of Reagan’s southern African policy.

Bibliographic Note
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On South African destabilisation, see especially: R Davies & D O’Meara, ‘The state of


‘NEW WINE IN OLD BOTTLES’: TRIBAL MILITIAS AND THE SUDANESE STATE
M A Mohamed Salih

The rise of the SPLA/SPLM in 1983 marked a new era in Sudanese history. It shifted the emphasis of southern struggle against northern domination from separation to liberation. Furthermore, the political programme of the SPLA/SPLM produced both a divided south and a divided north as different factions grouped in support or in opposition to it. Religion, which had not been a crucial factor in the negotiations which produced the 1972 Addis Ababa Accord, now came to be seen by some parties as a major obstacle to peace. Tribal sentiments, relatively subdued and contained in the first civil war, have now come to the fore. Indeed, it is ironic that there was probably more national cohesion during the 1955 — 1972 separatist war than there is today when the protagonists advocate national unity.

It is interesting that a movement advocating unity and an equitable distribution of resources, equal rights and better representation in the national political apparatus, should induce such a hardening of attitudes and so negative a response from the northern leadership. It is also interesting that the movement has aroused opposition from fellow southerners who not long ago were fighting for separation from the north. It is no less ironic that so many Sudanese who have offered relief to the refugees from neighbouring countries are unable to coexist peacefully with their own fellow citizens. Little wonder, then, that many Sudanese have begun to question the integrity of their political leaders, both northern and southern, for their seeming preference for war over peace. They ask whether or not these leaders represent anything more than power hungry cliques, whether or not concepts of nation and state have any substance in Sudan, and whether or not the political survival of particular parties is more important than the lives of the citizens they claim to govern.

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The tragedy is that the present war has ravaged the south, leaving it economically crippled, militarily devastated and politically and socially alienated. For the first
time since the creation of the so-called modern Sudan, the south is afflicted with famine, mass starvation and the almost total destruction of meagre social and public resources. The misery of its people is beyond comprehension and yet the south continues to fight against genocide. This is something appreciated throughout the world except, it would seem, among the political leadership, elites and status seekers of both south and north.

In the midst of this, the educated elites have begun to use tribalism to ensure their grip on power and resources. Tribal militias, non-existent in the Mahdist state of the 1880s, now thrive with support (direct and indirect) from the government. In this situation, law and order are no longer administered through the legitimate state institutions normally entrusted with the task of keeping the country together. Law and order in the south (and other parts of Sudan) are effected by the fist of the most powerful and feared. Not surprisingly, given the conduct of the state, the masses in both north and south have resorted to taking the law into their own hands. Whereas in the first war conflict involved government soldiers or Anya-nya fighters, the south is now the scene of a war of all against all. Arms are carried by almost anyone who can afford to purchase or otherwise acquire them illegally.

Even when peace is achieved, it is likely to take decades to contain the problem of the tribal militias. In the face of a weak state based on family rule and the manipulation of kinship and ethnic ties, there seems no early prospect for peaceful co-existence between these warring tribal factions. Such a project can hardly be realised in the context of the dominant political ideology held by political elites who have abused tribal sentiments for their own short-term political gains. The main theme of this Briefing is that the present war has allowed the resuscitation of tribal entities detrimental to nation-building and peace making. If the southern and northern political elites (liberal, Islamicist and radical) can reach a compromise, they still must confront the tribal militias and they will have to build unity amid animosity, racial hatred and suspicion.

The Emergence of the Tribal Militias
The existence of tribal militias as organisations encouraged, organised or indirectly supported by the state is a new phenomenon in Sudan. Although there were semi-military tribal organisations before the war, the present conflict seems to have justified the use of arms by civilians in the midst of the conflict between government and SPLA/SPLM forces. The main justification voiced by supporters of these militias is that, because of war and economic crisis, the state is debilitated and unable to execute its duties in sustaining peace and order. Governments since the downfall of Nimeiri have sought to counter the mobility of SPLA/SPLM forces by directly or indirectly arming tribal groups with modern weapons, to protect themselves or to fight the war for the state. Such military supplies have not been restricted only to Muslim Arabic-speaking tribes; they have also gone to some southern groups hostile to the SPLA/SPLM.

A formalist approach to the study of the state focuses on the jurisdiction of the state, often expressed as the general public interest, mediated by institutional mechanisms of dominance. These institutions are designed to enforce law and order within a specific territory through apparatuses of force. Chaos and disorder usually result from delegating or ceding the state monopoly over the use of force to civilians. More importantly, the formalist approach to the nature of the state in
Sudan has to be understood in terms of the ethnic character of such a state. Moreover, the state has to be economically capable of executing its duties and maintaining national integrity. The Sudanese state has suffered, since the mid-seventies, from deep economic recession, slow economic growth, mounting debt and worsening budget deficits, coupled with drought and famine. The emergence of the SPLA/SPLM in 1983 came at the height of the economic crisis. In its efforts to maintain the status-quo between north and south, the state has had to give priority to financing the war and purchasing expensive weapons. As financial resources dwindled and morale began to erode, the state resorted to involving rival tribal groups in its war against the SPLA/SPLM, claiming that it did so in order that innocent citizens could defend their lives and property. The tribal groups, in turn, justify the militias as their only means of self-defence, the only way to survive the present genocide.

Thus the government has found in divergent tribal interests a ready-made contingent for use in its war against the SPLA/SPLM. The process of militarising tribalism began with the northern Muslim Arabic-speaking tribes bordering the south (including the Missiriya (both Humr and Zurug), the Riziygat and the Ma'aliya in an effort to check the northward advances of the SPLA/SPLM. These groups already had high levels of skill in the use of modern weapons because of their long-standing tradition of service in the Sudanese army. Some southern tribes, such as the Mandari, Didinga, Murle and Bari, have also been armed by the government and there have been more tenuous links with the Nuer, represented by Anya-nya II, which the state has sometimes referred to as being ‘friendly’.

As the war gained momentum, these tribal militias devastated peaceful southern villages and animal camps. Far from protecting the innocent, the strategy has inflicted great harm on them. Militarisation has been pursued with traditional raids and animal thefts which contribute to inter-ethnic conflict. It would seem that the state has taken the whole country back to an age before colonialism and resurrected inter-tribal warfare, but now with modern weapons. In contrast, the colonialists seem almost angels in holding the country together and subordinating these group wars to law.

The government’s reckless attitude has signalled a dangerous message to these tribal militias, one detrimental to national unity and state integrity. It has confirmed the impression that the state is weak and that there is no authority to question or check raiding, plundering and attacks on life and property. In the process traditional values about the warrior tradition (see Mazrui, 1974; Cunnison, 1965; Deng, 1972; Baxter, 1977) and masculine symbols of courage and war have been revived and transferred to the context of modern military combat. Many tribal militias in both south and north have used such values to form armed groups and both the state and the SPLA/SPLM have found in these military values a ready institutional framework for recruitment and morale raising.

Retribalisation and the Shrinking Modern Political Arena
Mazrui (1970) defines ‘retribalisation’ as a process arising from the decline of African nationalism which he argues produces, in turn, a decline of national politics. In the Sudan this process has been in train for a long time. In recent years it can be linked especially to the implementation of the Regional Government Act in 1983 (the year the war started). Although its announcement produced some
initial enthusiasm in Sudan, it soon became clear that the regional governments in both south and north were subsumed to the traditional balancing of power between major ethnic interests. In the south there is the notion of a pan-Dinka league ranged against non-Dinka, mainly Equatorians. In Kordofan conflict between the Baggara (cattle herders) and Aballa (camel herders) was bound up also with the Nuba and the Dinka. Deals and conspiracies were formed between ethnic groups to oust a governor or a regional minister. Large ethnic blocs without high ranking representation in the political and administrative hierarchies were resentful and even rebellious.

The situation in the south was little better. The redivision of the south split public opinion there. According to Gurdon (1984: 64)

for the most part it has been welcomed by the province of Equatoria, where it is seen as a method of ending Dinka domination. It has been attacked in Bahr el Ghazal and Upper Nile provinces as a way of dividing the Southern region and weakening it.

One of the unique manifestations of this is that the south has become divided in its political allegiance, lost its ideological coherence vis a vis the north and retreated from a unitary approach to resolving the question of the south. Educated Equatorians, in particular, have sought a different approach from that of the SPLA/SPLM although there are such Equatorians in the movement's ranks.

The revival of tribal sentiments in the south as a result of atrocities committed by some armed groups against others means that there is now less unity among southerners than ever before. There are more frequent attacks between southern tribes today than between southern and northern groups along the north/south frontiers. This has created 300,000 refugees living on the borders with Ethiopia, another 250,000 estimated to have lost their lives and a looming famine which threatens the lives of another million people. At a time when the elites fuel war and rally foreign support for war, more than a million southerners have migrated to the north in search of refuge, peace and food. This increases the number of southerners in the north to about 3 million, more than a third of the population of the south.

The outbreak of the war immediately after the enactment of the 1983 Regional Government Act and the redivision of the south, offered an opportunity for tribal animosities to surface as an integral part of national politics. Educated, tribal and political elites, in their scramble for office, acted to resurrect them. When the war started in 1983, many infuriated politicians who had served under Nimeiri joined either Anya-nya II or the SPLA/SPLM in order to settle old grievances disguised under the mask of the fight against the racist nature of the Sudanese state. The political and educated elites generally do not fight wars; they manipulate their tribesmen to fight on their behalf. What they offer is strong military organisation and committed tribal leadership (see Salzman, 1978: 55). Thus, in a situation of war, many people who felt that their lives were in jeopardy fell back on their tribal allegiances. Sixteen years after Nimeiri's regime had claimed to have eliminated the Native Administration System, tribal conflicts continue with a new intensity. The 1986 elections indicated clearly that tribal interests have not been divorced from sectarian political parties, despite their brief separation during the Nimeiri period.
The behaviour of Sudan's parties today confirms the sad fact that they are not only dependent on the perpetuation of tribalism for their support but that they have actually strengthened its hold. The use of ethnic divisions in pursuit of short-term political gains has gone beyond logic or reason when it employs tribal militias to fight a civil war for the state. Likewise, in the face of a weak state clinging to survival rather than concerned with development, the population have begun to isolate themselves from 'modern' politics and to look to local politics. The result is a process of retribalisation and a negation of concepts such as nation and state.

Kasfir (1976: 14) argues that the shrinking political arena results from de-participation which he defines as 'the reduction or elimination of political involvement as a consequence of choice, apathy and coercion'. In the Sudan, however, de-participation takes the form, I would argue, of retribalisation and the shrinking is of modern political institutions in the face of advancing tribal values. The disengagement of the population from modern political institutions in this way is augmented by the lack of political tolerance of the warring parties which perpetuate tribal divisions in order to strengthen their political positions. De-participation, therefore, is not a matter of choice or apathy so much as the outcome of engulfing the population in a civil war instigated by elites.

The war permits a cynical political leadership to use the present conflict to excuse its failures in dealing with the problems of underdevelopment. This tendency has operated from the start; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Sudan observed in 1973 that:

the Southern problem contributed to the maintenance in power of reactionary governments, providing them with a ready justification for their failure in solving the pressing social and economic problems of the country. All governments' shortcomings were blamed on the Southern problem and the drain it represented on the resources and manpower of the country.

If a leadership is prepared to sacrifice an entire region for its own political survival then, clearly, the shrinking of the political arena and the relegation of politics to ethnic cleavages is a matter of minor concern to it. Faced with long-term problems in need of solution, the political parties of Sudan have responded with short-term expedients. This involves a retreat from addressing pressing questions about economic and social problems and the nature of the state. It represents a move not only from development to crisis management, but also from building modern political institutions capable of involving all people in Sudan to those which glorify and reinforce the ethnicist tendencies of the political leadership.

Tribal Militias and Peace-Making: the Flask and the Monster Thesis

In discussing the relationship between state and society, Held (1983: 35-6) argues that

The state maintains compliance or order within a given territory which involves a defence of life, property and the well being of its citizens ... The state web of agencies and institutions finds ultimate sanction in the claim to the monopoly of coercion and a political order is only, in the last instance, vulnerable to crisis when this monopoly erodes. In other words the state is based on a monopoly of coercion which is legitimised by a belief in the justification and/or legality of this monopoly.

The Sudanese state should therefore be expected to monopolise the use of force and not to delegate it to tribal entities with old enmities and rivalries. Many tribal groups in both north and south have responded to this failure to maintain this
monopoly by forming armed militias. The process has at least three implications for the Sudanese state and the war in the south:

1. The delegation of the state's control of violence to regional and ethnic groups raises questions about the state's legitimacy, as posed by Held. It is an admission of weakness and inability to execute its functions and obligations to its citizens. It runs counter to the need to create a state which transcends ethnic loyalties.

2. The state regards the use of arms by the SPLA/SPLM as illegitimate, even though it conceded that there is cause and a serious problem to be solved. It needs to solve the problem rather than just define it, to bring about peace and stop the war. The SPLA/SPLM, for its part, for all the validity of its case, has also used arms against civilians. There is an urgent need for both sides to find a solution and save the lives of millions now homeless and destitute.

3. There is a danger that a weak state could attract external predators so that the solution to Sudan's crisis ceases to be in the hands of Sudanese, whether north or south.

The question then remains of how to put the monster of the tribal militias back in the magician's flask. It is possible that the militias, which lack any common ideology, will continue to attack each other and the government if they do not approve of any agreement between the state and the SPLA/SPLM. It is also possible that the militias may become bandits. And it is possible that the larger ones might demand separation and their own ethnic states. Joseph Garang (1973: 90) has already warned that

given democratic conditions, the large national groupings might develop into nations within the Sudan.

The question remains whether the state can rein in the militias, whether they will be part of any peace process or whether they will continue to operate after peace has been agreed between the government and the SPLA/SPLM. What must be stressed is the danger that has been created: the tribal militias may contain the germ of 'nationhood' and may contemplate separation in the face of a weak central state, even after the present war has been concluded.

A solution to the present political brawl in Sudan must involve the creation of democratic conditions which allow all Sudanese nationalities to develop and interact freely and peacefully. History has already shown that any attempt by the state to suppress national aspirations can only end in civil strife and war. Unity in diversity is the only way out of political turmoil.

Bibliographic Note
M.A. Mohamed Salih is at the Scandinavian Africa Institute, Uppsala, Sweden. An earlier version of this paper appeared in the proceedings of a conference on Sudan in Bergen in 1988, entitled: 'Tribal militias, SPLA/SPLM and the Sudanese state: "new wine in old bottles"'. We are grateful to the author for permitting us to publish this shorter, amended version.


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**THE CONTEXT OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN UGANDA TODAY**

Pius Nkamuhayo and Gill Seidel

Amnesty International’s report on human rights in Uganda (1986-1989) painted a grim picture and did not mince words. Surprisingly, it was widely reported in the Ugandan media. ‘Amnesty criticises Uganda’ was the headline in the government newspaper, *New Vision*. The outspoken publication of the (Catholic) Democratic Party (DP) wrote that ‘Amnesty identifies cause of fighting in N. Uganda’ and included photos of two men severely scarred after being allegedly beaten by soldiers of the National Resistance Army (NRA). *Topic*, a weekly read by the intelligentsia, ran the headline: ‘Amnesty concerned at reports of killing in the North’.

If the basic information tallied, the tone adopted by *The Citizen* was more confrontational than that of *New Vision*; whereas the latter spoke of ‘rebels’ in Acholi, the former referred to the ‘people of northern Uganda’. Yet, despite this different construction of events, the headlines indicate a remarkable openness in political discussion and indicates a growing confidence on the part of Yoweri Museveni’s government — not without justification.

**The Reconstruction Agenda: What Priorities?**

Museveni’s achievements are outwardly visible. Roads are being levelled and surfaced with Chinese, Yugoslav and Hungarian assistance bartered for beans, peas and soya-beans (to circumvent foreign currency shortages). Industries are being rebuilt and commercial loans are now available. Structural rehabilitation is seriously under way.

But there is no denying the enormity of the task. In a country where more than 80 per cent of the population are in agriculture, most of them women, it is clear where priorities must lie. Now that arbitrary killings in southern, central and western Uganda are rare and normal activities have been restored, memories are short; there are already signs of impatience with the pace of change. Farmers continue to receive unacceptably low prices for coffee and tea and have allowed their plantations to lie fallow, often shifting to other crops like banana and plantain. These can be sold quickly for cash so that villagers can buy necessities such as

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soap, salt and cooking oil and obtain medicines from local dispensaries (though these have become scarce since the last IMF agreement).

The problem was exemplified by tea farmers in Bushenyi in western Uganda who were threatened with arrest if they uprooted their tea. It is ironic that the government has encouraged these farmers to grow more so-called cash crops so that it can meet its barter deals. There is no doubt changes in western trading policies would not only bring about greater economic justice at the international level but would also allow internal changes and would result in a more equitable distribution of rewards.

At the same time, Uganda's reconstruction agenda is lengthening as war and systematic destruction and human rights violations continue in the north and east. Twenty years of fighting and brutal government have destroyed the infrastructure. Military expenditure exceeds 50 per cent of the budget while war continues in these regions and foreign debt repayment must be managed on top of that. Little is left to rehabilitate state hospitals, to rebuild schools and provide universal education.

**Museveni's Human Rights Inheritance**

Amnesty's report on Uganda's human rights record since 1986 (when Museveni came to power) suggests that the problems of the NRM need to be assessed in terms of its inheritance.

Some 800,000 people are estimated to have died under Amin who were predominantly Acholi and Langi in the north. Obote's victims came mainly from the Luwero triangle in central Uganda. In many areas, Swahili, the language of the army, is still experienced as threatening, particularly when spoken at night. The mere sight of khaki has been enough for some citizens to flee into the bush.

The present scale of casualties of the war in the north and of alleged violations are difficult to determine and rumours rife. Hard news is scanty, access difficult and what is heard is also politically highly charged. As usual in such situations, there are claims and counter claims. The NRA maintains that it has displaced the civilian population to avoid it being caught in crossfire, that the use of military personnel is limited and that, in any case, it is difficult always to conform to strict discipline in war time. It refers to its good discipline based on the NRA military code of conduct. There have been disciplinary procedures and prosecutions under its rules, although local discipline may be weak.

**The Northern Question: A Running Sore**

The unrest in the north and east escalated immediately when Museveni came to power and remains a critical problem. There are a number of rebel groups: chronologically, these include 'Force Obote Back Again' (FOBA) formed in Busoga, 60 miles east of Kampala; the Ugandan People's Democratic Army (UPDA) set up in Juba, southern Sudan, and led by former Prime Minister Otema Alimadi; the Ugandan People's Army (UPA) led by Obote's defence minister Peter Otai; and the Holy Spirit Movement with a religious and separatist message. Initially these groups did not pose a serious military threat but, by the end of 1986, their numbers grew and the NRA increased its actions against them. On 6 January 1987 at a seminar on the administration of justice, the Ugandan Army Commander, Elly Tumwine,
responded to criticism of the use of detention by saying that 'the army understands justice in a different way from the judiciary. The NRA will not sit still and fold its hands just because the law has not empowered us to conduct arrests and detain criminals'.

The rebels have continued to seek political power using military means. Despite Museveni's earlier efforts at reconciliation, including the February 1987 conditional amnesty, a number remained active through 1989. The situation has been further confused by the activities of cattle rustlers who set fire to houses and granaries, harassing the population. The NRA maintains that Karamajong cattle rustlers east of Gulu hide under the cattle to terrorise the local people, obliging them to shoot the cattle along with the rustlers. All this has resulted in the displacement of the local population who lack food and means of support other than displacement kits (which may be stolen) delivered by the Red Cross. The President agreed that these peasants could claim compensation (New Vision 29 April 1988) provided that they produced a signed chit from the local NRA commander accepting responsibility for the loss of cattle. As the situation has deteriorated there has been a perceptible hardening of attitudes and, by implication, a blaming of the victims. The District Administrator of Gulu, commenting on relief efforts for the people of the district, remarked that 'it is sad that such a proud and independent people should be reduced to begging'. The issue of compensation has become a source of tension rather than relief.

Northerners' grievances need to be addressed. Many feel that following Amin and Obote's second term they have been condemned as 'a race apart', subject to ethnic discrimination while being economically and structurally disadvantaged; they also resent numerous terms of disparagement used against them. A clue to many of these grievances can be seen in the style and following of Alice Lakwena's Holy Spirit Movement which, despite the arrest and killing of many adherents, was still not entirely spent in 1989. It was, like many similar phenomena elsewhere in Africa, a kind of military crusade of the powerless although its disciples were not equipped like a modern fighting force. They dressed in cassocks and wigs, carried bibles and sang hymns while young boys sprinkled water from jerricans. They were armed with bows and sticks and covered themselves in oil as a magic protection against NRA bullets. Its message was messianic and apocalyptic. The movement degenerated into violence as the need for food, and later losses to the army, caused it to kill, rob and burn houses. The movement had a wide following in Gulu but almost none in neighbouring Busoga where Lakwena met stiff resistance. Since her escape to Kenya, the movement has been headed by her father and several other spirit groups have been formed. They offer no real threat to the NRA but have created havoc and suffering.

Detainees
Many Lakwena followers who were captured or surrendered after the 1987 amnesty were still being detained in 1989. This led to over-crowding in Ugandan prisons, despite more than 1500 other prisoners being released. In Kampala, in Luzira Maximum Security Prison alone, 6000 prisoners of all categories were crowded into a prison with a capacity of 2000. Much blame for this attaches to the Police and the Criminal Investigation Department. Some remand prisoners have been in detention for ten years and are informed each week by the police that investigations into their cases continue.
It is often impossible for prisoners to go to court because the prison authorities have no transport or fuel. There is also evidence that the police do not always take investigations seriously. The Ugandan journalist, Francis Odida, had to spend eight months in prison, albeit in good conditions, to allow police to investigate an interview he did with Lakwena which was presented as a dream encounter in the *Sunday Review*. When he was finally released on bail, his file contained a letter to the Director of Public Prosecutions to the effect that dreams could not be investigated. Two other *Sunday Review* journalists arrested on the same day, George Ongaya and Ben Kirara, have not been traced. Despite several demands by President Museveni that the police improve their image, the legal process remains appallingly slow.

**Human Rights Commission**

The Human Rights Commission began its work in December 1986. Its formation had been proposed while Museveni was still leading the guerillas in the countryside. It was intended to document Uganda's history and expose the people who had committed human rights violations. Those found guilty would cease to play a prominent role in public life while others, under suspicion, could be cleared. It is perhaps significant, however, that the Commission's brief does not extend to violations after 1986 and so excludes the present question of the north and east. This is because the government has its own Inspector General (IGG). In addition, the Commission is only empowered to make recommendations being an investigating arm of government, not a judicial body. Nevertheless, the President has indicated a willingness to respond to its findings and has strongly supported its work.

In mid-1988, General Mustafa Adrisi, Amin's former vice-president, and Paul Muwanga, Obote's defence minister and vice-president, appeared before the Commission. This created a surge of public interest. Muwanga, for instance, had organised the *Panda Gari*, an operation hunting guerillas which had led to many arbitrary arrests and killings. Both Adrisi and Muwanga appeared to suffer serious memory lapses during the hearings which were conducted in an extraordinarily gentle and indulgent manner, without police guard or public tension — despite the fact that these men were essentially war criminals. The atmosphere was one of relief that people could present evidence freely; this in itself was seen as a guarantee of justice.

The Commission's work continues, with occasional hearings upcountry (Luwero, Mbarara, Arua, Jinja, Tororo and Mbale). But, like all Ugandan initiatives, it is underfunded. There is a story that the Ford Foundation offered transport and recording equipment to the Commission provided that it accepted a Ford adviser. The offer was refused. The President has tripled its funds but it continues to lack resources. The report due to be presented after two years of investigation has been postponed indefinitely.

**Increased Women's Participation**

The development of Ugandan women is high on Museveni's agenda. He is aware of their importance in rebuilding the economy, in the construction of citizenship and as a key political constituency. The new Ministry for Women and Development, set up in 1988, reflects this concern. In 1989 there were five women ministers in
the government. Women could stand for election to all positions on the Resistance Committee and Council, and 34 new seats were created for women in the National Resistance Council (or parliament).

More than 80 per cent of women are engaged in food production in addition to domestic and reproductive labour while many are not directly involved in the cash economy. Unmarried women have almost no social standing in Uganda and childless and divorced women are marginalised. Girls are taught submissiveness and dependence so that unequal power characterises negotiations in all social relations and encounters. This gender and economic oppression is an explanatory factor in the spread of HIV among young women. It also needs to be seen as a development and human rights issue. Although professional and business women are more visible in the cities, women generally have less access to education and literacy and so less access to non-menial work (even NRC membership requires educational qualifications).

Women's organisations, clubs and cooperatives have mushroomed in rural and urban areas. They seek more outlets for their produce and hence greater access to trading and financial opportunities. They have been encouraged to apply for funds under new grant schemes. But the Ministry's resources remain severely limited and assistance was being sought from the World Bank and NGOs. Many women (such as the chair of the National Council of Women and members of Makerere) argue that the emancipation of women needs to be an economic, rather than feminist, issue. A number of pressure groups have emerged among women in all walks of life, the most radical of which is perhaps the Association of Women Lawyers (FIDA). In April 1988 FIDA opened the first free legal aid clinic in Africa, advising women of both their legal and reproductive rights and providing resistance to traditional inequalities based on customary law.

The President is clearly keen to empower women to become not only beneficiaries but also participants in development projects. It is hoped that various initiatives will provide more than a token female presence, despite opposition. Museveni's emphasis in 1989 was on mobilising and sensitising women about constitutional issues and making them aware of their rights. Women's rights were not on the agenda of the old constitution.

Uganda's New Constitution and the Rights Agenda

Uganda is currently drafting a new constitution. It is being debated by various councils of the Resistance Committees. The final draft may eventually be ratified in a national referendum. Whether or not legislation, a written constitution or charter can guarantee and safeguard categories of rights is being widely debated.

Some people see Resistance Committees, which administer local justice, including fines and caning, and the Human Rights Commission as no more than political window dressing. But in the context of Ugandan history they are surely more significant and their impact more radical than critics allow. There are clearly serious failings in human rights observance in Uganda. On the other hand, both Amnesty and the NGOs agree about the government's commitment to such rights and to making them respected. Museveni's record is more impressive than that of his predecessors and better than that of Uganda's neighbours.
Note:
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Inkatha and Regional Control: Policing Liberation Politics
Gerhard Mare

We believe that practices acceptable in civilised nations should characterise the methods and the procedures used by the police in the enforcement of law (Inkatha, 'The Statement of Belief', appendix 2, Mare & Hamilton, 1987:228).

It is widely accepted now that, under P.W. Botha, the centre of political power in South Africa slipped from parliament and from second and third tier levels of government into the hands of the executive and the military and police. Heading the junta that, in effect, had ultimate control over the direction of the country was the State Security Council (SSC), operating through the National Security Management System (NSMS). Thus even the racially exclusive democracy that whites had enjoyed over the years increasingly became a shell; and the incorporation of Indians and 'coloureds' (through the tricameral parliamentary structure) occurred into the same empty space where political voices echo but have little effect (See Moss, 1980, for an early example of analysis of the total strategy within which the new structures were created, and Seegers 1988).

An indication of the extent to which power has now shifted to the executive and to the repressive apparatuses of the state, came in an otherwise unremarkable confrontation on television between Treurnicht, the Conservative Party (CP) leader, and a (then) government minister, F.W. De Klerk. Treurnicht challenged De Klerk to state whether or not the CP would be allowed to take power if it were
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Gerhard Mare

We believe that practices acceptable in civilised nations should characterise the methods and the procedures used by the police in the enforcement of law (Inkatha, 'The Statement of Belief', appendix 2, Mare & Hamilton, 1987:228).

It is widely accepted now that, under P.W. Botha, the centre of political power in South Africa slipped from parliament and from second and third tier levels of government into the hands of the executive and the military and police. Heading the junta that, in effect, had ultimate control over the direction of the country was the State Security Council (SSC), operating through the National Security Management System (NSMS). Thus even the racially exclusive democracy that whites had enjoyed over the years increasingly became a shell; and the incorporation of Indians and 'coloureds' (through the tricameral parliamentary structure) occurred into the same empty space where political voices echo but have little effect (See Moss, 1980, for an early example of analysis of the total strategy within which the new structures were created, and Seegers 1988).

An indication of the extent to which power has now shifted to the executive and to the repressive apparatuses of the state, came in an otherwise unremarkable confrontation on television between Treurnicht, the Conservative Party (CP) leader, and a (then) government minister, F.W. De Klerk. Treurnicht challenged De Klerk to state whether or not the CP would be allowed to take power if it were
ever to win an election. The question was raised in the context of widespread speculation that the National Party (NP) would never allow itself to be unseated through the ballot box. The prospect even seemed to find some guarded approval in the English-language press, more concerned about a far right takeover than about the semblance of democracy.

All this has much to do with violence and political control in the Natal/KwaZulu region of South Africa. Once we start unravelling the role of the NSMS system, it becomes clear that the police and the security apparatus have been playing here as elsewhere. The extreme secrecy with which these apparatuses operate makes it difficult to explore fully. My main concern here is with the manner in which the Inkatha movement, based on Natal/KwaZulu, has become a part of this process while maintaining its claim to be a 'liberation movement' (in much the way that 'the extension of democracy' is used to justify the most undemocratic of practices in South Africa).

The Bantustan Branches of the State
The 'Bantu Homelands' or bantustans owe their artificial creation to the process of fragmentation of the African population set in motion by the SA government in 1959 with the Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act. Fragmentation was introduced to counter the rising militancy of the Congress Alliance and especially of its senior partners, the ANC and the SA Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU). The 'monster that was stalking Africa', as Minister De Wet Nel called African nationalism, was to be broken into manageable 'homelands' comprising a set of 'cultural nationalisms'. Rapid urbanisation, and the permanent and irreversible integration of Africans into industrial employment during and after World War II, presented the state with the dilemma of major and contradictory policy options. It had, for example, to choose either permanent urbanisation, with the consequent legitimation of black demands for participation in the central political process, or intensified segregation, with the immense control measures which the migrant labour system and black exclusion from wealth and power required. Once the latter policy option had been chosen and embarked upon by the NP government after 1948 ('apartheid') any regionally separate and ethnically distinct opposition to it merely played into the hands of the apartheid regime.

From the start, therefore, the element of control was central to the policy. Ideological control involved attempts to shape 'ethnic nationalisms' in order to manipulate in a political direction, the ethnic sentiments that were being fostered. It also involved the creation of a class of beneficiaries (such as senior civil servants and traders operating behind 'ethnic curtains') that cloaked the immodesty of the 'positive aspect of separate development'. Economic control required the regulation of the working class through the maintenance of migrant workers without rights. Political control involved the use of the administrative machinery of the central state supplemented by bantustan bureaucracies and the tribal authority system acting, in effect, as branches of the state.

Through the Homelands Constitution Act (1971) these branches of the central state were given certain defined powers depending on the particular 'stage' of their political 'development'. At certain 'stages' of their 'political development', the 1971 Act allows additional specified powers to be progressively handed over to bantustans. Under Chapter 2 of the Act, these include such matters as police.
Eventually some have even been declared politically 'independent'. While the economic dependence of these alleged 'states' was always acknowledged, it has taken recent coups in the Transkei and Bophuthatswana to demonstrate the contempt with which the central state treats even political 'independence'. Such coups, it has been pointed out, help to reintegrate these bantustans into the security network of the central state. For those that do not 'become independent' and remain 'self governing' not even coups are needed to secure their integration into the national security network. In KwaZulu, for example, Inkatha, led by Buthelezi, has successfully refused to take 'independence' and has often expressed opposition to apartheid plans. Nevertheless, the bantustan has acted willingly, if selectively, as a partner in national control structures.

My argument is that while Inkatha's 'liberation struggle' has been waged largely at the level of political rhetoric it has in much of its political practice remained, of necessity, part of the very structures which it claims to undermine. To this end it has used the formal powers made available by the state (e.g. tribal authority and the Zulu police) as well as developing its own structures and ideologies of control (e.g. of 'Zulu manhood' and 'Zulu military prowess'). Furthermore, it can be argued that at the local level, Inkatha members have been involved in 'warlordism', seeking to consolidate their local base by force using the power ceded to them regionally by the state. At present it would be a mistake to perceive Inkatha's use of structures of control as being simply a duplication of the role of the central state. In important respects, the regional mode has had both intended and unintended effects that distinguishes it as separate.

KwaZulu's Formal Powers

KwaZulu, as is the case with other 'self-governing' bantustans, operates within the ambit of central security legislation. All the draconian measures available to the state are also available within the bantustans, serving as a safety net for these branches of the state.

However, there are additional measures, such as the powers conferred on chiefs, or on the 'Supreme Chief' (now located in the person and office of the State President) by the 1927 Native Administration Act and its amendments. In 1974 KwaZulu passed its own Zulu Chiefs' and Headmen's Act, in Section 6 (1) of which (dealing with 'duties, powers, authorities and functions of chiefs and headmen') were contained powers similar to those of the 1927 Act. These include the stipulation that a chief or headman 'shall be entitled ... to the loyalty, respect, support and obedience of every resident of the area for which he has been appointed'. It also stipulates that they serve as local representatives of the government in matters of law and order, unrest, distribution of 'undesirable literature', and 'the unauthorised entry of any person into his area'.

Reading the KwaZulu Legislative Assembly Debates (KLAD) brings home the expected point that law and order is not only an issue of criminal law but also a social and political matter for the chiefs. 'Communists' and rebellious youths are frequently mentioned as targets (see, for example, cases mentioned in Mare & Hamilton, 1987:88-92). Several studies find that the role of chiefs has little to do with the interests of their people (Zulu, nd; Daphne, 1982; Bekker, 1983). Yet these posts have remained central to KwaZulu's administration and the Inkatha movement.
But it is not only through chiefs and tribal authorities that powers have been sought and obtained for these 'self-governing states'. The second Bantu Laws Amendment Act (71 of 1974) gave bantustan authorities the power to ban organisations, individuals and publications (SAIRR, 1974). Since the mid-seventies the KwaZulu Legislative Assembly (KLA) and, later, Inkatha have been consistent in their demands for greater powers of control. These include the right to issue firearms to protect property and the right to train KwaZulu's own police and to deploy them in all areas where Africans live in the region (even outside the areas of jurisdiction of the KLA).

Proclamation R103 has been in operation since 1973 in the Msinga area, ostensibly to be used against those involved in 'faction fighting'. It appears from applications for the extension of the powers of detention granted under this Act in 1977 that many policemen elsewhere in KwaZulu had wanted the same provisions (Mare, 1982:12). Since then the powers of search and detention have, in fact, been extended through the central state’s Proclamation 38 of 1986 in which 'a key clause says that for the purpose of public safety, the legislative assembly [of the 'non-independent' bantustans] may pass laws banning organisations, restricting the movement of people and banning speeches or publications' (Weekly Mail, 4 April 1986). In 1983 it was reported that the KLA had adopted the state's Internal Security Act without any dissenting voice (Star, 8 December 1983). In 1987, through various amendments to the KwaZulu Police Act and new legislation, powers of search, seizure and detention without trial for purposes of interrogation, were made available to the bantustan police.

The need for a police force was articulated from the start in the KLA. In 1975, a request was made to push for the transfer of policing powers to KwaZulu (KLAD, 6:615, 622). In 1976 the executive councillor for justice said that while such a force could not yet be formed (because KwaZulu did not yet have 'Chapter 2' powers) he intended to launch a recruiting campaign for young Zulus in anticipation of such authority (KLAD, 9:412). In the meantime a permanent liaison committee was established between the KwaZulu 'government' and senior SA Police (SAP) officers (Daily News 21 May 1976).

In 1978, the KwaZulu minister of justice, Mtetwa, stated that the bantustan not only wanted to take over police powers 'but would also ask Pretoria to give military training to Zulu tribal regiments' (Natal Mercury, 12 May 1978). At the beginning of 1980, the KwaZulu Police (ZP) came into being and a few months later it was said that a 'security section' would be formed (Daily News, 8 May 1980). Buthelezi has said in the KLA that KwaZulu needed a police force in the same way that a Zulu man was naked without a fighting stick. He stated that, despite all the words of 'any pipsqueak' against the Zulus, 'if it came to the push we would clean them up before breakfast'(KLAD, 19:411-17). In discussing the motives for the takeover of police functions, Buthelezi referred to the schools boycotts in KwaMashu; the work of 'members of the public' in crushing the boycotts could not be done by them 'on a permanent basis'. Furthermore, 'as a Black politician, I dare not be seen to be protected by the South African Police'.

There was an immediate transfer of 271 'Zulu' members of the SAP to the bantustan force. However, the process of transfer of police stations was always too slow for the liking of KwaZulu. By 1982, control over seven stations had been granted and plans were announced for an 'anti-riot unit' (KLAD, nd:50). In 1986, Buthelezi went so far as to threaten court action unless all police stations within KwaZulu were

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handed over (*Daily News* 31 December 1986). This call was repeated early in 1987
and, shortly afterwards, it was announced that the ZP would take over policing of
townships within the greater Durban area (and hence outside KwaZulu) (*Natal
Mercury* 19 May 1987). The state of unrest in these townships was precisely the
reason that Buthelezi made the demand in 1986: 'it undermines us if we are not
seen to be responsible for law and order in our townships' (*Daily News* 4 June
1986). This can only be interpreted as a clear acceptance of the responsibility of
the state, or of a 'federal' branch of the state.

In 1988, the ZP took control of the urban areas of Mpumalanga and KwaNdengezi
(between Durban and Pietermaritzburg). Both townships had been the scene of
large-scale violence in the political conflict sweeping the region. KwaZulu hoped
to extend its control to 68 police stations in eight districts (compared with a
previous 17 stations in four districts, see *Natal Mercury*, 11 May 1988).

After the formation of the ZP, there was a demand for training facilities. In 1985
Buthelezi severely criticised the SAP performance in 'riot situations' — they could
learn much, he said, from the way in which the British police had crushed the
miners' strike of 1984. He said that KwaZulu would have to give the training that
was 'so obviously lacking' in the SAP (*Natal Mercury* 22 May 1985). Early in 1986,
the Department of Development Aid invited tenders for equipping a police training
college at Ulundi and later in the year Buthelezi was officiating at the first
passing-out parade of 499 ZP members at the Amatikulu Youth Camp which served
as a ZP training base. Buthelezi also gave out the first merit awards and medals
to 17 recipients in June 1986. In his speech he linked the need for training to the
needs of the post-liberation period when there would be a need for services such
as the police while the laws were changed.

From the start of the KLA debates on the ZP it was claimed that this force would
be 'friends of the people' (*Daily News* 26 May 1981). In 1984, KLA member V.V.
Mvelase told the assembly that the SAP were unfortunately seen as the enemy of
the people, because of the cruel apartheid laws of the Pretoria regime (*Daily News*
29 May 1984). However, it would appear that the behaviour of the ZP quickly came
to alienate them from the people, too, even if we confine ourselves only to cases reported in the press. In 1984, a young man was suing the police minister for R50,000 after allegedly being shot 'unlawfully and negligently' by the ZP (Natal Mercury 18 September 1984). In 1987, many claims of assault were made against the ZP (City Press, 19 June 1987; Natal Witness 26 September 1987). It was also reported that old-age pensioners had claimed that ZP members had demanded money from them in return for attending to them (Echo 26 November 1987).

These complaints continued into 1988. In May an interdict was granted restraining the ZP from assaulting and torturing two detained 'theft suspects'. They were being held under KwaZulu’s Tracing and Detention of Offenders Act (1987). The detainees were alleged to have stolen money from Khulani Brown (a company partly owned by Inkatha) (Mare & Hamilton, 1987:114). In another case, an assault was alleged on Michael Shoba, during which he was said to have been 'wildly abused for six days and not allowed to eat or drink water' (Natal Mercury 12 July 1988).

In October 1988 it was alleged that further detentions had taken place under the KwaZulu legislation. Several youths had been detained and one of those released alleged that brutal assaults had been made on all the youths. There were also allegations of complicity between the ZP and Inkatha against the UDF in the KwaMakhuta area where the detentions took place. The lawyer acting for some of the people involved, Linda Zama, subsequently stated that five civil cases against the ZP, dating back to May, were pending in the Supreme Court, and there were another 15 in Amanzimtoti (New Nation 6 October 1988; Daily News 12 October 1988).

Inkatha and the KLA
The Inkatha movement was formed in 1975 (see Mare & Hamilton, 1987, for a full account). While it arose out of a specific Zulu history, it soon attempted to give form and direction to the national ambitions of its trading and professional leadership. That direction never really took off, partly because of its strategy of 'working within the system' and partly because of the historical legacy which allowed an easy option of ethnic consolidation in the early 1980s.

What is of relevance to this analysis is the total overlap between the political party and the structures of the bantustan. Ironically then, while Inkatha was formed to provide a base outside of the bantustan, it has come to depend on the apartheid creation for its growth and power. It has been the sole organised contestant in KwaZulu elections. Initially it was to have decision-making powers over the KLA. The first Inkatha constitution stated that, should there be conflict between a decision of the Inkatha central committee and the KLA cabinet, the former should prevail. Debates in the KLA frequently assume the status of a party caucus. Chief Buthelezi maintains a multiplicity of roles which serve to make the structures indistinguishable — he is chief minister of KwaZulu, minister of police, minister of economic affairs, president of Inkatha, a traditional chief in his own right, chair of the SA Black Alliance and so on, and it is often unclear which role he is playing at any given time.

Employment in KwaZulu is dependent on support for the KwaZulu government (in effect, then, for the only political party in the KLA). The 1987 KwaZulu Public Service Amendment Act makes a declaration of loyalty to the bantustan
government a condition of employment, putting into legislative effect what had previously often been demanded anyway. The pledge was made part of the KwaZulu Public Service Staff Code and a signature (a condition of employment) meant a commitment never to ‘vilify, denigrate or in any manner speak in contempt’ of the chief minister, his cabinet, KLA members and ‘all persons in authority in the KwaZulu government service’ (Natal Mercury 5 June 1987).

While there have clearly been advantages to the movement from this identity, it has also served to draw accusations of collaboration with apartheid. These have increased during the conflict with the UDF and other groups, particularly as the mobilisation of Inkatha has used militant Zulu symbols and politicised ethnicity (or tribalism) as its trademark.

A year after Inkatha was formed, the momentous events which have become known as the Soweto Uprising of 1976 occurred. A new chapter in the history of resistance in South Africa was being written, a chapter which moved the struggle out of the workplace, where it had largely been waged after the 1973 Durban strikes. The new terrain included the issues of education, local government, transport and services. By then the KwaZulu bantustan had been in existence for six years, gradually taking control of these very areas in the lives of black people in the region. In 1977, it was given the additional powers contained in ‘Chapter 2’ of the Bantu Homelands Constitution Act, as we have noted.

Prior to the formation of Inkatha, responsibility for these matters might have reposed with individuals or with the ‘traditional authority’ — the chiefs through the KLA. But, from its formation, Inkatha became the KLA. This situation was confirmed after Inkatha broke with the ANC in 1979/80 and concentrated its political energy, and organisational thrust, in the region. It meant that ‘Zuluness’ became ever more important in mobilisation and that Inkatha sought to create a stronghold, or stepping stone into national politics, in the area coinciding with the territory of KLA administration and control.

The Para-Militarisation of KwaZulu
It was initially envisaged by Inkatha that the movement would be placed above the KLA in decision-making. But this idea was rejected by the chiefs because it would have diminished their power and authority. However, it was agreed that the KLA would consider all Inkatha decisions. At one of the first Inkatha National Council meetings, it was decided that the KwaZulu government should vote funds for security police and that ‘military training be established to assist the KwaZulu police (sic) in case of trouble’. This was reported to the KLA (KLAD, 7: 973-4). It perhaps merits emphasising that this call came in 1976, as Soweto and other urban areas rose in protest.

What the overlap between Inkatha and the KLA has done is to make available another range of mechanisms of control and repression that are ostensibly outside the ambit of the bantustan. Because Inkatha draws so heavily on the ‘warrior’ aspects of Zulu tradition, impis, or amabutho, have been able to act under the auspices or in the name of Inkatha. Vigilante groups have been linked to prominent Inkatha leaders (the infamous case of Mandla Shabalala serves to make the point; apparently he has been the only central committee member to be called before an internal disciplinary hearing).
This process has not been without its contradictions. Firstly, while Inkatha leaders frequently refer to their disciplined and organised membership, the behaviour of these vigilante groups is clearly embarrassing to a movement which professes non-violence. Criticisms of such activities by Inkatha members are met with justifications based on the slogan of 'an eye for an eye' or by denials of responsibility for the behaviour of individuals within its claimed 1.5 million members.

Secondly, the movement has had to take responsibility for what happens within its 'liberated zone'. It cannot both claim to have taken control of all aspects of peoples' lives, and then deny responsibility when those people, as commuters, residents, pupils and students, object to the conditions under which they have to live. In line with Inkatha's claim to represent all the African people in the region (and often all, or millions of, Africans in the country as a whole) it is often claimed that 'outsiders' are responsible for unrest. Thus the ANC is accused of manipulating the UDF and Cosatu in the seemingly interminable violence raging in Pietermaritzburg. In 1987, Buthelezi accused the 'sub-human' ANC activists and their 'cohorts' of being responsible for the violence (Natal Mercury 19 December 1987). Such accusations of 'outside agitation' go all the way back to the mid-seventies. Blaming outsiders also extends to 'racial outsiders', such as accusations that Indians, whites, coloured students or other ethnic groups are responsible for violence (also the case in Pietermaritzburg).

In July 1980, the Inkatha central committee decided that, because of the break with the ANC (in 1979) Inkatha had to move into a 'para-military phase', especially with respect to youth (Inkatha central committee resolution, quoted in Langner, 1983: 154). After this meeting, Buthelezi announced the formation of a 'Youth Service Corps' to deal with disasters and 'to safeguard national interest'.

Early in 1981, Dr Dhlomo, the Inkatha secretary general, took a paper with him on a visit to Israel, to have discussions of the YSC 'with people who have possibly been involved in military training camps and in small-scale community-bound light industries and service industries'. The document makes frequent mention of military training (see Mare & Hamilton, 1987: 69). By the end of 1981, a camp had indeed been set up on a farm on the banks of the White Umfolozi river. It was reported that the KwaZulu government was to spend R2.5 million to establish this camp (Daily News 29 April 1981).

The language of militarisation also extended to Buthelezi's address to Inkatha's annual conference in 1980. He called for the creation of 'well-disciplined and regimented impis in every Inkatha region ...' Buthelezi stated that Inkatha was committed to 'eradicate disorder in black politics' (Daily News 21 June 1980).

Speaking in the KLA in 1980, Buthelezi 'called for the creation of black vigilante groups to protect buildings and said they should “shoot to kill” if they found anybody interfering with these buildings' (Star 2 June 1980). In the same year, a member of the KLA suggested in 1980 that making 'every Zulu ... a policeman of sorts is part of our effort of ensuring law and order in the country. That is our traditional way of policing the country ...' (KLAD, 20: 763).

The KwaZulu minister of justice, Mtetwa, suggested in 1978 that there should be 'military training for tribal regiments' (Mare & Hamilton, 1987: 214). Before Buthelezi assumed the position, Mtetwa briefly held the police ministry. In 1980, he recommended that vigilante groups join the police reservists (Daily News 8
May 1980; KLAD, 19:494). The introduction of 'kitskonstabels' ('instant constables') with Inkatha connections into the Pietermaritzburg area brings Mtetwa's suggestion frighteningly close to actuality. The 'kitskonstabels' undergo a rapid period of training and are then despatched to serve as an auxiliary to the regular police. They have achieved notoriety through the brutality of their actions and a number have been brought to trial. In the Pietermaritzburg area it was claimed that several Inkatha members had been recruited to undergo the training in the Cape; they had subsequently returned to Natal where they were used against opponents of the movement, but were now in uniform and hence could not be reported under the State of Emergency regulations that continue in force. Some of these 'kitskonstabels' had been dismissed.

KwaZulu leaders have sought to justify such para-militarisation in terms of attacks on KwaZulu government and police property and personnel. In 1984, for example, Buthelezi referred to attacks during the previous year on KwaMashu and Ngwelezane buildings in a speech calling for a 'para-military wing of the Kwazulu Police Force'.

The Future — Changes Under the Indaba?

In a recent analysis of the Inkatha movement, we concluded that 'Inkatha is willing to formalize its role in political repression through responsibility for the KwaZulu Police and it has indicated its desire to extend defence forces under its control' (Mare & Hamilton, 1987: 215). Actions and events during the two years since it was written have largely tended to confirm that statement. We need look no further than the clear intentions spelt out by Buthelezi at the 1987 passing-out parade of the ZP. He called the ZP 'my first bastion of defence against anything and everybody that mounts threats against the democracy which alone can set us free'. He advanced arguments reminiscent of those of Law and Order minister Vlok when he suggested that 'it was impossible to negotiate in the midst of chaos' and then threatened 'the political thugs' who stood in the way of 'freedom'. These 'political thugs' are later identified as 'the ANC mission in exile, working through surrogates'. Yet, at the same time, this branch of the SAP is held to be 'in the frontline of the black struggle for liberation'.

Michael Massing, a journalist who interviewed chief minister Buthelezi and his officials, gained the impression that they perceived a 'civil war as inevitable. As one Buthelezi adviser told me:

Over the long run, there's only one central black political process in South Africa — the conflict between the ANC and Inkatha. And there can only be one victor in that conflict (The New York Review of Books, 12 February 1987).

This is the world view with which Inkatha's leaders operate — that there is an international campaign to attack and vilify the movement.

In the passing-out speech mentioned above, Buthelezi warned against the infiltrators who came like 'wolves in sheep's clothing', disguised as KwaZulu civil servants, nurses, doctors, lawyers, pastors and trade unionists, and who might even infiltrate his police force. The ZP thus is placed in the tradition of the 'warrior stock' of 'Zuluness'. In a bizarre homage from the leader of a 'liberation movement', who had just committed his police to the 'struggle to rid our country of racist oppression', Buthelezi then expressed his 'high regard for General Johan Coetzee,
both as the highest officer in the SAP and as a fellow South African’ (Buthelezi
speech, 21 January 1987) (Coetzee retired after a lifetime in the SAP, having headed
the notorious security branch before rising to become the Commissioner of Police).

These contradictory messages only make sense if we accept, as I have argued,
that structurally the present KwaZulu leaders are part of the state in essential
ways (even if not in all ways) and, furthermore, that Inkatha leaders are committed
to defend many aspects of power relations as they are presently constituted.

The future does not offer much prospect of change in this respect either. Despite
its commitment to the outcome of Natal's much-publicised indaba, Inkatha has
taken up powers that are directly in contradiction with the Indaba Bill of Rights
(to which Inkatha and the KLA were signatories). Moreover, it has taken such
powers not only before the indaba but since the Bill of Rights was accepted. In
September 1987, it was reported that KwaZulu had started using State of
Emergency detention powers and even denied legal access to a detainee (Weekly
Mail, 25 September 1987). The Indaba constitution itself did not alter the status
quo with regard to repressive powers but in fact confirmed and even extended
them. Provision was made under ‘matters falling within the powers of the [regional]
legislature’ for ‘special services’ that would include a ‘tribal police force’ for the
‘protection of life, persons and property’, ‘police matters’ and a ‘Natal regional
force’ (KwaZulu Natal Indaba, 1986). Whether this document has any relevance to
the future constitutional development of South Africa in the light of current events,
remains to be seen. But it does offer one more piece of evidence of the outlook
which the Inkatha leadership is likely to bring to any future negotiations and
political activities.

Conclusion
The violence that has torn Natal province apart, especially since 1987, has brought
to the fore the issue of control over the population of the region. The structures
of the UDF have been seriously weakened or destroyed by the State of Emergency
and the repressive actions taken against the organisation and its activists
nationally. Cosatu remains the strongest organisation but, although it has taken
up wider issues, it necessarily remains a trade union congress, with a prime
responsibility to advance the work-related interests of its members.

Cosatu recently released (1989) an extensively documented accusation that the
SAP is working directly with Inkatha to crush opposition to the central state in
Natal. As if to strengthen such accusations, the divisional commissioner of the
security police in Pietermaritzburg, Brigadier Jac Buchner, a man closely involved
in coordinating repressive measures against the UDF and Cosatu, was appointed
KwaZulu commissioner of police in 1989. Buthelezi was quoted as saying that the
appointment was ‘acceptable to the KwaZulu government’ (Daily News, 7 April
1989). Buthelezi has consistently and vehemently denied claims of Inkatha
collusion with the police state (most recently in February 1990 in response to a
reported comment by Nelson Mandela that the SAP had sided with Inkatha in the
violence in Natal). Yet despite the frequency and vehemence of such denials the
belief persists, nourished by the processes and pronouncements described.

Three thousand people or more have been killed in the violence in Natal since
1987 and many times more wounded or turned into refugees. Whatever social and
economic conditions serve as the underlying causes, the form the violence has
most frequently taken has been a contest between members of Inkatha (some of them prominent in the formal structures of the organisation or the bantustan), and people who identify with the broad alliances of the UDF, COSATU or, more recently, under the banner of the Mass Democratic Movement. Not all opponents of Inkatha are organisationally linked, often simply sharing resistance against the methods of control and recruitment of members of the organisation or of the bantustan. Similarly, not all people in the fight against the 'comrades' are Inkatha members, but are drawn from criminal elements and vigilantes and dirty-tricks squads with links closer to the central state.

I have not dealt with the more recent events but provided background to the structural integration of Inkatha into the powers granted to, and role demanded of the bantustan. The unfolding of this aspect of the bantustan policy during the past three years largely confirms an assessment of the historical material. The undoing of these links and regional powers, as much as the legacy of ethnic mobilisation through the bantustans, will be amongst the most difficult tasks facing those engaged in the transformation of apartheid South Africa.

Bibliographic Note
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Endnote
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Reviews

Unfree Labour and its Persistence into the Capitalist Era: A Critical Review of Recent Books by Robert Miles and Robin Cohen reviewed by Bob Currie
The New Helots: Migrants in the International Division of Labour by Robin Cohen; Capitalism and Unfree Labour: Anomaly or Neccessity? by Robert Miles.

Robin Cohen and Robert Miles have produced extremely important and valuable studies of the use of unfree labour in the capitalist era. Both challenge the idea that the capitalist mode of production is based on the exclusive use of free wage labour. In contrast they suggest that capitalism has historically coexisted with a combination of unfree labour regimes. Whilst both authors adopt a Marxist methodology, they attempt to avoid treating Marx’s work as a 'holy script', to use Miles’ words. Instead they outline and attempt to rectify, gaps and deficiencies in Marx’s analysis.

In contrast to Marx, Cohen argues that, historically, the international division of labour wrought by the capitalist mode of production has been characterised by a combination of free and unfree labour regimes, rather than by the exclusive use of free labour (p.3). Cohen provides examples of the use of slavery and other forms of unfree labour in peripheral zones, particularly under colonial rule. He then asks if capitalism is compatible with slavery, whatever the specific causes for utilising slave labourers in particular areas, then should it not also be compatible with other forms of involuntary or coerced labour?

As an example Cohen suggests that international migrants can in some respects be viewed as involuntary labour, since their existence in advanced capitalist political economies should be seen to be 'a modern version of the demonstrated capacity for capitalism to combine different forms of labour' (p.26). He outlines a number of the restrictions which have been directed against post-war international migrants, suggesting that these migrants share similar characteristics to earlier generations of unfree workers, insofar as they are prevented from becoming settlers and citizens. This theme is explored further: in chapter 2 with regard to the US, the Caribbean and Mexico; in chapter 3 with regard to white South Africa and its internal and surrounding periphery; and in chapter 4 with regard to northern Europe and its labour reservoirs in the Mediterranean countries and its former colonies. Cohen also discusses the use of unfree labour in the core zones, concluding that 'neither Britain nor the United States have ever exhibited ... or continue to display, a pure form of free labour regime' (p.19).
A principal feature of Cohen's method and one with which I disagree, is his assertion that the capitalist mode of production (CMP) is so determinant after its initial settlement and conquest in peripheral zones that we do not have an articulation of modes of production; instead we have a subordination and an encapsulation of the pre-capitalist 'form' of production and reproduction. For Cohen this process of subordination subsequently generates commoditisation in agriculture and unfree labourers to work in the core, or on the edge of the regional political economy. Cohen suggests that this provides the heart of an economic theory of migration (p.26).

However, I am unconvinced that the capacity of the CMP to encapsulate and to subordinate other non-capitalist modes after its initial intrusion is as complete as Cohen suggests. Furthermore I do not find entirely clear what he believes provides the mechanism and dynamic for this encapsulation and subordination. Although he later correctly draws attention to the need to examine the particular historical circumstances under which an underdeveloped region becomes 'enmeshed' in capitalist social relations, it is not entirely clear from Cohen's work how it was that capitalist production methods came to be introduced initially into regions where pre-capitalist modes were dominant; nor is it clear what the primary conditions are that give rise to capitalist development.

In his second chapter Cohen focuses on economically rooted migration to three selected areas — the United States, northern Europe and white South Africa. He considers whether or not a causal theory of international migration can be advanced by examining the structural and political forces at work in the area concerned, in the context of the US and its surrounding labour reservoirs. He argues that the individual's decision to migrate occurs within the constraints that structure the opportunities available for migration. These include factors such as rural immiseration; prospects for employment and housing; transport costs; constraints imposed by international law, immigration policies and the recruitment policies of employers; the need to obtain work permits, passports and other documents, and so on. Consequently he correctly concludes that 'the individual's resolve to migrate cannot be separated from the institutional context in which the decision was reached' (p.35-36).

For this reason Cohen argues that he is concerned with the constraints on the opportunities which are on offer to migrant labour. Central to his method is an interest

in structure rather than motivation in that individual preferences only explain why some people choose to make themselves part of a general phenomenon: they cannot explain the phenomenon itself (p.35).

He argues that his insistence on structural factors attempts to take into account that modern migratory movements are restricted by a 'more pervasive set of institutional actors'. Amongst these the labour importing state is the most important in legislating immigration policy and in seeking to regulate the conditions under which migrants are able to live, work and reproduce. Any complete analysis of migration must consider structural factors at both ends of the migration process, amongst which the demand for labour at the importing end may be decisive (p.40-41).
Cohen's recognition of the constraints which these factors place on the opportunities available to migrants is crucial to any analysis of migrant labour. Like Burawoy he is right to argue that migrants do not have unrestricted freedom to participate in the labour market. However, I would suggest that there is a danger in overemphasising these structural limitations at the expense of motivation. These structural limitations only dictate the boundaries of the possibilities for social change and do not provide an explanation of its dynamic. This leaves us with a rather static analysis of migration. Cohen correctly observes that men and women are confined by circumstances which they have inherited from the past and other 'structural constraints'. But historical materialism also demands that a study of human 'individual preferences' is essential to understanding how this history is made and how the 'general phenomena' to which Cohen refers have emerged in the first place. People must make their own history, even if they do not make it always of their own free will.

In his third chapter Cohen goes on to examine the social effects of migration and the consequence for the reproduction of labour power in the labour reservoirs of southern Africa. Quite correctly he suggests that the social conditions for the reproduction of labour power within the household unit are crucial to understanding the dynamics of the capitalist mode of production. This is true in both an economic sense, in the way and the extent to which female labour 'subsidises' the costs of labour power as a commodity to the employer; and in an ideological sense, where the family is seen to represent an important site for the reproduction of certain relations of production and reproduction, sometimes referred to rather loosely as 'patriarchy' (p.74).

Cohen rightly argues that there are important gaps in Marx's work about how internal reproduction is accomplished and how the proletarian family reproduces itself. He suggests that we must recognise the unit of reproduction of labour to be both the family in advanced capitalist countries and the peasant household in developing societies. Although the peasant household does not produce much directly exploitable surplus labour in the economic sense, it does subsidise the CMP in a number of ways: reproducing labour power, producing and preparing means of subsistence and so on. Therefore in many cases the migrant labour system reinforces the gender division of labour in the sender country.

Cohen's work is to be recommended for the attention which it directs to tribal and gender issues concerning migrant labour and the reproduction of labour power. He describes how the migrant labour system may reinforce social differentiation within tribal societies. Often the chiefs have been the first to benefit by exploiting their customary rights to demand tribute labour and by payments for allowing labour power to be recruited from within the group (p.99ff). Cohen also describes how powerful social, economic and demographic changes have exposed women in these countries to serious insecurity by forcing them to produce and reproduce with their men frequently absent; how changes in marital patterns have had major effects on women's capacity to bear the burden of reproduction; and how women especially younger women, have been forced to enter the wage market themselves, often contravening cultural and legal restrictions by doing so (p.103-104).

An important theme of Cohen's book is explored in his fourth chapter. This concerns theories which explain labour migration as a 'structural necessity' for advanced capitalist countries. Such explanations have tended to suggest, in rather functional terms, that not only was migrant labour useful to European capital in
the post-war period, but its presence was an essential feature of capital’s need to accumulate, to control the labour force both politically and ideologically and to allow the state greater power to control the economy. However, these explanations provide little indication of the reasons for the demise of migration into western Europe since the early 1970s. Cohen attempts to provide a more historical account and correctly recognises, like Miles, that we have experienced an end to the migrant labour book of 1945 to 1975. The supposedly ‘structural requirements’ of capital were no longer being met by continuously importing large numbers of migrant workers.

Cohen offers an alternative to these explanations, suggesting that

the mix between free and unfree labour is spatially redistributed in a complex and continuously changing way in response to the mix of market opportunities, comparative labour-power costs, the course of struggles between capital and labour and the historically specific flows and supplies of migrant and other forms of unfree labour (p.144).

This mix of free and unfree labour is contingent on factors present in both the host and the labour sending country and particularly on the nature of the class struggle at any instance. This is a more satisfactory approach than those which attempt to explain the persistence of unfree labour relations in terms of the structural needs of capitalism.

One important aspect of Cohen’s work is to challenge functionalist notions that the conditions applied to regulate and oppress migrant labourers are so ‘deterministic’ that they can not be challenged. He directs attention to the conflict between migrant labour and its oppressors, discussing the measures used by employers and the state to control migrant labour and how the latter organises to resist these measures. Importantly he discusses the dialectic between habituation and resistance, referring in particular to mineworkers in southern Africa and their strikes and struggles for representation. Consequently he raises a number of important questions regarding the implications of these patterns of resistance and their development from forms of hidden protest to open confrontation, for the future of apartheid and for the chances for South Africa’s black miners ‘to follow a path from unfree labourers to citizen’s and settlers’ (p.219).

In his book Miles adopts a more theoretical approach than that followed by Cohen, the latter’s intention being to give greater emphasis to ‘descriptive and empirical method’. Miles argues that the general theory of capitalist development, including an explanation of the uneven character of capitalist development, provides the best context for an explanation of unfree relations of production. Beginning with an analysis of production relations and their reproduction in the development of the CMP, and giving attention to what he refers to as political and ideological (i.e. racist) relations of production, Miles attempts to identify people’s differential incorporation into production which contributes to the emergent world economic system (p.225) and to explain why the development of capitalism has not immediately or systematically swept away all forms of non-wage and unfree labour. His argument rests on the premise that

the existence and reproduction of different forms of unfree labour persistently identifies the historical limits of the development to the capitalist mode of production within the social formations which constitute the emergent world economic system. Forms of unfree labour exist and are reproduced because the conditions for capitalist relations of production are
neither universally or automatically present but depend upon a combination of specific material preconditions and active human intervention (p.222).

He suggests three possible reasons for the survival and reproduction of unfree relations of production in a world economic system increasingly dominated by the capitalist mode of production (CMP): 1) forms of unfree labour, which may be extant or reconstituted, can be the constitutive element of the primitive accumulation process preceding the CMP's emergence; 2) forms of unfree labour can exist because the commodification of labour power is obstructed or breaks down; 3) forms of unfree labour can coexist with free labour where non-capitalist modes are sustained in some form of interrelation with the CMP either within or between different social formations (p.222). Miles suggests that although the CMP is a 'particularly dynamic and self-expanding system the survival of forms of unfree labour illustrates that there are limits and obstacles to that development. History demonstrates, he argues, that all forms of unfree labour are an 'anomalous necessity' which reveal situations where capitalist relations cannot develop or their development is obstructed by various factors.

Miles defines unfree labour as those relations of production which are characterised by direct domination. He emphasises that the concept of 'unfreedom' in the sense in which he employs it, is not defined in relation to forms of political restriction per se. Instead it exists where politico-legal restrictions are specifically intended to restrict the circulation of certain categories of labour power within the labour market and although these restrictions may be overdetermined by related political constraints (such as absence of voting rights), the latter by themselves do not constitute the defining feature of unfree labour (p.33).

Miles begins by attempting to characterise Marx's concept of capitalism. Correctly he emphasises the value which Marx attached to the concept of mode of production in his analysis. This enables us to specify the relationship between producer and exploiter and, thus, the nature of the process of exploitation and the set of class relations which shape the process of historical development. He then attempts to explain first, given that the CMP is not a natural and universal phenomenon, why wage labour and capitalist relations have emerged and secondly, given that the CMP does not instantly become a universal phenomenon, how and why this new set of capitalist relations interrelated with other extant relations of production.

Miles discusses the first of these questions in the context of primitive or primary accumulation, examining Marx's concern with the influence of merchant capital, trade and the colonial system in shaping and creating the primary conditions for capitalist accumulation and development. Rightly he argues that Marx's historical analysis of primitive accumulation in England presupposes the notion of articulation of modes. Thus, he suggests, primitive accumulation and articulation are interdependent and the former may be an example of the latter; for example when a sum of wealth is accumulated in one mode and is transformed into capital in another mode by being brought into contact with wage labour.

However, it is debateable whether the persistence of unfree production relations are an 'anomalous necessity' in situations where capitalist relations cannot develop successfully, as Miles argues. This approach still tends to explain the survival and reproduction of unfree labour as a functional device used by capitalism to overcome obstacles to its development. I would instead suggest that unfree labour
is not a 'necessity' but rather a result of the particular nature of the articulation between the CMP and pre-capitalist modes; and that, in fact, the CMP is not so determinant after its initial intrusion into peripheral zones that it necessarily encapsulates and subordinates the pre-capitalist form of production and reproduction. It is also unclear exactly for whom unfree labour represents an 'anomalous necessity.' Although we are told that this is 'necessary' for capitalism, Miles does not specify the agents which 'capitalism' represents. Does he mean sections of the capitalist class? Or of the capitalist state? Or some other set of interests? It would be wrong to assume that these interests all necessarily coincide.

However, like Cohen, Miles is correct to argue that there are gaps to be filled in Marx's framework, especially regarding the development of capitalism in countries outside Europe. He rightly suggests that, although Marx did provide an analysis of the dynamics of capital, his work does not leave us with anything approaching a systematic analysis of the inter-relationship between capitalist development in Europe and newly created modes of production elsewhere in the world, including those countries which have been colonised. Importantly he argues that Marx's analysis of the development of capitalism in England is only one instance of capitalist development and should not be seen as a 'blueprint' for all others. Thus a Marxist analysis should not attempt to draw conclusions by applying a single 'law of capitalist development' mechanically to a multitude of historically distinct circumstances (p.47-49).

Drawing on evidence from the Caribbean, Australia, South Africa and western Europe he then attempts to focus on more specific aspects of the relations of production which accompany and sustain unfree labour. He argues for a wide concept of 'relations of production' to include not only the relations between people directly involved in producing objects to satisfy human needs, but also the wider set of relations which are required to ensure that production takes place. Thus 'the forms of state are facets of a given mode of producing things, as essential to reproduction as particular kinds of property or technology' (p.19) in the capitalist mode of production the state is an 'essential relation of production' which regulates all those relations which sustain the commodification and exploitation of labour power (p.23):

the state is that institutional complex ... which organises social relations within a social formation to ensure the reproduction of a particular mode, or articulation of modes, of production. It therefore organises a particular ensemble of class relations. In the first instance it appears as a 'purely' politico-legal structure but the manner and effects of its intervention mean that it is, in its functioning, a relation of production. This is because the state attempts, inter alia, to secure, by direct force and/or in law, the particular conditions considered necessary at the time ... to determine that those relations are reproduced and/or reformed in particular ways (p.181).

It is in his definition and conceptualisation of relations of production that Miles makes his greatest departure from conventional Marxist theory. He examines the role of racism in the formation and legitimation of unfree production relations, arguing that this also represents a structural relation of production, an 'ideological interaction which inheres in the production process' (p.188). Miles conceives racism to be a potential ideological element by which to select and legitimate a particular population whose labour power will be exploited in a particular set of unfree production relations. Once used in this way it may become a structural feature of the means to recruit and retain labour power (p.188). Thus 'racism has
the potential to legitimate a particular ensemble of relations of production and a signified group, to justify the assignation of particular people in the productive process' (p.188). For Miles, racism has therefore itself become an economic relation of production, and not just an ideology that 'reacts back' on economic relations (p.191).

By referring to racism and other 'ideological' features of unfree labour in this way, Miles is using the concept of relations of production in too wide a sense. He is quite right to criticise the apparent divorce between economics, politics and ideology which is evident in much Marxist work. He is also correct to assert that political and ideological relations of production can shape economic relations as well as vice-versa. But it does not follow that this therefore makes them relations of production. Although Miles is to be commended for trying to provide a more dialectical alternative to the base/superstructure approach, he is wrong to attempt to do this by collapsing the superstructure into the base in this way.

One of his strengths is the emphasis which he places on the importance of human agency and class relations in shaping the course of history. Like Cohen, Miles recognises that although human beings have the ability to act in ways which transform the material world, the scope for such transformative activity is constrained by the character of the particular material circumstances in which they live (p.169), a fundamental assumption of Marx's historical materialism. But he also rightly emphasises the importance of the dialectic between material constraint and human agency when examining the development of the capitalist mode of production, in order to try to avoid writing history in which the 'logic of capital' is portrayed as invincible, 'as if capitalism is a steamroller which sweeps aside instantly and effortlessly all obstacles to expansion' (p.221).

Both these authors have attempted to challenge aspects of the existing literature on the subject of unfree and migrant labour. Their work is to be commended in several respects. Firstly in both cases they have tried to employ a dialectical and historical method, based in Marx's historical materialism, which emphasises the dialectic between human intervention and material conditions. Secondly, both realise the central importance of the reproduction of labour power and relations of production to an analysis of the CMP, and its relationship to forms of unfree labour. Thirdly, both have correctly argued that the conditions for unfree labour are not confined to this historical past, but that there are similarities between migrant labour in the modern era and other forms of involuntary labour. Fourthly, both recognise the central role which is played by the state, racism and other political and ideological factors in maintaining unfree relations of production, and in influencing economic production relations. Both Cohen and Miles are rightly critical of functionalist Marxist explanations which explain the origins of racism as a product of capitalist development, or as an ideology designed by capitalists to legitimate their exploiting labour power (p.188). Finally, both authors have recognised that an analysis of the nature of the class struggle and the forms of resistance put up by unfree and especially migrant labourers, is a crucial feature of an analysis of unfree labour and its coexistence with the CMP. The nature of these confrontations raises important questions regarding the future of migrant and unfree labour systems and of the regimes which support these forms of unfree production relations. Cohen and Miles have raised important questions in two impressive books.
POVERTY AND THE ENVIRONMENT IN DEVELOPMENT


Since their relaunch early in 1988 as an editorially independent but wholly owned subsidiary of the International Institute for Environment and Development, Earthscan Publications have rapidly emerged as one of the leading publishers in the crucial interface between development and the environment. This is a particularly timely event. Concern with these issues has mushroomed over the last few years, as the extent of the global environmental crisis has become more evident and the need for sustainable development paths ever more urgent. For many radical scholars, (re) discovery during the 1980s of the environment, hitherto not a major concern of political economy, has led to important advances in analysis (see for example, ROAPE 42 — special issue on the environment). Furthermore, publication in 1987 of Our Common Future, the report of the World Commission on Environment and Development, served to emphasise international concern at the highest levels.

Of late we have witnessed an increasing number of severe disasters around the world, many of them supposedly ‘natural’ and causing widespread loss of life and destruction. Importantly, however, many of these disasters have either been attributable to, or their effects greatly exacerbated by, human impacts on the environment. For example, deforestation of hillslopes greatly increases the scale of landslides following earthquakes or monsoonal rains, while desertification in the Sahel has been greatly accelerated by inappropriate land uses and excessive human pressure. Equally, the siting of chemical plants, petrochemical complexes or nuclear power stations in or near densely populated urban centres exposes thousands to death or serious injury in the event of leaks and explosions, while corruption or negligence in the construction of sub-standard high rise buildings contributes greatly to the destruction wrought on cities by earthquakes such as that in Mexico in 1985. All the above activities have at least one thing in common: they were undertaken in the name of ‘development’ but had disastrous, unforeseen or unintended consequences.

The three books reviewed here all advocate approaches to development which take due account of the environment, although the volume by Dixon et al is very different from the other two in both scope and stance.

Both Wisner, and Munslow et al have written first class books, focusing on ongoing and hence more pervasive environmental crises than the dramatic events listed above, namely the widespread poverty and underdevelopment in Africa. Their messages need to be taken seriously, because environmental degradation undermines and ultimately precludes any meaningful development strategy. Humankind is not master of nature but part of it. Yet the majority of Africans are
poor — in many cases increasingly so as their access to and control over the means of production and even social reproduction shrink. In their struggle for survival they are destroying the very environment upon which their survival ultimately depends.

Wisner's central concern is with basic strategies as applied in Africa over the last two decades or so. Far from being the intended radical departure from previous development initiatives, the concept of basic needs has been hijacked by most governments and development agencies and misused to rationalise cheap projects of the familiar top-down, externally controlled type under the guise of helping the poor in times of world recession. This watering down has reduced what Wisner calls the 'strong' basic needs approach (BNA) into 'weak' forms, which in many cases reflect the interests of donors and elites far more than the supposed beneficiaries. The conventional wisdom that the BNA has failed to improve conditions in Africa and elsewhere is therefore incorrect. 'Strong' BNA has never really been given a chance; what we have witnessed instead is the failure of 'weak' forms. This is hardly surprising, since 'weak' BNA shares many common features with other conventional development strategies.

BNA was originally formulated in an attempt to focus attention away from the wasteful and generally unsuccessful large scale, capital intensive agro-industry and industrialisation strategies which most third world countries had been implementing in their drive for rapid modernisation. All people have certain basic needs for short term survival and longer term existence — minimum levels of nutrition, clothing, shelter, potable water, health care, education and so forth. These should form the initial focus of development initiatives, because they are the foundations upon which all else depends. Crudely put, starving diseased people cannot be productive farmers or factory workers; nor can they have any use for consumer durables, luxury hotels or international airports. Yet it is these very basic needs which were all too often given lowest priority by conventional development efforts.

As important as the satisfaction of basic needs per se, however, is the process by which they are satisfied. True or 'strong' BNA helps the poor to help themselves. It is a process working with and through the people at the grassroots, a process which seeks to promote self-reliance rather than a perpetuation of dependence on outside supplies and expertise. It must therefore tackle the underlying causes of poverty and powerlessness, not merely alleviate the symptoms. As such, 'strong' BNA is an inherently political process, conscientising and empowering the poor.

Wisner rightly asserts that this is the key to understanding why it has so rarely been implemented. Once the poor become aware of the root causes of their plight and attempt to deal with them, rather than being totally preoccupied with their daily conditions of existence, potential threats to the status quo emerge. It is far easier and more convenient for governments — the majority of them less than truly democratic — and development agencies to deliver a product ('basic needs') than to embark on a process that is both complex and likely to have uncomfortable consequences. 'The rural poor are up against established structures and strong interests' (p.20).

Wisner develops his arguments clearly and convincingly, and in a manner refreshingly free from jargon and obfuscation. Strong BNA is about putting the last first, about helping the poor to remove the obstacles to their own development.
These people are far more knowledgeable about their environment and their constraints than most outside 'experts', and should not be viewed as passive recipients of 'development'. Paraphrasing the theme of John Turner's work on the issue of self-help housing policy in the early 1970s, Wisner advocates seeing need as a verb, i.e. a process. The weak BNA, by contrast, imposes needs from outside or limits the potential for participation. For example, the failure of the UN Decade for Women cannot be attributed solely to Africa's external problems but also reflects the failure to support women's struggles for economic power within the household and beyond. Female headed households comprise 20-30% of the total in many African countries. Yet despite frequently being among the poorest, they are generally bypassed by so-called integrated development efforts. One of the few 'strong' BNA initiatives to emerge from international agencies was the programme of action formulated by the ILO's World Employment Conference in 1976.

After discussing the nine hallmarks of a 'strong' BNA, Wisner elaborates the theme over several chapters with particular reference to health care and sanitation. He argues that the primary health care strategy of the World Bank, the largest and most influential development agency, is grounded in human capital theory, and consequently aims essentially to increase worker productivity. It has frequently been more concerned with capital than with people, providing merely a package of preventative and curative services that can be administered by auxiliary personnel. The cause of ill-health is seen as being poverty, without seeking the cause(s) thereof. The author's long experience in Kenya provides revealing case studies, revealing how the recurring crisis there is due to the state's failure to assure the preconditions for health.

The problems of 'weak' BNA are nowhere more evident than in the 'shopping list' approach underlying single issue campaigns at the international level, which concentrate on particular sectors. For example, the Water Decade has had a narrow sectoral focus and the approach has been largely administrative and technical, thus failing to take account of the integrated nature of water resource use in rural and urban areas. Any local participation has been short lived and not transformative. Few skills have therefore been acquired. The detailed critique of UNICEF's 'GOBI' (growth monitoring, oral rehydration therapy, breastfeeding and immunisation) strategy in Chapter 4 proceeds along similar lines. It concludes by suggesting that oral rehydration therapy and fortified food aid are the downmarket end of the same international corporate marketing strategy which is promoting the multivitamin stress pill and frozen convenience foods. The reader is likely to reach the rather pessimistic conclusion that no UN-type international campaign can achieve its supposed objectives, since these are necessarily predicated upon the existing political structures in each country. However, Wisner does leave a chink of light by conceding that some programmes such as the Water Decade may have opened the way in political and technical terms for subsequent implementation of strong BNA.

Another element in the argument is exemplified in the sphere to food security. As with earlier strategies, weak BNA has been obsessed with production first, i.e. maximising output — often cash crops for export — under existing relations of production. The poor have thus been bypassed except in an auxiliary way for capitalist production. Consequently the crisis of rural production and reproduction has worsened for the majority, thus also exacerbating pressure on the environment. Ecological collapse, illustrated with case material from Kenya and Botswana, is
inextricably linked to the collapse of food security. The issue of technology in basic needs development is also examined in depth. It undoubtedly has a role, but must be integrated with the wider social and economic relations and structures, i.e. be socially appropriate.

Wisner concludes that much ‘rural development’ in Africa today actively undermines the position of the poor and has therefore ultimately sought to put a human face on earlier, more explicitly ‘production first’ policies. In other words, BNA has been used to legitimise continuity of practice rather than a fundamental reorientation. Although NGOs certainly have a role to play in promoting strong BNA, there can be no package solutions. African livelihood strategies are extremely complex and any successful development will need to have the inseparability of economy, society and the environment as starting point. The book ends with a set of practical recommendations for African and foreign scholars, NGOs, donors and African governments concerned to promote strong BNA.

Somewhat surprisingly, Wisner does not refer to the report of the World Commission for Environment and Development (WCED 1987) or other recent work on sustainable development, e.g. by Redclift (1984, 1987). Perhaps the manuscript had already gone to press by the time the later books appeared. These deal in different ways with the same basic issues of working with and through the poor, and it would have been interesting to know Wisner’s views on them.

The Fuelwood Trap by Munslow et al dovetails very neatly with Wisner’s volume, being concerned with the fuelwood crisis in the SADCC countries of southern Africa. Most of the central issues are common: the complexity of resource use, interrelationships between environment, economy and society, the limitations of conventional approaches to the provision of solutions, and the urgency of finding more appropriate ways forward. Demand for biomass energy, of which fuelwood is the major component, is growing rapidly while supply is dwindling. For the region’s 60 million people, the vast majority rural, biomass provides roughly 80% of all energy consumption.

The fuelwood problem has long remained hidden because it has been regarded as an abundant and ‘free’ resource which is not produced or generally marketed commercially. Moreover, bureaucratic structures are inappropriate to the implementation of integrated fuelwood strategies once the problem has been perceived. Supply augmentation usually falls to Forestry Departments, which are geared to commercial plantation silviculture, while demand monitoring and management is undertaken by Energy Departments, with little if any communication and co-ordination between them. The essence of the ‘fuelwood trap’ is assuming that there is a simple solution to the problem once identified.

A major element of recent supply augmentation strategies has been the introduction of peri-urban and communal rural woodlots. However, these have frequently been unsuccessful because the perspective is too narrowly product oriented, seeking to produce more ‘fuelwood trees’. The cost of wood from peri-urban lots is usually far higher than supplies brought in from ‘free’ rural sources, and beyond the financial means of the urban poor. The introduction and management of rural communal woodlots has also been inappropriate. Moreover, trees fulfil a multitude of roles, of which use as a fuel source is only one. The authors argue that this holds the key to evolving more successful approaches: the fuelwood crisis is actually a symptom of a wider crisis of deforestation and
ecological degradation. Tree loss means that peasants and smallholder farmers are losing not only fuelwood but also vital sources of erosion control, soil quality enhancement, shade, fruit, traditional medicines, live fences, fodder and building materials. People do not destroy such valuable resources willingly; this reflects their grim circumstances and the exigencies of deteriorating conditions for production and both biological and social reproduction. Tree growing must be encouraged to meet all the above needs, around the homestead, in and between fields and wherever else may be appropriate. This will indirectly but more effectively alleviate the fuelwood shortage. Furthermore, any such initiative must be undertaken through the peasants, who should participate actively and exercise control. With appropriate advice and assistance and under conducive conditions, they will be best able to determine and meet their own needs.

Again, social relations of production should be taken into account. Fuelwood collection is 'women's work', along with the greater part of agricultural labour, in much of the region. Hence, declining supplies necessitate longer collection trips and times, with inevitable knock-on effects on other productive and reproductive (childcare, household) activities. 'Deforestation carries a heavy social cost' (p.7). Reforestation and tree growing initiatives must therefore address women's needs. As with other development projects, negotiations and transactions all too often take place only with men.

A series of helpful rural case studies summarises experiences in a range of agro-ecological systems within southern Africa and provides some pointers to the way forward. Trees are an integral element of sustainable rural development; they may be managed under high, medium or low intensity systems according to local conditions. Once again, the need to learn from the people is emphasised. A more thorough understanding of the various factors determining the supply of, and demand for, fuelwood is developed and the causes of the fuelwood crisis are clearly explained. In essence, indirect, low cost and multipurpose management approaches are advocated. The section on rural areas is concluded with a chapter on locating and assessing problem areas. A sequential stage approach is outlined, beginning with use of remotely sensed imagery and working steadily groundwards with more detailed local analysis and verification leading ultimately to site-specific work for project identification. This is both a logical and now fairly widely accepted methodology. The potentially valuable case study application thereof to Malawi (pp.99-106) is, however, rather disappointing in that it does not proceed beyond the identification of broad problem areas.

The urban section is rather shorter than that dealing with rural areas, partly, as the authors point out, because comparatively little is known about fuelwood markets and related energy issues, but no doubt also partly as a reflection of their own research and experience. Nevertheless, the very useful discussion highlights problems of declining per capita incomes and economic stagnation coupled with rapid urban growth, and does attempt to conceptualise the situation. There is a need to ascertain the amounts of different fuels used by different income groups in each area of towns and cities. Since urban areas do not produce significant fuelwood resources but are primarily points of consumption, strategies must focus on fuelswitching, supply enhancement, fuel conservation and improved transport and marketing. Each of these is discussed in turn. Security of supply and the time-cost of obtaining it are shown to be at least as important as the monetary price in determining household fuelswitch decisions. Wealthier families are able
to broaden the range of fuels used to cover supply interruptions, but the poor are vulnerable to price and supply fluctuations of fuelwood.

The most attractive policy is suggested as being the development, as a central policy element, of commercial energy sources which occur indigenously. This will facilitate fuelswitching without incurring vast foreign exchange costs, but must inevitably remain a longish term strategy because of the initial obstacles to increasing production, improving secure distribution and promoting domestic production of low cost standardised appliances. The strategy should be flexible, build on existing distribution and marketing systems where possible, simultaneously enhance supplies of fuelwood and employ appropriate pricing policies.

The most surprising omission from this section is a detailed discussion of strategies to expand electricity networks into even poor urban neighbourhoods in an effort to reduce pressure on peri-urban fuelwood supplies. This has been undertaken in several places over the last decade or more, most notably Harare and Lusaka (Kalapula, 1987) as an element of low income housing upgrading schemes. Both Zimbabwe and Zambia utilise cheap hydroelectricity supplies from Kariba — one of the indigenous commercial energy sources mentioned by the authors — yet electrification receives only passing mention. Even under such circumstances, these projects are not by any means problem free, and specific evaluation would have enhanced the overall analysis of urban areas.

My main reservation about an otherwise excellent book is the separate treatment of rural and urban areas. The authors argue the case for this in terms of the very different situations pertaining there and the consequent need for different strategies. Rural areas are characterised by both the production and consumption of fuelwood, and by the lack of a widespread cash or marketing system to enable fuelswitching or significant fuel conservation. By contrast, urban areas consume but do not produce fuelwood, while marketing and distribution systems for fuelswitch and conservation do exist. All this is true, but the dangers of a partitioned approach should be evident. Rural and urban areas are not somehow separate and isolated from one another, but part of the same spatially delineated political economy. This is characterised by continual but seldom balanced interaction: human migration and circulation, resource and commodity flows, communications and so forth. A country or functional region is a dynamic system and effective policy must therefore ultimately take account of this. As I argued in the journal a few years ago rural and urban development strategies are generally formulated in isolation and frequently contradict each other with predictably disappointing consequences (see Simon, ROAPE 34, 1985). The interdependence of urban and rural areas obviously does not mean that rural and urban policies should be identical, but complementary elements of an integrated systemwide approach. Munslow et al unwittingly illustrate the point well themselves in the section of Chapter 8 dealing with urban fuelwood supply enhancement. All five elements they distinguish involve rural production. Some are specifically for sale in urban areas, and others are identical to rural supply enhancement methods, such as natural woodlands with enrichment planting, discussed in earlier chapters.

The Economic Analysis of the Environmental Impacts of Development Projects rests rather uneasily with the previous pair of books. Dixon et al are concerned with the much more specific issue of improving project appraisal techniques so as to incorporate environmental and other less readily quantifiable impacts. As
such it is a practitioner's manual, having its origins in an Asian Development Bank staff paper. This in itself is not problematic — development projects of all scales will continue to be implemented and present appraisal techniques are indeed inadequate. The problem lies in the narrowness of the perspective adopted and consequent methodological limitations which fall far short of the broad poor-oriented strategies so eloquently advocated in the other books. The approach is explicitly and unapologetically based on neo-classical economic theory, the underlying assumption being that existing cost-benefit analysis and related techniques are not inherently flawed but can be expanded to embrace environmental variables and thus provide realistic results. There is no hint of awareness of other perspectives or even that neo-classical economics has any inherent limitations in the third world contexts in which application of the techniques is advocated.

The book commences by defining development as being economic development which does not cause environmental damage. This is both dated and narrow, omitting all reference to the socio-cultural value and role of the environment, not to mention non-economic facets of development. The same limitation applies to their definition of sustainable development (p.7).

The authors state their objective as being how to identify, quantify and value environmental impacts for inclusion in economic appraisals. Hypothetical and real examples are used to illustrate the range of impacts and how they may usefully be treated. This coverage of actual impacts is comprehensive, but the conception of many critical and even closely related issues is inadequate. For example, no mention is made (pp.9-12) of how implementation of a multipurpose dam can cause social alienation of displaced people even if they receive alternative land. And an irrigation and resettlement scheme in Sri Lanka is praised for having a water catchment management covenant included in the loan agreement, with no mention of the fact that adequate enforcement rather than the mere existence of such a provision is critical, or of the fact that success is probably best measured by the extent and sustainable nature of benefits derived by the local population.

After a brief outline of key tenets of neo-classical economics and of conventional evaluation criteria such as the Net Present Value, Internal Rate of Return and Benefit to Cost Ratio, the book outlines a variety of techniques for achieving environmental coverage with different degrees of data availability, using market prices to value costs or changes in production where possible, or else surrogate prices, perceptual trade-offs and other approaches as necessary. Property and land values are recommended as potentially useful surrogates, yet relatively few third world cities have widespread capitalist land markets. Indigenous land tenure systems are still common in segments of many cities if not entire urban areas. I was also left musing over what the majority of inhabitants of Calcutta, Cairo, Tumbuktu or a desertifying Sahelian village would make of bright eyed Caucasian consultants trying to gauge their opinions using trade-off games, costless choice techniques and take-it-or-leave-it experiments involving computerised logit models. Not to mention the average petty official in Khartoum or Lusaka faced with the need to carry out and interpret linear programming or generalised input-output models.

The final chapter contains a short discussion of the limitations to economic measurement of environmental impact. My hopes that this would embrace some of the wider conceptual problems and limitations were disappointed, for mention
is only made of conventional cost-benefit analytical conundrums of how to account for income distribution, intergenerational equity, risk and uncertainty, the irreversibility of some options, the value of human life, and incrementalism where the combined impact of several small projects is greater than the sum of the individual parts. The final subsection on cultural, aesthetic and historical resources is superficial and less than one page long, barely hinting at the more fundamental problems and suggesting contingent valuation techniques as potentially useful approaches. An appendix contains five extended case studies of development projects, showing how particular impacts can be incorporated into the appraisal. These are rather more useful in so far as they go, but do not overcome the more fundamental problems I have discussed above.

In summary, this book is purely technocratic in approach, the key to successful economic development being seen as project implementation. The contrast with the people centred perspectives of Wisner, and Munslow et al could hardly be starker. All the economic theory and techniques surveyed are derived within a western context and application in the very different conditions of the third world is advocated without any awareness of the greatly increased pitfalls and limitations. Blinkered ethnocentrism, it seems, persists undiluted in the ranks of many large multilateral 'development' agencies and their consultants.

Physical production of all three books is extremely commendable, especially in view of the retail prices which are competitive by current British standards. The books are fully typeset rather than being produced from camera ready typescript, typographical errors are virtually absent, and tables and diagrams are generally clear and legible. One of the few exceptions is on pp.150 and 152 of Wisner's book, where separate discussions of Botswana and Lesotho respectively both refer to Figure 5.1, while the figure itself is inadequately labelled to clarify the picture. Elsewhere, I noticed only one or two minor errors in the extremely comprehensive bibliography. In Munslow et al, the list of tree species in high intensity management systems (p.41) might usefully have distinguished the indigenous from exotic species alluded to in the text, while Figure 4.1 (p.56) fails to state the units used in the histogram.

It is to be hoped that Earthscan will maintain these impressive early standards and continue to publish such well written, topical and perhaps controversial contributions to the development literature. Seldom today can a reviewer wholeheartedly recommend two out of three books for wide readerships.

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AFRICAN LABOUR STUDIES

The African Worker by Bill Freund (Cambridge University Press, 1988), reviewed by Eddie Webster

Class analysis of contemporary Africa has had a shaky history. Before the Second World War, most scholars who wrote about Africa scarcely took Africa seriously enough to use so European a concept as class. A small group of orthodox communists transposed class categories mechanically and were soon discredited because of their failure to identify the specific characteristics of proletarianisation in Africa. The growth of liberal modernisation theory in the 1950s led to an emphasis on national integration and the social scientific community of North America declared the concept of class as irrelevant. For the successful nationalist politicians who followed in the wake of decolonisation, class was a dangerous and divisive concept that threatened their delicate political project.

Disillusionment with the 'classless nationalism' of African politics first propelled intellectuals, such as Samir Amin (in an article in the Journal of Modern African Studies in 1972) into pursuing a class analysis of Africa by drawing on new Marxist concepts such as the notion of peripheral capitalism. Similarly, Robin Cohen challenged 'the myth of classlessness' in an article in the Socialist Register in 1972. Systematic critiques of modernisation theory were mounted by a new generation of radical scholars influenced by the theory of underdevelopment. The establishment of the Review of African Political Economy in 1974 provided a forum for these scholars. It was published with the express purpose of 'providing a counterweight to that mass of literature on Africa which holds that Africa's continuing chronic poverty is primarily an internal problem and not a product of her colonial history' (ROAPE no.1, 1974:1).

From within this new paradigm, studies emerged in the 1970s that emphasized the differences between the working class in Europe and Africa. In Africa, it was argued, industrialisation has not been as thoroughgoing. This has resulted in a number of important characteristics of the African working class: the industrial working class is very much a minority of wage-earners, wage earners are not growing as fast as the population, and class divisions have not been simplified as in Europe. Workers are divided by a multiplicity of vertical cleavages such as race, ethnicity, language, region, religion, kinship and, above all, through links with the countryside. Not surprisingly these characteristics of the African worker have created problems for trade union organisation and any notion of a working class politics.

Bill Freund’s recent book, The African Worker, provides a useful introduction to the literature on this new paradigm. It is divided into eight chapters. Chapter 1 provides the reader with a review of the historiography of labour. He shows how labour studies during the colonial era concentrated on labour supply questions. This managerial problematic dictated the nature of much research and led to a concern with labour migration in particular. With the struggle for independence the emphasis shifted to trade unions examining their political role in the national struggle and their economic role in the modernisation process. This was to change in the early 1970s. 'By the mid-1970s', Freund argues, 'a new generation of scholars had discovered the working class and, armed with more flexible means of considering the application of class consciousness, they began to change the way
labour in Africa was being written about' (p.22). Two key books reflect this ‘new class paradigm by academics’; Sandbrook and Cohen’s The Development of the African Working Class and Gutkind, Cohen and Copans’ African Labour History. Importantly, Freund adds, this new paradigm does not assume that the working class will form a particular kind of political party. It is critical of African nationalism, de-emphasises colonialism while increasing attention is paid to capitalism and emphasis is given to ‘hidden’ forms of worker consciousness (p.23).

‘The reality of contemporary African society’, he comments, ‘requires us to make sense of the total picture of what women do as well as men, of how labour is organised in agriculture as well as industry, of what actually goes on in the many facets of what political economists call the informal sector of the economy’ (p.24).

This last point provides the point of departure and the central theme for the rest of the book — the relatively uneven penetration of capitalist social forms and ideas into most parts of Africa and the contradictory responses made by workers to this unevenness. In Chapter 2 the large number of employees outside industry and the many people who make a living entirely outside regularised wage employment is stressed. In Chapter 3 the ‘informal’ and ‘popularist’ nature of worker resistance is demonstrated. This theme is developed further in Chapter 4 through an examination of the distinctive role of women in production in Africa. Of particular interest is the literature on the crucial and quite independent role women play in the cities of West Africa. Freund cites a study by Francine Kane of a proletarian quarter of Dakar which revealed that it was often women who achieved more success than men at finding a niche in the urban economy. Many cases were recorded of female factory workers, petty traders, and domestics supporting unemployed husbands, a situation which tends to weaken marriages and challenges the dependent links binding women to husbands (p.87).

Chapter 5 focuses on the relationship between the trade union and the state. Freund successfully identifies the dilemmas that arise after independence when political leaders believe that unions must now address themselves to the problems of creating new national societies, together with the assumption of these leaders that the national governments will determine what form the industrial relations must assume. The problem arises out of the fact that effective union participation in the process of economic development and modernisation requires a more closely prescribed role for the unions and an institutionalised industrial relations system which promotes far closer ties and cooperation among social partners, i.e. government, unions and employers, than was the case before independence. In spite of these pressures on the unions from government to act as a ‘transmission belt’ (p.95), Freund concludes this chapter by stressing that in most African countries organised workers retain ‘certain strengths that continue to animate them’. Worker resistance, instead of disappearing, is dissipated into a variety of informal channels of the classic kind — theft, desertion, poor work habits, etc. — that are difficult to get around for management. Frequently these grievances lead to explosions that play a role in the overthrow of shaky African regimes.

Freund argues convincingly that the degree of industrialism in South Africa warrants treating it as a special case (Chapter 6). After identifying four main periods in the history of labour in South Africa, he poses the central question as to whether a distinctive socialist politics within the working class is likely. He emphasizes the counter factors — the large proportion of the population outside the industrial proletariat and the newness of a fully proletarianised working class.
However the principal reason he gives for the weakness of a distinctive workers' politics is the strength of the populist-nationalist tradition that lacks any coherent theory of social transition. Although Freund seems to feel that the emphasis on worker control and the transition to socialism among certain unions in COSATU pushes the nationalist movement in a more class-oriented direction than other nationalist movements in Africa, in the end I read him as sceptical of the likelihood of any rapid transition to socialism.

Freund may well be correct in the long run but since the book was written there has been a significant narrowing of the ideological differences between those located in the nationalist-populist tradition and those unions in the shop-floor tradition inside COSATU. During 1987 a strategic compromise began to be forged whereby unions in the shop-floor tradition, such as NUMSA, began to accept the symbols of the national tradition, including the Freedom Charter, as 'a good foundation stone on which to start building our working class programme'. In July of that year COSATU noted that national oppression and exploitation were 'complementary to each other and part of an uninterrupted struggle for socialism'. In adopting this approach the dominant view in COSATU was rejecting any notion of a chronological two-stage theory in favour of a more dialectical view that the struggle for national liberation is part of the struggle for socialism (Fine and Webster, 1989). The outcome of this 'ideological class struggle' remains to be seen; what is clear is that the mainstream of the trade union movement has moved from 'abstention' to one of close alliance with the national liberation movement.

The chapter that follows on the development process is rather thin. The role of labour as a strategic factor in development is a central one and deserves more systematic treatment than it does in these five pages. A more theoretical critique of existing literature on underdevelopment theory would have been appropriate here. Is it still adequate to argue as radical scholars did in the 1970s, that Africa's deepening poverty is primarily the product of its colonial history? The book concludes with a further guide to the literature on labour in Africa.

This book is part of a series on *African Society Today* which is designed to appeal to a wide readership. Because it is written more in the form of an extended review essay than a history or sociology of the African worker, it is likely to be rather too allusive for the reader who is not familiar with the literature. The lack of precise figures on such key issues as the number of wage-earners, the structure of the labour force by sex, the size of the 'unemployed' population, the average income per labour force member, and the proportion of workers unionised, contributes to an absence of concreteness in some of the debates raised in the book. For example, what is the size of the organised working class in Nigeria in comparison with that of South Africa or Kenya? While the International Labour Organisation's World Labour Report series have major reservations about the suitability of quantitative data to understanding the position of third world labour, they are an indispensable source for a broad picture of the structure and composition of the African labour force (ILO, 1984, 1985).

Although he cites the major labour process studies in his bibliography, a surprising omission by Freund is a discussion of the way the labour process acts as a site of labour control and worker resistance. As Burawoy argues, theories of development and underdevelopment 'never accompany the colonial producer into the hidden abode of production'. It was Burawoy who first tried to apply systematically the labour process approach to third world labour studies when he coined the phrase
'colonial despotism' to describe the way in which labour was controlled in a coercive and racist way in colonial Africa. Both Burawoy's case study of the Zambian copper mines and Crisp's study of Ghanaian gold mines reveals the decisive importance of the labour process as a form of control and a site of resistance. Similarly, Jon Lewis has identified the way in which the transformation of the labour process created the material conditions for non-racial industrial trade unionism in the manufacturing sector in South Africa between 1924 and 1955.

Freund is possibly unique in having an intimate knowledge of the literature on labour in both west and southern Africa. At a time when the focus of academic work in South Africa is tending to become ever more parochial a book that brings together an understanding of scholarship in other parts of sub-Saharan Africa with the new labour historiography inside South Africa is invaluable. Furthermore the approach adopted in this book makes it an excellent contribution to the growing body of literature loosely described, in a recent book by Ronaldo Munck, as the 'new international labour studies'. Unlike Latin America, where a local intelligentsia has emerged dedicated to the field of labour studies, in Africa (with the partial exception of South Africa) labour research has been dominated by expatriate academics from Europe and North America. Let us hope that Freund's remarkable skill in synthesising the complex body of literature on labour in Africa will contribute to the emergence of an indigenous labour studies tradition.


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**War and Society: The Militarisation of South Africa** by Jacklyn Cock & Laurie Nathan (Eds); David Phillip, Cape Town, 1989, reviewed by Roy Williams.

War and Society (W & S) is a thorough collection of analyses of different aspects of the militarisation of South Africa. Writers work under the shadow of increasingly concealed and unaccountable rule in a country that paradoxically still expends much effort parading as a democracy. Writing about W & S from the 'inside' is a dangerous task in a South Africa which is used to parcel bomb and assassination squad murders. The book is dedicated to David Webster.
W & S as an archive is very successful. It counts the bodies and lays them out for all the world to see. It also counts seats of power and enumerates payoffs. The Security and Military/Industrial complex is accounted for in detail with the Anglo-American liberals firmly in the same column as their erstwhile Afrikaner ideological opponents, united now around the boardroom tables of Armscor.

As genealogy it doesn’t achieve as much, with the exception of Sefie’s and Lacey’s articles. To some extent the horrors of the militarised response to the people’s demands to be ‘enfranchised’ have blocked out an even more nightmarish analysis: that, internally, militarisation was a temporary measure, an aberration, only necessary because the planning of the state’s ‘normal’ repressive apparatus had made some administrative underestimations. The issue of the appropriation and defence of power within South Africa has not always been articulated through militarisation. Externally it certainly was, but the loss of air superiority in 1988 changed that and made destabilisation less attractive to the regime. The mobilisation of reserves (most of them conscripts) so that, ‘in 1985 alone, more than 35,500 troops were used in townships throughout the country’ (p.7), is evidence that militarisation was essential only for a time. Militarisation, or more precisely the suspension of civil rule, was only necessary because Botha was inefficient in managing his repressive-reform project, which Sefie discusses in Chapter 11.

Militarisation as an interpretative symbol of the immoral abuse of internal power by the South African state tends to overreach itself by building its own interpretative realm. Accounting for the jackboots has been done and had to be done; but symbols can become self-evident and as Posel (chapter 19) has pointed out, ‘ideological shorthands such as ‘the crowd/flames/stone-throwers’ can close down the project of understanding’.

The National Security Management System (NSMS) was central to P.W.Botha’s militarisation of government. According to The Guardian report (29 November 1989): ‘De Klerk breaks security grip on government’, the NSMS has been disbanded. Does this mean that the situation has been transformed even before this book has been distributed? I think not. Firstly, The Guardian reports that the State Security Council (SSC), the executive ‘board’ of the NSMS, ‘is not being scrapped’; instead, ‘effective power in security matters is being transferred to a new cabinet committee’. Secondly, believing that the ‘grip’ of security on government has been broken because ‘De Klerk has significantly distanced himself from the country’s security establishment’ is wishful thinking. De Klerk’s rule is different from Botha’s, but his main achievement so far is a more sophisticated public relations strategy. He obviously does realise that effective public relations requires tokens of legitimation. The recent ANC rally in Soweto and timing of the release of the Rivonia prisoners to coincide with the opening of the Commonwealth Conference in Kuala Lumpur, are examples of such tokens.

The question of security remains. In South African politics no ruler can afford to distance himself from the security establishment; change it, manipulate it, reconstitute it, yes. The change of President requires the reformulation of the security establishment, just as the last change of President (Voster to Botha) did. The demise of Voster and van den Bergh’s Bureau of State Security (BOSS) and its replacement by Botha and Malan’s SSC and NSMS enlarged, not diminished, the grip of Security on South Africa. What we are now seeing is security ‘with a human face’ replacing security ‘with a secret face’.
The project of W&S is well formulated in the Introduction. Cock writes that 'an informed understanding of militarisation' has to deal with 'the social relationships organised around war...the acceptance of organised state violence (and) the mobilisation of resources for war at political, economic and ideological levels' (p.2). Two pages later she writes of the difficulties that arise if "militarisation" becomes a kind of "hold-all" into which everything negative and repressive about South African society is thrown', and states that 'the approach followed here is to ground analysis in a particular social process — militarisation — that involves the mobilisation of resources for war'.

But historically and politically 'internal' and 'external' aspects of power (respectively repression and destabilisation) have been kept separate as political and organisational constructs. Botha quite happily collapsed them into one, using military and police for both. Vorster, on the other hand, even though giving the police an external role, understood that keeping them separate was essential for international consumption. If repression is better planned, it can be kept within the ambit of 'civil rule'.

W&S documents the legal, psychological and industrial frameworks of security and catalogues the violence carried out within those frameworks. This is essential to understanding what is happening in South Africa. Militarisation is the funnel through which all action and meaning have increasingly been forced — from toys to economic policy. The analyses of militarisation in W&S throw light on the coy alliances between Afrikaner and English power and capital, showing how they got into bed and what they have been doing there all these years.

The chapters in Part II on the NSMS detail the extent to which the State 'reaches down into the communities, rips out their leaders and puts drains and tarred roads in their place' (to paraphrase Swilling). This is new only because the NSMS coordinates the 'welfare and security modes' of 'reform' (see Selfe).

There are, however, issues which have not been dealt with. Is the security function of the NSMS so different from that of BOSS? and if so, why? Why did P.W.Botha allow militarisation? When he took over from Vorster and dismantled van den Bergh's power base in BOSS, was he merely using another method and/or did he put the military into power because they were people he knew and their language was all he understood?

It is necessary to document the mobilisation of resources for war and W&S succeeds in this task; possibly it does not have space for an expanded interpretative agenda. The question remains, can this not be done within the documentation of the mobilisation of resources for power? The continuity between the manner in which Vorster's BOSS reached into the community and throttled the political life out of the community/leaders and Botha's NSMS, are not picked up in W&S. War is merely politics by another name and intelligence is merely security by another name. The white electorates ally themselves behind power, not war, as De Klerk seems about to 'teach' us.

The Guardian report notes that De Klerk is 'a former education minister who has had few links with the security services', and also notes the very unusual enthusiasm with which Government propaganda organs like the Citizen and SABC radio are pursing the 'monstrous' allegations of assassination squads. This self-righteousness is about as endearing as the confessions of the East European
Communist Party chiefs, but it does reveal the public relations input in both reform mixes.

More to the point, De Klerk is not a 'securocrat'. This brings into focus questions about the Botha/militarisation years which are largely unanswered in W & S: why did Botha push the 'securocrat' option and why did he allow what has been described as a creeping coup by the military? In other words, to what extent was Botha exercising the (limited) options available to him and to his circle of trusted colleagues? What is lacking is an analysis of Botha's strategies as a function of the weakness rather than the strength of his position.

There are a variety of ways in which militarisation has permeated South Africa. W&S describes these as: allocation of resources, destabilisation, internal repression, state decision-making, incorporation of civilians into the SADF, legitimation of violence in resolving conflict, consumerist militarism, militarisation of white schools, indemnifying the SADF from prosecution (Cock in the Introduction). But at all these levels, the analysis is focused primarily on the way in which militarisation permeates the white sectors of society.

This is not a criticism of the writing (although it is to a limited extent a criticism of the editing). Whites need to be told how far the penetration of militarisation has gone. Activists are keenly aware of the work that has to be done in the white community. Whites are uncritical of militarisation largely because they (incredibly) still do not know what is happening around them. The chapters on the response to militarisation, especially by the ECC (End Conscription Campaign) and Church (and the less clear but useful chapter on psychological responses to 'service' in the townships), indicate that militarisation has brought into focus for whites the specifics of repression which had been hidden from them.

Cock's chapter on women and the South African Defence Force (included in this issue in abridged form) deals with some of the crucial issues in militarisation of the whites — the need to mobilise female personnel in a demographic crisis and the contradictions this poses for the contracts of masculinity which in turn is crucial to the legitimation of militarism.

The militarisation of black society is not considered here. It goes without saying that blacks do not need to be told how far militarisation has penetrated their lives or how destructive violence is. But an integrated analysis of violence as it mutually affects the divided society is still needed. Most whites and the international community are not aware, for instance, of the extent to which black communities, and specifically black children and youth, view reactive violence (the armed struggle) as necessary, as legitimate and simply as heroic. The issues of legitimate violence in black communities, both within community structures and within the ANC have certainly undergone important changes (especially since the height of 'necklacing') and are not necessarily resolved. The residues of violence and the skills people develop in violence, will mark people and relations in South Africa for a long time to come.

Lacey's chapter (on the role of the Union Defence Force 1910-1924) is perhaps the most valuable synthetic analysis with which to understand the militarised '80s. She locates the use of the military within the exigencies of class formation and class war. Writing of the 1914 rebellion and the brutal use of martial law by the state, she adds (page 35): 'the military does not only play a repressive role in defence of dominant class interests...it can also play a modernising role in class
formation...[e.g.] where the middle class challenges traditional landed oligarchies and the military is used to dislodge the latter. She writes of 'a deliberate policy designed to transform and modernise capitalist relations of production' (page 36). And in the conclusion to her chapter, Lacy points out that there 'has been an erroneous assumption in the literature that civil-military relations after Union were patterned on the British model where the military is subordinate to the civil authority', and that 'militarisation, suspension of the rule of law, and parliamentary sanction for the arbitrary use of force were not generally regarded as the hallmarks of an aberrant society...these aberrant forms represent the South African way of life' (page 38).

The question arises: is there still an assumption in the literature (namely W&S) of the value and sovereignty of civil society over the military and, even more so, the 'security forces'? The notion that there once was a 'civil' society in South Africa is very problematic; there has been a civil 'sector' (white society), but this has always been at the expense of a subordinate black majority subject to conditions of martial law; there has never been a civil society in 'South Africa', only some of the trappings of one. Besides, if Lacey would allow me to extrapolate her argument, the Afrikaner generals from Botha to van den Bergh and Malan have probably never been concerned with the niceties of the civil/military distinction (it's not in 'their' tradition anyway) except insofar as it was useful for international consumption.

The context in which the militarisation of South Africa took place included the widely expressed concern, from at least 1980, that the demographics of the white population would enforce reform. The tricameral parliament was not a 'liberalising' reform initiative, but a response to changed conditions of production. Militarisation, as used in repression, should not be seen as a planned development (which seems to be the implicit assumption in some of the papers in W&S), but as a response to the 1984-86 uprising, which was in turn a response to the tricameral parliament (amongst other things), which was again, a response to demographic trends and pressures.

Militarisation externally (discussed by Davies, Grest and Weaver) and internally were two quite distinct developments; externally, to put off the 'domino effect' as long as possible and to undermine the support bases of the ANC; and internally, to modernise relations of production. Having failed to prevent the 'dominoes' falling, attention had to be focused on rapidly and forcibly modernising relations of production and building up the long awaited black middle class: class formation and, if necessary, class war with military rule.

The construction of the South African state internationally has become crucial to South Africa's financial credit worthiness ever since Botha's Rubicon speech. This issue is not discussed in W&S. There are benefits to living up to the 'civil' society pretence that the West projects onto South Africa (and vice versa); and this is all that is required for Bush and Thatcher to allow South Africa to re-enter international trade and finance circles. The South African state is perceptive and cynical enough to follow this line of thought. In the 1990s we might see the police replacing the military, but with equal or more repression, in a continuation of the 'modernising' project.

Swilling & Phillips do address the 'modernising' project of the South Africa state/capital alliance, and they offer a detailed and useful analysis of why they think
it won't work: 'what the state has achieved is a defeat averted not a victory won' (page 148). They do not deal with the possible success of a return to 'civil' repression with the lifting of the state of emergency and the release of detainees. Haysom, writing on vigilantes and Boraine, writing about Mamelodi, show how the process of substitution of the military by privatised and/or co-opted 'civil' forces has taken place.

The clearest result of militarisation is the synthesis of the interests of the state and private industry. The state has effectively co-opted the private sector, which was previously at pains to keep the state at arms length (see four chapters by Phillip, Simpson, Cobbet and Archer). The contrary strategy of private enterprise, namely consultation with the ANC (to hedge their bets), is dealt with but not in enough detail.

War and Society is a collection of essays on very different aspects of militarisation. That is the strength of the volume for it allows different readers access to the detailed phenomena of militarism and articulates different points at which people are trying to engage with the immensely repressive regime. But it raises questions about how these perspectives (and perspectives on other important issues) could be synthesised within the analysis of modernisation and power, i.e. as shifts in the means of repression.

The other question is precisely for whom the book has been published. As a book published for people who are familiar with the situation, it succeeds. It is a valuable addition to the debate. But as a publication for the uninformed, militarisation on this 'total strategy' scale is in danger of remaining slightly unbelievable, or the reading is likely to be incomplete because, apart from Posel's chapter, militarisation could be read as a driving force in its own right, requiring little or no opposing 'threat'.

* * *


The subject of this welcome addition to the available bibliographic literature on Africa is a crucial one which receives all too little coverage in the pages of ROAPE. While Africa is the least urbanised continent, it has been experiencing the fastest sustained urbanisation rates over the last two to three decades. The implications of such large streams of rural to urban migration are no less critical for the managers and planners of Africa's cities than for analysts concerned with migrant labour, rural development and social transformation. Indeed, researchers and policy makers alike have tended to regard urban and rural issues as somehow separate. This false dichotomy impedes appreciation of the fundamental systemic nature of national and international political economies.

Urbanisation and urban problems have spawned a voluminous and diverse literature in different languages. The problems of identifying and accessing relevant material have multiplied accordingly, particularly given the difficulties experienced in Africa itself with regard to dissemination of local output and purchase of foreign
material. Another limitation has been the generally low level of interaction between people working and writing in different languages. Probably because of the emergence of English as a world language, authors in Anglophone countries have tended to be more insular than most. A glance at the references cited in books and journal articles will confirm this view.

Stren's bibliography is therefore to be welcomed on at least four counts. Firstly, it brings together material in the two most widely used languages for African research, English and French, far more effectively than any comparable reference work. Secondly, it provides substantial annotations in both English and French, enabling the reader to ascertain the relevance of particular entries immediately. Thirdly, it is up to date, dealing exclusively with the period since 1979, which was the cut-off date for Tony O'Connor's major bibliography on tropical African urbanisation. Finally, it commences with a substantial and lucid introductory essay outlining the book's scope and identifiable trends in the literature itself. Thematic and author indexes enhance ease of use.

The actual bibliography is divided into five sections, covering general works, west, east, central and southern Africa, and novels respectively. Despite the book's title, North Africa is thus excluded. Even within sub-Saharan Africa, however, coverage is not uniform and, particularly with respect to central and southern Africa, far from complete. To some extent this is inevitable and, as Stren acknowledges in the introductory essay, coverage is most extensive for the cities and countries familiar to him and his colleagues in Montreal. Kenya, Tanzania, Sudan, Zaire, Zambia, Nigeria, Ivory Coast and Senegal are particularly well represented.

Stren points out several interesting and divergent trends within and between the anglophone and francophone literatures. In terms of the informal or petty commodity sector, a major focus of French research, attention was devoted mainly to land tenure, housing and employment. While these were also well covered in English, a broader range of issues was pursued, often with greater direct policy relevance. The role of women, a subject well nigh ignored in French, also proved important.

There was also significant geographical inequality of research effort. Dakar's pre-eminence in the French literature of the 1970s was replaced by a greater recent concentration on Abidjan and Kinshasa, which experienced very rapid growth and development, thus bringing many problems into sharper focus. The English literature covers a far wider range of cities, but squatting and related issues are particularly well studied in Nairobi and Lusaka.

Many of the trends uncovered by researchers across the continent suggest that continued rapid urban growth and economic stagnation are leading to 'ruralisation' of the cities. In other words, certain rural qualities are being imparted to the cities, as evidenced, for example, by expanding urban agriculture, weakening effectiveness of land use controls and the consequent increase in multifunctional use of urban space, deteriorating physical standards, growth of spontaneous settlements and the 'informal' sector, and the maintenance through all this of rural economic and cultural links. Many of these, while arguably inevitable and in some respects also desirable, are only now gradually beginning to impinge on the attitudes and policies of politicians and urban managers. Much is changing, and this will have major implications, not only for urban dwellers and administrators, but also for the distinctiveness of African cities.
Notwithstanding the points outlined above with respect to uneven coverage, this is a most useful bibliography which should find a place on the bookshelves of all libraries and researchers concerned with Africa in particular and third world urbanisation in general. It is well produced, published in paperback format, and is offered at a 30% discount for purchasers in developing countries.
Books Received


2. **WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA**: Comparative Perspectives edited by Jane Parpart, Dalhousie African Studies Series 7.


5. **TO KILL A GENERATION: THE RED TERROR IN ETHIOPIA** by Babile Tola, Free Ethiopia Press, Washington, D.C.

6. **INDUSTRIAL ADJUSTMENT IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA** edited by Gerald M.Meier and William Steel, OUP, £22.50.

7. **FARM IMPLEMENTS FOR SMALL SCALE-FARMERS IN TANZANIA** by Bjorn Mothander, Finn Kjaerby & Kjell Havnevik, Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, Uppsala. SEK 120.

8. **THE STATE AND RURAL TRANSFORMATION IN NORTHERN SOMALIA 1884-1986** by Abdi Ismail Samatar, University of Wisconsin Press, $17.50.


10. **NATIONAL AND CLASS CONFLICT IN THE HORN OF AFRICA**, by John Markakis, CUP, £30.00 hb.


12. **GROWING OUT OF DEBT** by Adrian Hewitt and Bowen Wells, ODI London, £4.95.


22. **FAMINE THAT KILLS**; Darfur, Sudan, 1984-1985 by Alexander De Waal,
BOOKS 217

Clarendon Press.


25. **BITTER MONEY**: Cultural Economy and Some African Meanings of Forbidden Commodities by Parker Shipton, American Ethnological Society Monograph Series No.1.

26. **BANKING ON THE GRASS ROOTS**: Cooperatives in Global Development by Bruce Thordarson, published by The North-South Institute, Canada.


32. **THE MARXIAN LEGACY** by Dick Howard, published by Macmillan.

33. **EUROCENTRISM** by Samir Amin, published by Zed Press.


35. **TELL THEM OF NAMIBIA**: Poems from the National Liberation Struggle compiled and introduced by Simon Zhu Mbako and published by Karia Press.

36. **POLICY CHOICE AND DEVELOPMENT PERFORMANCE IN BOTSWANA** by Charles Harvey and Stephen Lewis, published by Macmillan.

37. **TECHNOLOGY, GENDER AND POWER IN AFRICA** by Patricia Stamp published by the International Development Research Centre, Ottawa.


42. **WHITE PLAUGE, BLACK LABOUR**: TB and the Political Economy of Health and Disease in South Africa by Randall Packard, published by University of California Press.


44. **STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT IN AFRICA** edited by Bonnie Campbell and John Loxley, published by Macmillan.
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