Number 24

May-August 1982

Editorial Working Group
Chris Allen
Carol Barker
Carolyn Baylies
Lionel Cliffe
Robin Cohen
Erica Flegg
Shubi Ishemo
Peter Lawrence
Jitendra Mohan (Book Reviews)
Barry Munslow
Penelope Roberts
Francis Snyder
Morris Szeftel
Gavin Williams

Editorial Staff
Doris Burgess
Judith Mohan

Overseas Editors
Cairo: Shahida El Baz
Copenhagen: Roger Leys
Canberra (Aust): Dianne Bolton
Kampala: Mahmood Mamdani
Khartoum: Ibrahim Kursany
Oslo: Tore Linné Eriksen
Stockholm: Bhagavan
Toronto: Jonathan Barker, John Saul
Washington: Meredeth Turshen
Zaria: Bjorn Beckman

Contributing Editors
Jean Copans
Basil Davidson
Mehdi Hussein
Duncan Innes
Charles Kallu-Kalumiya
Mustafa Khogali
Colin Leys
Robert Van Lierop
Archie Mafeje
Prexy Nesbitt
Claude Meillassoux
Ken Post

Subscriptions (3 issues)
UK & Africa
Individual £6 £11
Institution £14 £25
Elsewhere
Individual £7/$15 £12.50/$24
Institution £16/$35 £25/$60
Students £4.50 (sterling only)
Airmail extra (per 3 issues)
Europe £3.00
Elsewhere £5.00

Giro no. 64 960 4008
Copyright © Review of African Political Economy, December 1982
ISSN: 0305 6244

Contents

Editorial 1

Political Graft and the Spoils System in Zambia
Morris Szeftel 4

Class Struggles in Mali
Pierre Francois 22

The Algerian Bureaucracy
Hugh Roberts 39

French Militarism in Africa
Robin Luckham 55

Briefings 85
Fishing Co-ops on Lake Niassa;
The Workers Struggle in South Africa; Where does FOSATU stand?; Mozambique’s Agricultural Policy; Namibia and Lesotho’s Massacre’s

Current Africana 123

This publication is indexed in the Alternative Press Index, Box 7279, Baltimore, MD 21218, USA.

Subscription to
Editorial

The first three articles in this issue bear on francophone Africa and more generally on the role of the French in Africa. Their presence redresses a little our inadequate coverage of this part of Africa.

Robin Luckham's survey of the French military in Africa is the most general. It is a thoroughly documented review of the French armed forces' intervention, both dramatically in moments of crisis, as well as unobtrusively as a permanent presence. It thus serves as a stark reminder that 'neo-colonialism' — in the more literal sense of the former metropolitan power's continued, indirect forms of control — is still close to the realities of much of former French Africa, in contrast to the former British colonies where metropolitan interests have been superceded by transnational interests. Luckham also insightfully explores different 'explanations' of the French military presence. The limitations of most single factor explanations are clearly revealed — though it is worth considering another that does not figure on his list. Jean Paul Sartre, the distinguished philosopher, argued just before he died that France's role within an emerging European super-power was to act as 'gendarme' not of the US or NATO, but of Germany!

The first of two articles on former French territories, and the one that covers most ground, is François' survey of crisis and class conflict in Mali. But this piece brings out another issue that provides a subliminal connection that runs through much of this Number — the political prospects for the left. François begins with an account of recent student confrontations with the regime, but then moves back to explore a broad range of structural contradictions and economic calamities. Not content, as are many presenting 'political economies', just to spell out the entrenched position of capitalist interests, foreign or local, and the operations of a neo-colonial state, François is particularly concerned to use this analysis as a basis for assessing possibilities for class alliances and for popular forces to pose some alternative. Whether one is as hopeful as he about the coming together of workers and peasants and their interaction with radicalised student protest, it is undoubtedly of value that analysts raise the issue of 'what is to be done?'

Roberts' discussion of the Algerian bureaucracy concentrates on that issue, but also explores possible ways forward. He discusses the competing
perspectives of transforming the bureaucracy to a more ‘rational’ vehicle for capitalist development as opposed to a different metamorphosis in the process of a shift of development policy in a ‘socialist’ direction and this does help to define any terrain for left struggle within state institutions. There are those who might conclude that the particular configuration of forces in Algeria makes the room for manoeuvre of the left within existing structures far more constrained; and some who would certainly assert from \textit{a priori} grounds that such openings for a socialist transition are automatically precluded by the existing class configurations and political structures of the Third World. But, again, the debate on such issues, rather than solely on how the bureaucracy works (or doesn’t) to the advantage of bureaucrats and/or capital, is to be welcomed.

In the course of his treatment of the Algerian state, Roberts touches on an issue also noted briefly by François on Mali — the regularity with which those with access to the state use its resources for private gain and the importance of this process for the growth of an indigenous bourgeoisie. Roberts links this parasitic quality of some among the Algerian bourgeoisie to a system of clientelism which continues in part to follow clan lines. In a very different setting — Zambia — Morris Szeftel also deals with clientelism, treating it as integral to a system of factional politics. While others have made passing reference to the subject, his contribution delves directly into the phenomenon of graft as part of a more general ‘pursuit of spoils’ within the independent state and assesses its importance, as a mechanism of surplus transfer, to the process of class formation and to an objective class conflict.

The issues of political struggle and the prospects for any state move toward socialism, raised with respect to Algeria, are also reflected in our Briefings on Mozambique. Following Meyns’s interpretation (in No.22) of how liberation ideology becomes translated into development strategy, we make further amends for our relative silence on that country by including contributions reviewing the concrete application of ‘socialist’ ideology. These briefings on Mozambique, and most notably that of Sketchley, provide a graphic account of what the application of socialist ideology means on the ground.

In respect of the very different context of South Africa, the possibilities for positive political action are treated in a speech by the General Secretary of the Federation of South African Trade Unions (FOSATU), also in Briefings. We have reproduced this speech with clear regard to its significance in the current crucial debate on the role of workers’ organisations in the opposition to the South Africa state. However, while sympathetic to calls for a workers’ political movement, we feel it important to ask how wide is the class in the South African context. Are migrant workers to be included? The reserve army of labour in the bantustans? The women in the bantustans? The peasantry?

The broad concern with prospects for and obstacles in the way of progressive political struggle running through a number of items in this issue was brought out earlier this year in a two-day conference hosted by the \textit{Review} in Leeds on the theme of the ‘Transition to Socialism in Africa’. By way of keeping alive the discussion initiated there and encouraging further
contributions, our next issue will contain some materials from the conference and some assessments of it.

Carolyn Baylies, Lionel Cliffe

WAMBA IS FREE

News has recently been received of the release from city-arrest in Kinshasa of the well-known Zairean progressive historian, Ernest Wamba-dia-Wamba, and his return to Dar es Salaam where he is a History lecturer at the University. Wamba was arrested by Zairean authorities in December 1981 on the occasion of a short trip home to visit his family; no charges were ever brought against him. For 34 days he was held in detention in one of Kinshasa's worst jails, and for the next 9 months he was kept under city arrest in Kinshasa and not allowed to leave the country. There was an international outcry over his detention and the Zairean authorities were finally obliged to release him on October 6, 1982. He returned to Dar es Salaam on November 7.
Political Graft and the Spoils System in Zambia — the State as a Resource in Itself

Morris Szeftel

This article traces a number of cases of graft in Zambia to show the importance of this practice within the political system. Graft is treated as one element of a spoils system through which clientelism operates and through which, more generally, the state is used as a resource for private ends. Graft and patronage are shown to have negative consequences for the state through undermining efficiency and legitimacy and displacing policy ends. But perhaps most importantly, it is argued that graft ultimately involves a transfer of wealth between classes and more specifically is an important factor in the growth of an indigenous owning class.

This paper is concerned with graft in Zambian politics, its place in the political process and its contribution to class formation. No attempt is made, therefore, to treat it as a discrete phenomenon, in isolation from a wider pattern of social behaviour whereby state resources are diverted from public to private ends. Recent debates in the pages of the Review have focused, in different ways, on the importance of the state in fostering elements of an indigenous capitalist class: the contributions of Kaplinsky and Leys on Kenya in No.17 and Beckman in Nos.19 and 22, for instance, have referred to the use of state resources for private interests. What is not clear in these accounts is just how this is done and what its consequences are for the political order. More interestingly, Depelchin, also in No.22, starting from Leys' notion that the state is used by an emerging capitalist class in a process of 'primitive accumulation', argues that Zaire cannot simply be dismissed as a corrupt political system but must be seen as fostering a developing indigenous capitalism. But his analysis focuses largely on various institutional arrangements designed to benefit indigenous capital rather than on how individuals use the state apparatus for their own benefit. And he does not discuss the possibility that corruption in Zaire is a mechanism through which the emergence of some elements of this capitalist class is achieved.

Clearly, graft occupies varying levels of significance in different African cases. In Zambia it appears to be fairly common without being endemic, and the frequency of exposure and punishment indicates that it remains a risky undertaking. But still it has important implications for the way in which politics is acted out and for the process of class formation. It constitutes one way in which individuals appropriate the spoils of office or, more generally, of access to the state and thus provides a valuable point of
entry into the way in which the political process permits private accumulation.

I have used the term 'graft', rather than the more widely understood 'corruption', in order to avoid a construct at once bedevilled by conflicting definitions. More importantly, I thus avoid a term having a narrow and more or less precise legal meaning in particular countries (no judgment as to the legality of actions discussed is made here). In graft I include some broader phenomena — I mean any behaviour which deviates from the norms, rules and duties governing the exercise of a public office or role for purposes of private gain or influence. It may do this by ignoring prohibitions against certain actions, or by fulfilling obligations to act, or by exercising legitimate discretions to act, as long as it does so for private advantage or private motives. Such a definition would include, beyond formal corruption, such practices as theft of public resources, fraud, use of office as a business, nepotism, extortion, discrimination and even some cases of abuse of power where these involved personal or private enrichment in contravention to obligations surrounding the exercise of that power.

Clearly such a perspective indicates that graft involves practices which transfer public resources to private pockets by means of procedures which are not prescribed and which may even be specifically proscribed. But quite obviously, graft is not the only way in which state resources are so appropriated. Zambian politics are characterised by a clientelist form in which patronage constitutes an important mechanism through which political supporters often obtain access to state resources in return for helping patrons obtain access to public office itself. An understanding of the nature of graft should illustrate much about all the ways in which state resources are accumulated as political spoils. And, to the extent that clientelism involves the organisation of political factions, we would expect to find a relationship between the incidence of graft and the process of factional competition. What will seem to some groups legitimate payoffs for political supporters, will appear as corrupt practices to critics and opponents.

Even so, there is clearly a difference between using clientelist links to obtain state contracts or public office, on the one hand, and stealing government funds or taking bribes, on the other. Most people recognise some kind of hierarchy of repugnance when considering misuse of public resources. The distinction made by one politician of New York's infamous Tammany Hall between 'honest graft' and 'dishonest graft' contains an element of truth about how people view the use of public office for personal advantage. In this context, it is important to retain some analytic distinction between graft and patronage despite their clear relationship and the blurring of distinctions in practice. It might perhaps be useful to consider patronage to involve the dispensing of state resources to third parties in return for political support of some kind, while graft would involve the use of state resources for personal advantage by officials.

The State as a Material Resource
The importance and pervasiveness of the spoils system in Zambia reflects
the centrality of the state and the resources it commands in an under-developed economy. Indeed, the centrality is made more stark by the particularly uneven and distorted form which capital accumulation took in Zambia: an oppressive colonial state apparatus organised on behalf of vast copper mining multinationals, devastated labour reserves, settler racism excluding Africans not only from the petit bourgeoisie but from most skilled and semi-skilled labouring categories, and the concentration of commercial agriculture in settler hands. Thus the state became the focus of African aspirations, both for what it could do in the way of development policies to redress the deprivation of the population as a whole and (more significantly for our purposes here) as a resource in itself, an avenue of upward mobility and a source of wealth for entry into the private sector. Given the obstacles imposed by multinational and settler capital on entry into the market, members of an aspirant indigenous bourgeoisie were prone to look to the state for opportunities for consumption and for the initial capital stake for entry into the private sector.

From Independence in 1964, the Zambian government sought to respond to the many demands for resources from its supporters. After initial success in boosting urban social welfare, health, education, wages and infra-structural investment, by 1967 the system began to run into the inevitable problems of meeting investment needs. Where attempts were made to fund production by the mass of the population, such as through co-operatives, loans tended to benefit the better-off and not the average peasant producers. More success was achieved in expanding state employment opportunities. Thus, from 1963 to 1968 the number of Zambians in central government employment rose from 1,357 to 7,509 through Zambianisation of existing positions and the expansion of the civil service. The economic reforms after 1968 greatly increased state intervention in the economy and created a large parastatal sector, in the process opening up industrial jobs to political access.

The importance and value of public sector employment can hardly be overestimated. Between December 1975 and December 1977, a period of acute crisis for the economy, total employment of Zambians in the private sector fell from 120,320 to 98,730. In contrast, it increased from 124,760 to 126,260 in the government sector and from 116,150 to 128,350 in the parastatals. And average earnings were 60 per cent higher in the parastatal sector than in the private sector in 1977. At the top end of public employment, the rewards were indeed high, as the Mwanakatwe Report on public sector salaries observed in 1975:

A top (parastatal) executive — in addition to receiving subsidised housing and furniture, an entertainment allowance, a free car with petrol provided, water, telephone and electricity bills paid, servants' wages, security guards provided day and night and the benefit of medical aid contributions — has generous leave and pension arrangements and may receive a bonus, can be individually supported by his employers to a value greater than that of the annual basic salary he earns. . . . it is apparent that there are parastatal bodies which have begun to extend generosity to the point of profligacy and are, moreover, using the taxpayer's money for the purpose.

In 1975, too, the President criticised a number of parastatals and statutory boards, noting that the Dairy Produce Board had increased physical sales by 10 per cent in three years but that staff travelling expenses had increased
by 159 per cent and wages and salaries by 54 per cent. The Mwanakatwe Report also noted that, while civil service rewards did not match those of the parastatals, they were nevertheless generous. The civil service had increased by 265 per cent from 1963 to 1974 and its emoluments by 328 per cent in the same period.

All this would indicate that the state constituted an important resource as an employer and an attractive one for those with access to its upper echelon positions. In addition to salaries, subsidised housing, medical aid contributions and loans for the purchase of cars and refrigerators were available. The reports of the Auditor-General indicated that checks on repayment were inadequate throughout the sixties and seventies. Such reports indicate also that many officials were able to make use of state resources to improve their lifestyle. (Foreign Affairs was particularly noticeable for lavish redecoration of ambassadorial homes and for extravagant loans and travelling arrangements). Access to the state was thus a crucial element in increasing consumption.

Quite apart from such short-term additions to consumption, the state was essential as a source of capital for Zambians seeking entry into business and farming. A variety of loan organisations were created and loans were sometimes discovered to have been improperly dispensed. But even where this was not the case, political access appeared to have been extremely important. Political office was a crucially important resource for the acquisition of property. Sometimes this was the avenue to state resources; at other times it could be translated into private sector loans or positions with foreign capital. As one Cabinet Minister remarked in 1974:

Without UNIP the various properties which we now think we want to protect, to hoard, could not have been there at all. Without the Party the bank manager could not see you to negotiate an overdraft for anything.

The relationship between political position and private accumulation thus has followed the scheme proposed by Cohen on his essay on class in Africa:

(In post colonial) societies wealth or status do not customarily precede power; rather power and status are isochronous, while wealth more often than not increases with power. The politicisation of class relations is dependent both on the virtual absence of a proprietorial relationship and on a low resource base. (Socialist Register, 1972).

And the insecurities of office ensure that there is pressure on those with access to the state to maximise the resources they appropriate from it. Few state salaries are sufficient to accumulate an investment stake, especially in circumstances where there are great pressures to consume and dispense patronage, and most official positions do not even provide a particularly luxurious level of consumption. Even subsidised housing, while sumptuous relative to that of the mass of society, is generally small for the size of Zambian families. The temptation to 'cut corners' and maximise the spoils of office while they are available is therefore clear. Graft occurs as a natural extension of the system, an unsurprising though neither inevitable or universal progression of the value placed on access to the state apparatus.

In the present conjuncture in Zambia, then, graft is a symptom of the peculiar conditions surrounding the process of class formation and a mechanism whereby some individuals appropriate state resources either to increase their consumption or, more fundamentally, to acquire property
and change their class position. It is one strategy imposed on elements of an emerging indigenous capitalist class in the context of uneven development, as a result of which class formation is intimately dependent on access to the state apparatus or on the influence it brings. I would go further and suggest that graft is also an expression of class conflict in the peculiar conditions attending capitalist development in a post-colonial state. In the first place, it permits an emerging class to increase the rate at which it can appropriate elements of the social surplus — again through the state apparatus rather than through production — at the expense of other classes, especially workers and peasants. Second, more unusually, it is also a device through which certain fractions of capital which have lost control of the state, can defend themselves against attempts by indigenous petit bourgeois elements to use the state to supplant them. Graft can be used to offset state regulations designed to curb settler capital and even multinationals. Numerous instances of misuse of public office could be cited but my emphasis here will be on cases which have been fully described in official reports, the courts and the press. There are, of course, problems with such a strategy. The press tends to be more responsive to considerations of power than of truth; commissions and court evidence tend to be structured in terms of the political considerations which initiated them. In addition, to have received such public attention, the cases in question need to have represented particularly pernicious examples of the problem, incapable of being contained within administrative procedures. They are, therefore, by definition exceptional rather than typical of the process. Indeed, since graft does not lend itself to quantification, one always risks finding the atypical. Nevertheless, there are also some important advantages to choosing to use cases on public record. In the first place, the data is less subject to dispute. Second, their very exceptional character indicates their importance for the political process and the problems attending the state's efforts at political control. In this respect, they embody important problems for legitimation of the system. Third, in the cases considered below, it was impossible for the state to manage or control information about the events described because the revelations were part of a struggle between contending factions. These factions had an interest in exposing the perfidy perceived in their opponents and used every available avenue to do so. Finally, while the instances are exceptional, the features of the process which they demonstrate do not seem in any great degree to differ from that perceived in numerous other, undocumented instances which were discovered.

The 1968 Lusaka City Council Inquiry
In 1968 a commission of inquiry headed by the Chief Justice of Zambia presented a report of its investigations into the conduct of the affairs of the Lusaka City Council. This document constitutes the only systematic consideration of the conduct of public office since Independent in 1964 and is therefore worth considering at some length. Because it deals with a transitional period in the Council's history when the senior officers were still white expatriates and because expatriate civil service officers provided expert research and reports for the commission, the Report provides an assessment of the conduct of local government affairs in terms of the inherited norms and values of the colonial administration and in contrast to
the pressures on many politicians to make political pay-offs to supporters and ensure individual advancement through the state. Thus the Report is itself an indicator of the degree of divergence between officially sanctioned rules of conduct and the practilities of the spoils system.

The Commission found little evidence of actual illegality and some evidence that it had been resisted by members of the Council. Nevertheless, the Report comprises a chronicle of official impropriety made all the more impressive by the fact that the investigators did not attempt an exhaustive account of such behaviour. Two major categories of such impropriety can be identified, indicating both a wide range of forms and their inter-relationship with patronage practices.

The first category comprises a number of activities through which individuals used public office or access to officials to advance personal wealth or position. One such instance was found in irregularities surrounding the allocation of Council housing and the collection of rents. The rapid growth of Lusaka's population after 1964 made housing extremely scarce and expensive and placed great pressure on inadequate Council resources. The Commission accepted that many of the problems surrounding housing were the result of inefficiency and lack of capacity, but it also was clear that other irregularities arose from the use of influence: an unusual number of houses went to prominent people for reasons which could not be explained to the Commission.

A much greater degree of irregularity was found in the allocation of trading stands and food-stall sites. Fifteen per cent of such properties allocated over the 1965-7 period went to Councillors (in one case to the wife of a Councillor) and another plot went to a person who later became a Councillor. Given that there were a total of 592 applications for 45 allocations, this represented an extremely high success rate by Councillors. It transpired that the procedure adopted was for a Councillor in committee to propose the name of a suitable applicant on the list and for this proposal then to be seconded; there were no records of debate or of counter-proposals. Despite the conduct of the inquiry, the practice seems to have continued throughout the investigations. In February 1968, for instance, the Council's Estates Committee considered 392 applications for 12 trading stands. In every case there were candidates better qualified in terms of experience, skill and financial standing than those who finally obtained the plots. Questioned about this, a Councillor denied that applicants were chosen because they were known to members of the committee, but he later changed his answer to say that:

Sometimes Councillors would personally know some of the people who were doing very well... and therefore might be given more to do.

This idiosyncratic behaviour appears, however, to have reached its zenith with the reservation of 103 residential plots for possible purchase by the Mayor in 1967 before any of them had been advertised for sale. For some ten weeks, prospective buyers were put off or refused these plots. Thereafter, following public queries the properties were released for public purchase but later ten of them (including two already allocated to the Bank of Zambia) were again reserved for the Mayor for a further 30 days. The Commission considered that the Mayor had 'brought undue pressure to
bear upon members of Council staff'. It was also held that the Mayor had obtained advantage from the Council with respect to two other properties: in one case he had obtained a waiver of policy in order to obtain permission to sell liquor on land on which he had built a bar; and in another he was able to transfer his interest in one site to an interest in another (without the second being advertised) as a result of a special resolution by an appropriate committee. The property acquisition was, in any case, carried out improperly.

Another category of practices involves the use of public resources and positions to advance members of the ruling political party, UNIP, and even to penalise members of the opposition ANC. There were, for instance, several cases where membership of UNIP seems to have influenced appointments to Council posts. During the period from 1964 to the inquiry, there had been 454 new officers entering Council service in an establishment of 685, and there were 234 promotions. Opportunities and temptations in this area must therefore have been great and the Report describes instances in which qualified candidates were ignored in favour of others with privileged access. The Personnel Officer had been appointed over five others with equal qualifications and the Report implies that his distinguished role in nationalist politics probably tipped the job his way. Others seemed rather more fortunate to have obtained their jobs. A Chief Administrative Officer, for instance, was appointed although five others had superior qualifications for the position; he had been a UNIP Regional Secretary. A Marketing Officer was appointed after the Personnel Officer had received a letter from UNIP National Headquarters introducing him as 'our comrade for the post as arranged yesterday'. The Personnel Officer had then entered this candidate's name on the list of applicants previously interviewed and had written against his name 'appointed by the Chairman for urgency purposes'.

The most ludicrous political appointment was that of a man as Assistant Swimming Pool Attendant although the City Engineer considered him to be the least qualified of the four interviewed. The successful candidate could not express himself well, found the technicalities of operating the filtration plant difficult to grasp and could not swim, the last being the primary qualification for the job. The Assistant Personnel Officer, a former full-time party official, strongly recommended him, arguing that the candidate's political experience made him suitable for managing multi-racial crowds. In the event, the man had to be relieved of the job when it was discovered that he attended work irregularly, was uninterested in the job and refused to learn to swim.

Council powers appear also to have been abused in order to attack members of the opposition ANC. In one case an application for permission to extend business premises owned by an ANC member was delayed for some 16 months because the applicant had been denounced by local UNIP officials and because one Councillor had urged that the applicant be evicted from the property (on what grounds, if any, is not clear). 'We entertain no doubt that the improper deferment of Mr M's application was due to political considerations', says the Report. In another case a decision to allocate a plot to a former Councillor who was an ANC member was reversed and his
application to erect business premises was refused. The chairman of the Town Planning Committee noted that the applicant was 'not popular in the district'. And in the allocation and control of Lusaka's markets, the Report held that ANC marketers had been discriminated against — presumably enhancing the patronage UNIP could dispense.

Abuse of Office
In 1977 President Kaunda dismissed the Minister responsible for Lands for what he called activities 'tantamount to abuse of office'. A Land Act had been passed in August 1975 with the intention of curbing land speculation and, by regulating the property market, providing an opportunity for Zambians to acquire valuable land previously monopolised by expatriates and the most wealthy Zambians. To these ends, the Act required government approval for transfers of state land (as opposed to land held under customary, communal tenure) and gave the Minister wide discretionary powers to approve both individual transfers and the price at which such transfers occurred. This implicitly gave officials the power to override even agreements between the contracting parties. And, not surprisingly, there soon followed allegations that attempts were being made to circumvent the intention of the Act. One MP, for instance, alleged that political leaders and top officials were acquiring many of these properties for themselves. There were also rumours of improper influence at the Ministry, prompting the Minister to defend the leasing of state land to a Greek national by saying:

He did not bribe me and he did not corrupt me in any way because I am not corrupt... Allocation of this land was done as it should be and there is nothing scandalous about it.

The Minister's comment also included criticism of certain 'lawyers of fortune' who bent the law for their own benefit, which, in turn, brought a reaction from the Law Association. The Minister responded by criticising what he called 'a capitalist clique' seeking to restore freehold tenure and speculative prices. And the controversy escalated further when the Law Association's chairman, a prominent Zambian lawyer, questioned the Minister's exercise of his discretion. He alleged that the Minister had personally intervened in one transaction to lower the agreed price and to direct the vendor's lawyers to sell to a specified individual and to no other. He also claimed that in one case where consent had actually been given, an official intervened to halve the price agreed. In other cases, he stated, different prices had been assigned to identical housing units, a builder had been ordered to sell a house below cost, and in one housing area consent to alienate had been given for some new houses and refused for others. He concluded by claiming that 'this appears to be a prima facie case of abuse of power'. In the event the Minister was suspended pending an investigation; subsequently, as noted, he was dismissed.

Public Office as a Private Business
Thus far I have referred to cases where public office can be used to obtain preferential access to state resources and services. There are also cases in which officials can appropriate funds and property by turning their offices into businesses. The use of government vehicles as private taxis or for
haulage, the sale of driving licences to members of the public or of state land to residents seeking plots for houses (as undertaken by some party officials in one Copperbelt town) are all possible. Also possible is the acquisition of public resources at low prices or through indefinite loans. The reports of the Auditor-General are particularly instructive about such practices: in June 1970, for instance, police were instructed to auction five vehicles stolen and later recovered in neighbouring Zaire. The auction took place at the Zambian consulate in Lubumbashi without the services of an auctioneer. Consulate staff 'outbids others at the auction and subsequently disposed of the vehicles to themselves and acquaintances at nominal prices, ranging from approximately K28 to K50' (1 Kwacha = £1).

Even in offices where the pickings would appear to be meagre, there have been instances which indicate a high level of ingenuity by some officials. Cases have occurred where clerical officers have appropriated large sums from government by inflating the sum held in an account on statement copies and drawing the fictitious excess against the name of the beneficiary of the file. In 1972, for example, an accounts clerk obtained K35,123 in this way over a six-month period; investigations later revealed that he had appropriated K4,916 at his previous posting in the same way. The paying of wages to fictitious employees was another method of collecting public funds. The provincial office of one ministry had K78,697 in wages, overtime and allowances paid to non-existent officials in 1973.

Perhaps the most famous case in which public office was seemingly used as a private business involved the prosecution of two Permanent Secretaries for the alleged sale of citizenship to expatriate residents. Economic reforms introduced by government between 1968 and 1971 had excluded non-citizens from trading in specified economic sectors and in specified geographic areas. There was therefore a high premium placed on Zambian citizenship by those who stood to lose their livelihoods and, at the same time, pressure by Zambians hoping to take over such businesses demanding that the state prevent the reforms from being frustrated by newly created 'economic citizens'. Certainly citizenship applications took an extremely long time to be processed and many applicants believed that this was deliberate policy designed to facilitate the reforms. The Asian petit bourgeoisie was particularly affected and vulnerable.

During one of the trials, a witness alleged that in three cases of which he knew, citizenship had been granted after applications had been turned down by the Minister. A number of Asian businessmen further testified that they had paid large sums of cash, furniture, electrical equipment and motor vehicles in return for citizenship.

Public office could be, and was, used, therefore to accumulate resources from both public and private sectors. In the vast majority of cases, it seems clear that it has involved the lower levels of the bureaucracy. And, despite government readiness to prosecute, it does not appear to have diminished. The Public Service Commission Report noted that some 198 officials were dismissed from the civil service in 1971 for misappropriation of public funds. In 1976, the Prime Minister, answering a question in the National Assembly, stated that in 1974 fourteen officers has been convicted of offences relating to corrupt practices, 68 for corruption and more than a
thousand for theft by public servant. The increase between the two years might reflect improved methods of detection, as the Prime Minister clearly thought: anyone who escaped apprehension was ‘just lucky’, he said. Such optimism was less evident in 1982, when the acting Chief Justice as head of a new ‘anti-corruption commission’, indicated that it was becoming increasingly difficult to investigate cases of corruption — despite the fact that the commission had been inundated with allegations concerning various parts of the public services.

The African Farming Improvement Fund Scandals of 1970
Under the African Farming Improvement Fund Ordinance of 1958 the Northern Rhodesia Government set up African Farming Improvement Funds in Eastern, Central (CPAFIF) and Southern (SPAFIF) Provinces to promote ‘better conditions for African farmers through improved farming and marketing of agricultural produce and the conservation of natural resources’. Each fund was designed to improve African farming within its respective province and was administered by a Board with powers to use funds and make loans to Africans within that province. It must be stressed that the funds which the Boards used were contributed by peasants and ‘improved farmers’ through levies on maize surpluses sold on the market. Accumulated funds were intended to provide the infrastructure and loan assistance necessary to permit them to expand and, perhaps, become commercial farmers. When the Credit Organisation of Zambia (COZ) was created, the Funds ceased to make loans and were used for infrastructural development as before. This was the situation in 1968.

In that year, the Minister of State for Central Province, Henry Shamabanse, became Minister of State for Southern Province and thus, ex officio, chairman of SPAFIF (having been chairman of CPAFIF before). In November 1968, he informed the Board that he and the Minister of Agriculture, Munu Sipalo, had consulted the Attorney General and been advised that the Board could make loans ‘as and when and to whom it thought merited them’, even though the Ordinance did not permit such a discretion. Subsequent events have been summarised as follows:

Mr Shamabanse initiated what we can describe as an orgy of granting loans. In the first instance loans were granted on Mr Shamabanse’s sole authority without reference to the Board, though the Board was subsequently asked to ratify. This, of course, was completely irregular as it was for the Board to grant loans. By the early part of 1970 loans amounting to K312,533 had been issued of which only the sum of K390 had been repaid . . . The manner in which loans were granted both by Mr Shamabanse and by the Board was extraordinary. The outstanding feature of the procedure was that loans were made without any inquiry as to how far arrangements had been made for the purchase of the properties concerned, without any inquiry as to whether the persons concerned were African farmers, whether they were farming in the province concerned or whether the farms they purchased were in fact in the province concerned. . . nowhere was the money advanced secured . . . Shamabanse and the Board treated the words . . . ‘grant loans to African farmers’ as meaning ‘grant loans to persons who wished to become African farmers’. Most of the loans were made to persons who were members of the Board or who held positions in government or Public Service.

In November 1970 the President suspended a number of senior political figures and civil servants pending investigation by the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) into their association with CPAFIF and SPAFIF. The suspended leaders included two Cabinet Ministers (including Shamabanse), two Ministers of State, a Permanent Secretary, a divisional commander in
the Police, and two provincial agricultural officers. Investigations were also conducted into the actions of Sipalo (out of office after losing his seat in the 1968 elections) and a former UNIP regional secretary, M.M. Kalaluka, who had links with Sipalo in UNIP political organisational work in their province of origin. Another 11 officials were also investigated although they do not appear to have been suspended. These included a Permanent Secretary, five District Governors, three provincial civil servants and two senior central civil servants.

In January 1971, the DPP decided that he could not find grounds for prosecution against any of the above, except for Sipalo, Shamabanse and Kalaluka, who had already appeared in court by then. He noted that all those investigated fell into one of two categories: they had either obtained loans from SPAFIF and CPAFIF which were authorised by the Board, but were not farmers at the time or did not use the money for the purposes stipulated; or they had obtained loans through the chairman or executive officers without the knowledge or consent of the Board. But as there was no evidence of criminal conduct, no charges would be preferred. Accordingly, the President reinstated all those suspended except Shamabanse, ordering them to replay their loans by mid-1971. Shamabanse, Sipalo and Kalaluka were convicted of obtaining money by false pretences but appealed successfully. On other charges, Shamabanse was ultimately convicted and given an eight-month sentence after two appeals. But SPAFIF would appear to have continued to be a resource available to people in high office, a 1979 report indicating that it had outstanding debts of K191,483 and included among these debtors a Cabinet Minister, two former ministers, two MPs, four District Governors and a senior civil servant.

The scandal had profound political consequences. The reinstatement of those investigated produced allegations of political favouritism and even corruption and led to a judicial inquiry under Chief Justice Doyle, which essentially confirmed the conclusions of the DPP. The political crisis exacerbated tensions within UNIP, ultimately leading to a serious schism, the formation of a major new party in 1972 and the declaration of a one-party state by the government. It remains the most interesting and important single instance of the working of the spoils system.

Graft and Factionalism
The cases discussed clearly indicate the close connection between graft and patronage. Most demonstrate the interweaving of activities designed to ensure self-advancement and those seeking to promote friends and political comrades. This is hardly surprising since they are part of the matrix of a clientelist political system. In the context of electoral politics, access to public office requires the mobilisation of support and the need to make pay-offs to supporters in general and to political lieutenants and brokers in particular. In the Zambian case, this mobilisation typically involves the construction of political networks from a local and regional base so that political factions are generally regionally, provincially, linguistically or ethnically defined — although the lines of demarcation fluctuate over time and across issues. Political factionalism thus has a provincial flavour and is referred to by Zambian politicians as being ‘tribal’ or as ‘tribalism’.
It is not surprising, therefore, that the accumulation of spoils should take a factional form and replicate or reproduce factional lines of cleavage. And the evidence would indicate that this in turn has tended to promote and reinforce 'tribalism'. In Zambia the allocation of senior party and government positions has reflected the need to balance the claims of contending factions. The Cabinet, for instance, has been characterised by a (shifting) balance of posts between provinces. When shifts in influence within UNIP have led to adjustments in this balance, tensions have surfaced in the party. And when factional conflict has threatened to alter the balance drastically, the party and government have been plunged into political crises.

The SPAFIF affair particularly illuminates this factional influence in the spoils system. The loan beneficiaries were drawn, essentially, from four provinces — Eastern, Western, Southern and Central. By 1968, these were part of a larger coalition seeking to offset gains made in the UNIP power structure by Northern Province Bemba. Two of the loan recipients, indeed, were among the most important political figures in the country — Dingiswayo Banda had strong support in Eastern Province and in the urban areas and Sipalo had been one of the main leaders of the independence struggle. The loan practices were, apparently, first reported by a Bemba District Governor and, when the President accepted the DPP report and reinstated those suspended, criticism alleging widespread irregularity and discrimination was voiced in the press by two leading Bemba politicians (one a member of the Cabinet). These claims resulted in the creation of the Doyle Commission which essentially upheld the DPP. In 1972 elements of the Bemba faction left UNIP in substantial numbers to form a new party, the UPP. All three members of this group involved in the SPAFIF controversy were prominent in the new organisation. The UPP drew significant support from Northern and Copperbelt Provinces and its challenge was sufficient to provoke the creation of a one-party state in 1972. The SPAFIF scandal thus reflected the growing factional strains within UNIP; but it also exacerbated them and produced grievances which set in train events of profound importance.

Factional competition seems also to have affected the distribution of public office among competing groups. This was certainly the view of one editorial writer, who stated that:

there are these days numerous reports of corruption, nepotism and tribalism in the employment of personnel in many of our government departments and parastatal bodies as well as the private sector. Some of these are false and are made by people who have failed to secure employment because they do not qualify for the jobs they ask for. But it cannot be denied that these vices do exist in the recruitment of staff . . . There are those who do so for political reasons. They employ people of their tribe or whom they expect to support them politically . . . Then there are those who are pressed by friends or indeed people of their tribe to help them get jobs for their relatives or friends. The other class is that of people who want to get rich by accepting bribes (Zambia Daily Mail, 25 November 1972).

Certainly many people in Zambia believed that certain groups were able to use their position to ensure disproportionate access to office for faction members. In 1975 and, again, in 1977, for instance, MPs alleged that Eastern Province was unduly favoured in the distribution of senior civil service posts. The Prime Minister, on the second occasion, sought to make a
virtue of factional conflict in reassuring MPs: 'in a way sometimes I feel that our tribalism is somewhat a safeguard because everybody is watching what the rest of the tribal bosses are doing and, therefore, this restrains . . .'. But if the cases cited indicate that factional rivalries did make accumulation of state spoils hazardous, factional interests continued to be regarded as promoting a systematic extension of influence — through favouritism in appointments and promotion — of their own members, so that imbalances in resource distribution became self-reinforcing.

Claims that various departments and parastatal branches were factional fiefdoms as a result of the manipulation of appointments procedures were occasionally made. This was certainly one of the allegations made by the leadership of the Zambia Railways Amalgamated Workers Union (ZRAWU) against the management of the railways. This led to a Commission of Inquiry into the affairs of Zambia Railways to investigate allegations of tribalism, nepotism, corruption and theft made by the Union. The report indicates that it encountered persistent allegations that 'certain tribes were entrenched in certain departments . . . and were openly boasting about it', that disciplinary procedures were corrupted by tribalism, that appointments were made unfairly and also, by way of counter-claim, that such claims were malicious on the part of 'tribes' seeking to restore dismissed fellows. In substance, the allegations were that a particular individual who was a Tonga had ensured that his department became a Tonga stronghold. The report concluded that:

*Tribalism is practiced on Zambia Railways by means of favouritism . . . in relation to appointments, promotions, the exercise of disciplinary functions, and in showing hostility and harshness to members of other tribes. In this manner tribalism is practised on a very large scale and, in certain instances, without any sense of shame by those concerned.*

Given that access to state resources is at stake, it is not surprising that factional interest often comes to be the standard by which events and decisions are evaluated. Thus, while all condemn and abhor corruption and patronage, they tend to do so largely when practised by opponents. Thus disciplinary action against public officials for misuse of office tends to be approved in principle but resented when applied against members of one's own faction.

Perhaps the clearest illustration of this tendency is conveyed in the report on the railways which describes the opposition of the Tonga group to the Commission of Inquiry itself:

*The Tonga group believes that the Ngoni group, aggrieved by the removal of Mr O, their tribesman, have brought the allegations of tribalism, nepotism, thefts and corruption against Mr A (General Manager) so that they can cause his removal. The Tonga group argues that the persons who have been pressing for the appointment of the Commission are (the) General Secretary of ZRAWU, (the) General Secretary of the Zambia Congress of Trade Unions, the Members of Parliament for Bwacha and Kabwe Central, . . . all of whom (they say) are Ngoni. This view of the matter is held very strongly by Mr A himself, Mr — (the Provincial Political Secretary) and Mr —, a member of the Board. Mr O similarly believes that he was a victim of Tonga tribalism. However, the two MPs and the General Secretary of ZRAWU . . . repudiate this view of the matter.*

The prevailing philosophy often appears to be that an individual career depends on what can be done with a job rather than in a job, and this is likely to have a negative impact on efficiency in administration or planning. Officers may feel that to cross a superior can be costly to one's career and
may therefore assent to improper and erroneous decisions. One senior parastatal official noted in 1975 that many parastatals suffered in this way. Officers tended to assess projects in terms of the preferences they might perceive to be held by their superiors. The ability to say what was wanted rather than what was needed was cultivated to a fine art by some, he claimed, and the result was often that errors observed by those employed to check them were overlooked and implemented in their original state. Many of the instances cited in the reports considered above might seem to imply that such a process was at work, but perhaps one small example best illustrates the point. The Auditor-General's 1970 report draws attention to a vegetable production scheme in Kasama where the crops in the vegetable garden were infested by eel-worm and where it was revealed that the site was chosen against the advice of local field officers. Eleven workers employed in the garden were paid a total of K363 per month while the scheme earned K11 per month. Inefficiency is, of course, an element in the outcome of such schemes, but it seems clear that much inefficiency arises directly from the appointments and decisions made as part of the operation of the spoils system.

The case studies indicate also that the operation of patronage and corruption can redirect official policy in anticipated directions. The SPAFIF and Land Act cases, in particular, show that policy designed to broaden the social base of that public enjoying access to state resources can be hijacked in the interests of private accumulation. In the SPAFIF case this process is revealed most starkly. Funds contributed by, and intended for the benefit of, peasant farmers were appropriated, albeit not illegally, by high level officials for the purchase of private farms on state land.

The Land Act was passed in order to check pervasive land speculation and to give Zambians the opportunity to obtain state land in prime areas after President Kaunda had denounced price inflation in transfers of undeveloped land. The Act sought to check such speculation by suspending the land market and giving the state the power to approve all transfers. In the event, as we have seen, such powers were also used to direct sales to particular individuals and at particular price levels. In other words, the Act, instead of making land available to a broad public, increased the pool of resources available to those with access to public office. Indeed, one MP even claimed that property expropriated from absentee landowners (one of the provisions of the legislation) by the state was being purchased by political leaders and government officials.

The spoils system has tended also to negate the official ideological commitment of the regime (one that might perhaps be characterised as social democratic were it espoused in a European context). The leadership has frequently proclaimed its 'philosophy of Humanism' champions the lot of 'the common man' and makes capitalism an unacceptable motivating force in guiding development. But in the process of spoils accumulation, many individuals espouse these sentiments while practising individual acquisitiveness. A case in point is the criticism of 'capitalist' opponents of the Land Act. Another instance formed a background to the Lusaka City Council inquiry when the Mayor opened his K70,000 bar (after having obtained a Council waiver on liquor licensing rules) in 1968 and proclaimed
it 'a socialist bar' where people could drink without dress restrictions. Thus ideology can be appropriated along with policy in the service of the accumulation process.

That ideology can be reduced to verbiage acting as a smokescreen behind which state resources are redirected from global policies to individualised interests suggests that the spoils system can have negative effects for the political system as a whole as people come to see through the smoke. Quite what these effects are is more difficult to assess. Bourgeois social science (particularly in its American variant) has often sought to show corruption (and presumably other forms of graft) in a positive light. Thus it has been argued that it can act to promote social change and development, that it constitutes a market mechanism to allocate scarce resources more efficiently, that it is an alternative to political violence as a means of making demands on the state, and even that, when concentrated in elite-level hands, it may promote investment rather than consumption. Recently, it has become trendy to observe that since graft is a function of the centrality of the state in contemporary social formations, a smaller state would, by definition, reduce the level of graft. On the basis of such arguments, it might even be concluded that, had the government been less concerned to contain the spoils system and to check graft, Zambia might have experienced higher levels of private investment and might even have modified the impact of the recession from the mid-seventies.

There are at least two sets of problems with such a set of propositions, however. Firstly, it presupposes that private property is a desired end of development. Secondly, it is by no means clear that such private investment would result from such patterns of accumulation in the context of Zambian under-development. Given the barriers to market entry constituted by the monopoly position of settler and, especially, foreign capital, investment tends to be directed as much into circulation and speculation as into productive industry. Further, spoils tend (albeit marginally) to disperse the scarce investible surpluses concentrated into the hands of the state and, through patronage, to distribute them widely in small amounts among a multitude of claimants. Such notions are, then, a charter for foreign capital and the continuation of neo-colonialism, rather than for political legitimacy.

Instead, what seems to have occurred is that spoils exacerbate the disillusion felt by many with the inability of the state to meet the overwhelming demands and hopes directed at it. Particular advantage is often bought, as has been seen, at the expense of inefficiency and the failure of development projects. Graft, in the context of scarce resources, implies that people are able to 'jump the queue'. Thus the fact that some previously excluded elements gain access to the spoils of office simply means that others are excluded from that access. In such circumstances, the consequences for the legitimacy of the state are likely to be negative. Widely held notions that the 'government is corrupt', even where not true, are likely to produce low levels of commitment to the political system. Some of this disillusion with government was expressed succinctly by the chairman of the Zambia Congress of Trade Unions in 1977. Commenting that workers' representatives might need to run for Parliament in 1978 to protect
the working population from ‘political mercenaries’ who had made the administration ‘the despair of every citizen’, he observed:

Politicians are all the same. They promise to build a bridge where there is no river. In fact politics is the conduct of public affairs for private advantage. (Sunday Times of Zambia, 1 January 1978.)

Class Formation and Class Struggle
One of the main expressions of the conduct of public affairs for private advantage has traditionally been the pressure exerted by private business on public officials. In Third World countries, multinational corporations are frequently observed to corrupt (or seek to corrupt) officials who can facilitate contracts, capital exports, market monopolies, docile labour and so on. In Zambia, I encountered some reference to such pressures on public officials, particularly expressed in the form of gifts and entertainment. Some expatriate businessmen also mentioned approaches by public officials which might well conform to Plunkett’s observation about seeing one’s opportunities and taking them. But there was little hard evidence to support such allegations and this is an area on which this paper offers no evidence.

Nevertheless, illustrations of how public resources can be appropriated by private capital working in partnership with public officers can be found in the report on the Railways. In one instance, a police investigation revealed that Railways officials had stopped purchasing supplies from wholesalers and retailers with whom the Railways had accounts, and had redirected all such orders through one commercial company. This company, it was discovered, purchased the supplies from the same firms from whom the Railways had previously bought direct but the new intermediary now inflated the prices enormously (by over 350 per cent in one example cited). An official who queried this change was threatened by the superior responsible for the change. In another case, the practice of buying railway sleepers from Malawi was stopped and purchases were made from a local company instead. This local company, however, purchased the sleepers from Malawi and obtained import licences to do so on the strength of orders placed by Zambia Railways. The sleepers now cost the railways K13 each instead of K7 each as they had when purchased direct. The police discovered that two employees had received motor vehicles from the intermediary company. Such examples were typical of many of the allegations made about corporate relations with government. And it is clear that the state constituted an important resource for many businessmen, whether as a source of contracts and loans or of important economic goods such as citizenship.

But the case studies discussed in this paper indicate a more fundamental relationship between state resources and the capitalist class, one that is part of the most significant structural change in Zambian society since independence — the formation of an indigenous propertied class. It has already been noted that the spoils system provides access to resources, position and wealth only by excluding others from that access; it is a form of ‘queue jumping’ as we have mentioned. Graft is therefore not an egalitarian instrument of social mobility. Those who obtain resources are often able to set up in farming or business (or to use their gains for greater consumption) and so to enter into the bourgeoisie from which Africans
were excluded before independence. As Cohen has observed:

The major activity of the ruling groups is an attempt to use the benefits of political power in an attempt to redress the insecure position they find themselves in. This can be seen in more general terms as an 'embourgeoisement' of the ruling elite. . . . Mutual back-scratching exercises are inaugurated . . . governmental contracts are appropriated or supplied to supporters. . . . Wealth acquired from the holding of political office is used to acquire land, houses or small service industries. . . . The behaviour and activities of the ruling groups in office show their overt indebtedness to the political process as a means of developing class crystallisation and solidarity.

The study of Zambian companies undertaken by Carolyn Baylies and myself would indicate that access to state resources has been a factor in promoting the growth of a Zambian bourgeoisie (a process further promoted by state policy through loans and economic reforms). Access to public office has therefore been valuable as a form of upward mobility, but in many cases it has not been an end in itself so much as a half-way house from which conditions are created for entry into business and the acquisition of private property.

The case studies considered have clearly exemplified this process. The Land Act controversy was most obviously one surrounding the acquisition of immovable property and of some valuable businesses. The Lusaka City Council, less obviously, involved not only the first generation of Zambian politicians and officials in local government, but also a cross-section of Lusaka's bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie. The Mayor was a successful businessman owning a construction company and the bar mentioned. Another councillor was also a prosperous businessman and, indeed, later joined the board of at least one multinational corporation. And other councillors were small traders, including one who was chairman of the UNIP co-operative society which ran four of Lusaka's markets. Access to public office thus either constituted an asset by which entry into the bourgeoisie could be obtained or an attraction by which capital already accumulated might be enlarged. The link between political office, with all its insecurities, and private property which might be obtained by preferential access was most clearly expressed in the SPAFIF case, however. In this instance loans were taken from the funds for the specific purpose of buying farm land for the private use of public officials. Public office, for itself, was not always adequate as a former minister indicated in court when explaining why he had taken a loan:

Round about October (1968) I was aware of the consequences of the general elections so I was looking for property for myself. I was aware that we were going to lose the elections in the Western Province and also that I was going to lose my job (as Minister).

Yet it is not adequate simply to regard the spoils system as one in which advantaged individuals obtain preferred access to public goods and so are able to acquire the capital stake essential for entry into the petit bourgeoisie or the bourgeoisie proper. The resources to which such access is enjoyed represent taxes and levies drawn from the public at large. The appropriation of such resources therefore constitutes a net transfer of wealth from society at large to some privileged sections of it. The state, therefore comes to serve as an apparatus through which parts of the social product can be redistributed to incumbents of office and their supporters. In the SPAFIF case, the class character of this transfer is starkly demonstrated: there was, in that instance, an expropriation of surplus from the peasantry to the
emerging bourgeoisie through the apparatus of the state by means of the spoils system. This relationship was even understood, to some extent, by the Doyle Commission. Noting that it was ‘discreditable’ for people in public office ‘to descend like locusts on a fund to which none of them had contributed and from which morally they should plainly have been excluded’, the Report observed that:

It is plain that all the persons concerned were favoured in getting loans because of their position. The ordinary African peasant farmer for whom loans under the Ordinance were really intended and whose contributions formed the funds was completely disregarded — indeed left in the dark — in favour of a horde of privileged persons in public positions.

It is suggested that this observable link between spoils appropriation and class formation underlines the argument advanced here that graft, as a concept, has limited utility in explaining political practice and individual appropriation of public resources. But it is of great value when understood as part (perhaps a symptom) of a larger process of social change with important implications for political practice and class relations.

Bibliographic Note
This paper is derived from my ‘Corruption and the Spoils System in Zambia’, presented to the conference on corruption, University of Birmingham, 4-6 June 1982. The original will appear in a collection to be edited by Michael Clarke.


Reports and commissions referred to in the text, include: Report of the commission of inquiry into the affairs of the Lusaka City Council, November 1968 (Lusaka 1969); Report of the commission of inquiry into the allegations made by Mr Justin Chimba and Mr John Chisata (Lusaka, May 1971) (The Doyle Commission); Report of the commission of inquiry into the affairs of Zambia Railways (Lusaka, March 1978); Report of the commission of inquiry into the salaries, salary structures and conditions of service of the Zambia public and teaching services, . . . etc., Volume I: The Public Services and the Parastatal Sector, (Lusaka, 1975) (The Mwanakatwe Report). All Republic of Zambia commissions. The Annual Reports of the Auditor-General (Lusaka) have been extensively consulted; instances mentioned here are from the reports of 1976 (First Report) and 1977. President Kaunda's criticisms of the use of public resources and land speculation are in The 'Watershed' Speech, Address to the UNIP National Council, Lusaka, May 1975.

References to the press are specified, point by point, in Szeftel (1978), op. cit. Here they are necessarily more general. See Africa, 69, May 1977 and The Times of Zambia, October 1975, and The Zambia Daily Mail during January, June and August 1976, for details of the controversy over the Land Act. Selling off plots by party officials: TZ 25.2.76 and 5.6.76; ZDM 10.5.76. The sale of citizenship case was described in TZ in November and December 1972 and in ZDM in May, November and December 1972, January through March 1973 and on 9 April 1976. References to prosecutions and dismissals of officials are for TZ and ZDM for March 1973 and February 1976 and April 1982. The SPAFIF case was documented TZ and ZDM from December 1970 through March 1971, in April 1972 and March 1973. Debts in 1979 owed to SPAFIF are recorded in ZDM 9 April 1979.
Class Struggles in Mali

Pierre François

Over the last few years, Mali has undergone a structural and conjunctural crisis. Especially since 1973, the year when the Western media ‘discovered’ the Sahel drought, its economic foundations have been thrown into disarray. Even more recently, a crisis of government has been precipitated as reflected in numerous attempted coups d’états. The convergence of these processes has left Mali in a state of shock out of which serious social contradictions will emerge over the next few years. François attempts to analyse recent events in terms of Mali’s historical past and the principal structural problems within the economy and society emergent during the colonial period and persisting following independence. He goes on to examine some of the forms which resistance and conflict have taken, and explores possible strategies for popular participation.

Class Struggles in Mali: the Case of the Student Movement

It won’t be kids who force us out: at least, they will have gone before us. (General Moussa Traoré, Mali’s military dictator, May 1980).

Students in Mali, as in other countries of black Africa, form a distinct social group. They are part of the privileged urban strata; their education destines them to join the administrative and political elite. But they may also be the only group which can exercise a minimum of free speech and criticism of society. The ambivalence may put them in open conflict with government but prevents them from developing strong links with the mass of the population especially in the rural areas. Student protest is thus a sort of mirror of the state of social and political forces. It reflects the strength or weakness of consensus in society, the relative hegemony of the various social classes and the degree of stability of the state. Several repressive regimes in Africa have been overthrown as a result of urban interest in which students played a major role.

In Mali, students demonstrated en masse against the military regime of Moussa Traoré for the first time in 1977. From the start, their protests concerned both the educational and the political systems. Their initial opposition was to the Palme-Belloncle reforms which has toughened the qualifications for entry into higher education and reformed the primary school syllabus. Secondary school students who were unable to continue their education found themselves with no hope of employment. The
primary school reforms, overtly intended to make the school syllabus more relevant to the rural economy of Mali, were understood as an attempt to create a peasantry subordinate to the neo-colonial economy, trained to grow more cash crops such as cotton, groundnuts and tea.

But this issue soon emerged with the broader political struggles going on at the time. The regime was trying to institutionalise military rule by consolidating its own creation, the single party, the Union Démocratique du Peuple Malien (UDPM). The students demonstrated through the streets shouting ‘Down with Moussa, come back Modibo’. Modibo Keita, however, head of state until the coup d'état of November 1968, was assassinated on 22 March 1977 (officially he died of an oedema of the lung in the military hospital where he had been detained). His funeral was the occasion for further mass demonstrations.

The increasingly unpopular regime then tried to improve its image. In February 1978, the most notorious members of the military government were arrested and charged with corruption. Several officers in the Security Services and other senior cadres, whose reputation as torturers and criminals was widespread, were brought to trial. But when their evidence in the military court implicated a number of other officers, indeed the whole regime, the trial was suspended and their barrister was found dead in mysterious circumstances. This attempt to clean up the public image of President Traoré failed. The next was in December 1978 when the regime organised a National Seminar on Education. The students’ organisation, the Union National des étudiants et élèves du Mali (UNEEM), took advantage of the seminar to put the regime on trial. They declared that education was a democratic right and not a privilege and demanded a democratic educational and political system. Their demands, including an end to political control over recruitment to the civil service and improvements in living standards, were widely supported.

The Seminar marked the beginning of further harsh and public criticism of the regime, with inevitable consequences. In October 1979, proceedings were initiated against members of the previous Modibo government. In November, unrest broke out again within the schools and colleges. The regime closed all educational institutions in Mali. Confrontations in the streets of Bamako left 10 students and two soldiers dead. In several other towns (Ségou, ao, Sévéré, Timbuctou) the army opened fire and more than 350 people were arrested. Two hundred and sixty-seven girls and boys, all members of student committees, were forcibly recruited into the army. Hundreds of others were driven out of the towns and back to the villages. In the face of this repression, the students enjoyed massive support from both urban and rural areas.

In March, a number of teachers who had formed Comités Syndicaux de Bamako (Workers Committees) boycotted examinations in support of student demands and in defence of their own rights. With the collaboration of the leadership of the Union Nationale des Travailleurs Maliens (UNTM), of the the regime’s ‘official’ trades union, several were arrested and imprisoned. Confronted with the strength of this opposition, however, the regime hesitated between a policy of total repression or one of making some concessions. In January 1980, 1.4 thousand million Malian francs (MF)
were provided for student grants but the regime refused to release those who had been imprisoned in November.

Despite repression, the students reorganised themselves after the third congress of UNEEM under the new leadership of Abdul Karim Camara. UNEEM was immediately banned. On 8 March 1980, several thousand students and youths held a mass demonstration during a meeting of the Conference of Sahel States. Death threats against students were broadcast on the radio. Arrests, imprisonments, forced recruitment into the army, the taking of hostages, rapes, torture and murder increased. Eighteen students died. Amnesty International denounced the repression. Abdul Karim Camara gave himself up to the police in exchange for the release of his mother who was being held a hostage; he was killed under torture on 17 March 1980.

On 22 March the regime organised a counter demonstration. Only 200 people turned up, closely guarded by the army, despite the fact that the day had been declared an official holiday. On 15 April, several hundred young people, students and women seized the UDPM offices in Bamako. More than 21 students were shot and injured in front of the secondary school in Bagaladougou. The people were almost unanimous in their denunciation of the army, many comparing the situation with the assassination of school children by Bokassa in Bangui. Popular censure was so vehement that some soldiers showed signs of indiscipline in front of the demonstrators.

But, without its leader, the student movement could not go on, though by closing the schools and sending the students back to the villages, the regime had only postponed the struggle. The student uprising had, in fact, revealed the weakness and isolation of the military regime. The students had put together a number of anti-imperialist demands which had a strong appeal especially in the towns: denunciation of France's domination over the economy, support for the liberation struggles in Southern Africa and solidarity with the school children in the Central African Empire. And apart from their demands, the students had shown up the repressive and neo-colonial policies of the regime.

The 1980 student demonstrations seriously undermined the credibility of the regime. But that credibility was further reduced as protests spread among wage workers. The UNTM was compelled to give reluctant expression to this discontent and threatened a general strike if workers' demands for pay increases of not less than 40 per cent were not met. Rumbling protest was widespread in every sector of government: 'an undeclared general strike of management and civil servants' (Jeune Afrique, 16 May 1980). Discontent was even felt within the army and the police. Between September 1980 and January 1981 three attempted coups d'état were thwarted. Whether they were warnings or genuine threats, these convulsions within the regime added to the level of political instability.

In the end it was the weakness of an opposition divided, disorganised and scattered throughout Africa and Europe which enabled Traore to survive. The supporters of the previous socialist government, despite being well represented among civil servants, are split amongst numerous factions, some of which have co-operated with the regime. Other more radical
elements, as for example among students and teachers and also including *Bulletin du Peuple*, which is distributed clandestinely in Bamako, lack influence in the country as a whole.* The opposition has been unable to take advantage of the instability caused by popular discontent and the students' movement. As one disillusioned diplomat from Bamako said: 'Power is in the gutter and nobody want to pick it up', (quoted in *Le Monde*, 12 April 1980).

In February 1981 the UDPM held an extraordinary congress, but despite general expectation, nothing positive emerged. The various factions in power were unable to devise a credible new direction for the regime. Traoré just managed to save his face at the last moment when he proposed that delegates should give up their allowances for the good of the nation. But corruption and the organised pillage of the state by political leaders and army officers continued unabated. No official was sacked, despite the general expectation that some of those closely involved with repression and torture would go. Shortly before the congress, some soldiers implicated in one of the attempted coups d'etat of the previous months escaped with the obvious complicity of the army and the police.

The virtual collapse of the regime as a result of three years of disturbances has reflected profound discontent, emerging in part from a situation of economic disarray. The level of economic decline can be measured by the increase of bankruptcies, declining cereal production, decreasing exports, increasing unemployment and deteriorating public services. The crisis is a severe one whose origins must be traced back to the effect of colonial domination upon the societies of Mali.

**Pre-colonial Society and the Tributary Mode of Production**

Contemporary Mali is the outcome of a long historical process. The Greek historian, Herodotus, mentioned an area south of the Sahara from which nomads brought precious metals. Around the 11th century a group of kingdoms developed within the Ghana empire. In the 14th century, ancient Mali was at its height when the monarchy of Kakan Moussa managed to conquer Songhai, the capital of which, Gao, and the holy city of Timbuctou, controlled two strategic routes to the north. The territory which was the kingdom of Mali at that time is a good part of present day Mali.

From the 15th century onwards, Mali experienced a rapid decline. The north rebelled and won its autonomy. Then the Moroccans gained control, to be followed by the Touareg and the Fulani. The country was involved in continuous warfare until the arrival of the French, in about 1855, who managed to integrate the whole of Mali despite fierce resistance. It was called the French Sudan and formed part of the Federation of West African States (AOF).

Pre-colonial Malian societies formed part of much larger entities, states

---

*The previous government was based on the Union Soudanaise-Rassemblement Démocratique Africaine (US-RDA). At present, US-RDA is divided into a 'right wing', led by Jean-Marie Kone and Allsane Haidara, based in Abidjan, some of whose supporters work in UDPM and UNTM and a left wing which has refused all co-operation with Traoré. The radicals of the Bulletin du Peuple are members of the Parti du Travail, Marxist-Leninist (pro-Albanian) Tendency.*
dominated by military, religious and merchant aristocracies. The holders if power in these states were not the landowners, but the guarantors of trade and of the security of the land who exacted tribute from the population. Between the agriculturalists and the nobility there developed a variety of relationships expressed in kinship rules or religious codes. Slavery emerged but under conditions different from those of Europe. In Mali, slaves or captives (*Dyon*) became part of the communal extended family. This triangular structure (nobility, agriculturalists, slaves) varied from region to region, but it bore the main characteristics of what Marx called the Asiatic mode of production but is now referred to as the tributary mode of production.

This social structure in Mali concealed a permanent conflict of interests between various groups. The village was founded and organised by several extended families (*Lu*), which had their own network of relationships. But land was not actually the property of the village. The village head, who was also the head of the founding family, divided the land and allocated a certain number of fields for collective use to be cultivated by co-operative groups, in particular the *Ton*, the young men, or rather unmarried men. Attached to the agricultural families were artisan castes. The village was virtually self-sufficient while being at the same time dependent upon the state to which it had to surrender a certain amount of its production. There co-existed, therefore, in the village, collective forms (distribution of land, work on the collective farms) and private forms (each family cultivated its own land and disposed privately of the products of its labour). It can be seen that behind the unanimity of the village community lay many latent social contractions involving elders who controlled land and the young men and provided collective labour; artisans who were in conflict over the distribution of food and women who had no direct role in decision making.

**Integration and Dependency: the Effects of European Capitalism**

European capitalism and French colonialism did not completely destroy traditional society but served to ensure its dependence upon capitalist relations of production. Through forced labour, taxation and rents, the peasantry was compelled to engage in production for exchange and to cultivate the cash crops (cotton and groundnuts) necessary for the development of European industry. In the process the relationship between the peasantry, chiefs and merchants of the pre-capitalist social formations was transformed. Village chieftaincies themselves became one of the levels of metropolitan administration, the chiefs being made responsible for designating the ‘volunteers’ for public works and ‘stimulating’ the cultivation of cash crops in order that taxes be paid. As commission agents and suppliers of labour they became almost autonomous of the community. Meanwhile the expansion of trade, caused by the development of specialised production and the rapid growth of towns and trading posts transformed the merchants into the strategic agents of economic development. The peasants found themselves at the bottom of an oppressive pyramid of chiefs, merchants and colonial administrators. The colonial period was marked by a decline in food production and the standard of living in the rural areas and by the strengthening of the non-productive classes through their association with the developing export crop economy.
The social classes which emerged from and profited by the colonial period nevertheless favoured the idea of independence. For the majority of merchants, village chiefs and civil servants, the object of independence was to improve the terms of their relationship with the ex-colonial power. Independence was gained in 1960 within the Franco-African Community created by France to retain intact the structures of economic and political domination in the ex-colonies of the AOF and to transfer power to the classes which had made good during the colonial regime. The Union Soudanaise-Rassemblement Democratique Africaine (US-RDA) combined various elements of these classes, dominated initially by the urban intelligentsia (mainly civil servants and teachers) and led by Modibo Keita. Independence had been declared in the hope of creating a more viable economic community composed of Mali, Senegal, Upper Volta and Dahomey (now Benin). But from the beginning France was unwilling to negotiate with a federation of such potential strength and frustrated efforts towards its formation. US-RDA came into immediate conflict with France over this issue at a time when the nationalist ideologies of men like Nkrumah in Ghana, Nasser in Egypt and Mobuto in the Congo were undermining the ideological and political foundation of dependence and neo-colonialism. This led to the radicalisation of the intelligentsia in US-RDA and the party declared itself in favour of 'socialism' at its 1962 Congress. Over the next few years, however, much of the power of US-RDA fell into the hands of the merchant class, the struggle between the merchants and the intelligentsia within the party being resolved after the fall of Keita following the 1968 coup.

Malian Socialism
The socialism in question was always very fluid and imprecise. However, some of the administrative and political cadres did try to bring about social and economic transformation through the nationalisation of certain sectors of the economy, the establishment of state corporations for the management and marketing of agricultural commodities and the encouragement of co-operatives. But lacking a strong organisational and political base and direct links with the majority of the peasants, US-RDA and the government of Modibo Keita soon ran into serious trouble. Faced with French opposition, Mali could not create the conditions necessary for the changes it desired and found itself isolated within a West Africa still dominated by colonialism. Despite agreements with the Soviet Union and China, Mali was deprived of financial assistance and unable to establish external economic relations capable of supporting internal development. Inside the country, the merchants and other privileged groups (especially the major cattle owners) began to undermine policies of the regime by diverting produce towards neighbouring countries. They feared the extension of the socialist programme initiated by US-DRA and above all had no interest in the short term in breaking off relations with the ex-colonial power. Since US-DRA had very little influence in the rural areas, the merchants, village heads and cattle owners were able to prevent any links which might have been established with the peasantry.

Finally, within the government, the various factions disagreed over a strategy for staying in power. Despite the fact that some had proclaimed a
'Marxist revolution', US-DRA had in the short term neither the means, social base, nor the manpower, to undertake such a programme. The weakness of the regime was such that the army met no resistance when it overthrew Keita in November 1968.

**Since 1968: an 'Historic Compromise'**

Nevertheless, the heritage from Keita's period has been important. Eight years of a 'socialist' government did bring an influential group of officials into the civil service. Although unable to defend or to extend the process of radical popular transformation, they ensured that the essential features of his administration were preserved. The army contented itself in the end with controlling the heights of government, reducing the disagreements with France and permitting merchants and other privileged groups to take control of the economy without really touching the power of the civil service. The 'historic compromise' created a situation of parallel powers: the army and its French officers, the French companies, the Malian merchants and the civil servants. Beneath them all were the peasantry and the urban poor.

During his 12 years in power, Traoré and his military leaders have endeavoured to 'manage' this compromise while at the same time trying to profit as much as possible from their control over the decision-making machinery of the state. As a result, the various dominant classes have been transformed, combined and re-deployed.

The dominant factions within the government have shifted, but they have conserved the powers and instruments of the state. Through their control of state enterprises, they have monopolised a good part of the national economy. Several enterprises established by the Keita government have in fact been directed to the personal benefit of the senior cadres in government and in the army. The survival of state-owned corporations has also enabled the lower and middle levels of the bureaucracy to maintain (until recently) their standard of living. But they no longer fulfill the functions for which they were designed.

**A Devastated Society**

The fall of Modibo Keita in 1968 gave much pleasure to the Western powers. The 'failure' of 'full-blooded socialism' demonstrated, as far as the Western media were concerned, that the only road to development lay in bowing to the demands of the ex-colonial powers. Mali had 'improved its image, thanks in particular to the realism and liberalism of the present regime'. *(Marchés Tropicaux, 21 December 1979)*.

But even from the point of view of Western and French financiers, the record of subsequent years has been pretty disastrous. Exports in 1979 represented only 40 per cent of the value of imports as compared to 80 per cent in 1977. By 1981 external debt had exceeded 300 thousand million Malian francs and the public debt was seven times the projected revenue in the annual national budget. Despite the enormous quantity of external 'aid' (80 thousand million MF as against a national budget of less than 60 thousand million MF), the situation gets worse, though inevitably more so for some classes than for others.
The famine in the Sahel attracted international attention in 1974. According to the Western media, it was a 'natural disaster', a consequence of drought. In Mali alone, more than 100,000 people died during this period. Shortage of foodstuffs led to drastically increased prices, rising by more than 120 per cent in the period after 1976. It is not the peasants, however, who profit from this situation. As Decraene has noted:

Agricultural prices are fixed at a derisorily low level. The producer price of one kilo of rice is one quarter that in the Ivory Coast, one half that in Upper Volta. The conditions of producing are appalling, agricultural credit is virtually non-existent . . . the peasants are crushed by taxation because in Mali, it is the poorest who bear the heaviest burdens of taxation and levies of all kinds . . .

In fact, producer prices of maize and millet have scarcely improved since 1975. At the same time a plough which cost 23,000 MF in 1975 cost 45,600 MF in 1977. A pair of oxen cost 75,000 MF in 1975 and 150,000 MF in 1977. Phosphate fertiliser doubled in price.

The drought was particularly devastating in the north. In the regions of Mopti and Timbuctou, there has been large-scale destruction of pastoral societies. Nomads have not been able to rebuild their herds since the drought and have been effectively 'liberated' from their environment, forced to emigrate to the towns and adopt a sedentary life. At the level of social relations, this process involves a radical transformation from free petty producer to proletariat or semi-proletariat. The large landowners, with the best land on the banks of the River Niger, come to look for cattle herders in the refugee camps. The power of the chieftaincies and the merchants has increased and, despite a few hopeful, but marginal projects, international aid has scarcely change a thing. The process of proletarianisation and land concentration is developing in the south as well although the peasant communities there are in a better position to resist.

In an important sense the effects of the drought in the north served to reinforce policies pursued since colonisation and to intensify a process already taking place. The production of food crops and small-scale herding had in fact been stagnating or declining for years. The villagers who had previously kept back emergency stocks of food found themselves bereft of all resources in the face of the collapse of production in 1973 and faced a choice between death or surrendering themselves to the mercy of either international aid or merchant money-lenders.

Yet during this period, the amount of land under export crop production increased. The area cultivated in cotton increased by 30 per cent between 1975 and 1979. Supervised and supported by Government services and French multinationals, the cultivation of cotton continued because the peasantry found it to be the only immediate source of a cash income. Instead of producing the grain necessary to feed the population, the most fertile areas in the south provisioned the Compagnie Française de Développement du Textile (CFDT). The CDFT controls 40 per cent of the Compagnie Malienne de Développement des Textiles (CMDT) and effectively all cotton grown, of which 90 per cent is exported. Other cash crops (groundnuts, tobacco, sugar cane and tea), while less destructive than cotton, contribute to the increasing food shortage. Moreover, the staff of CMDT encourage mono-cropping even though the continuous cultivation
of cotton or groundnuts impoverishes the soil. Soil fertility is, however, a matter of relative indifference to CMDT. They can always move on to other villages and new land. The peasants have to stay.

Among the more recent developments, we should note as well the introduction of food crop production for export. Since 1979 Mali has exported thousands of tons of vegetables and fruit (green beans, peppers, mangoes, onions, etc.) to France, the Netherlands, West Germany and the Ivory Coast. One thousand four hundred tonnes were exported in 1979.

The Government and ‘Development Programmes’
The Government contributes to this desperate state of affairs through its development programmes, instituting projects aimed at integrating the supervision, financing and management of agricultural production and marketing. The Groundnut and Food Crop Programme, the Ségou Rice Project and the Office du Niger may have increased the national income as a whole, but as Dembélé has noted, they have also led to:

increased economic and social differentiation through the system of credit. Only the rich have access to credit, and all the ‘development projects’ practice such a credit policy. The only farmers who have had access to credit and been able to obtain agricultural supplies have been the traditional chiefs, retired civil servants and peasants whose relatives were staff on the projects.

The ‘development projects’ have encouraged the production of industrial crops and rice. The latter, which requires both adequate water supplies and greater labour input, used to be considered a luxury crop compared to millet, the traditional food crop. The old system of fallowing is no longer observed. Those not ‘lucky’ enough to be taken in hand by a ‘development project’ are more or less left to themselves, without technical assistance or credit. Only the most fortunate of the rest survive the experience. In the Ségou Rice Project, for example, the official yield on a peasant plot (33 per cent own less than one hectare) is about 1,500kg per hectare. But the farmer pays the equivalent of 100kg as rent for the use of the land, 10 per cent per tonne for threshing and must sell 400kg to the Office des Produits Agricoles Maliens (OPAM) whose methods of calculation are invariably contested by the farmers. At the end of the day, the farmer is left with 850kg which is insufficient to feed a family of, on average, seven persons. So he must buy back grain and get involved in an endless cycle of indebtedness. In order to increase production, he must hire ox ploughs from wealthy peasants or civil servants at 20,000MF per hectare per plough. Seventy per cent of peasants do not own a plough.

Social Differentiation
Social and economic differentiation is increasing. According to Traoré:

The wealthy peasant farmers have modern equipment: ploughs, carts, fertilisers and sometimes threshing machines and tractors. They include old soldiers, the traditional chiefs who made money during the colonial and post-colonial period, the relatives of wealthy civil servants, retired civil servants (agricultural staff, health officers and livestock inspectors) . . . They are the ones who get assistance from the development projects. They invest their profits in cattle.

In this context, rural emigration is increasing. More than 50,000 Malians are working in France; several thousand others are in the Ivory Coast and Senegal. The ‘tons’, the co-operative labour groups of young men, have
collapsed; craftsmen have left the villages to find work in Bamako. The destruction of traditional structures and the increasing penetration of cash crop production and commerce has led to a marked decline in the standard of living in the rural areas. The intensification of labour, particularly among women, has increased the prevalence of diseases brought about by overwork. Rapid inflation has raised the cost of medicines. Despite the theoretically free public health service, peasants must in practice pay for health care out of their own pockets, and that is if they can find it. Since doctors and ancillary medical staff refuse to leave the towns, many rural areas have neither medical services nor medicines. In many areas, infant mortality exceeds 16 per cent. Despite a few experiments, no serious effort has been made to reinstate traditional medical practices.

The government does have a plan of educational reform which in the rural areas, however, amounts to peasants being obliged to assume the costs of maintaining schools. At an estimated cost of 2,000MF per child per year, schooling is inaccessible to the majority of children. The 'ruralisation' of education, in principle making school more appropriate to the rural environment, merely devalues the education offered to the children in the rural areas. At Ziaaso, near Sikasso, teachers told us that the Ministry of Education was, in any case, misappropriating the equipment for agricultural education donated by UNICEF. More fundamentally, the ruralisation of education requires a political will which does not exist. It would be necessary to raise the status of farming and improve farmers' incomes to make an agriculturally oriented education attractive. Under the present circumstances, peasants have good reason for being distrustful of ruralisation since this eliminates any hope, however feeble, that their children will obtain jobs in the civil service or elsewhere.

The Problems of the Co-operatives
During the Keita's government, Mali experimented with co-operatives with varying degrees of success. Lack of managerial and technical assistance, competition from merchants and wealthy peasants and problems of organisation were severe but there were some signs of hope. Since the coup d'état, they have been left to the mercy of their competitors without state support.

The co-operatives must buy consumer goods at the state outlets (OPAM, SOMIEX) at official wholesale prices... They depend on other institutions for finance and equipment. Even in those cases where co-operatives are really well run, the system of prices and constraints are such that balancing the books is a real achievement. In the absence of genuine control, the buyer can rig the scales, use rounded down weights, fix the price himself, arrange stock shortages to push up prices, under-pay staff, buy outside the official marketing season, smuggle goods or currency... Under these circumstances, there is no doubt that the private merchants realise much greater profits than the co-operatives. (Gentili, 1979).

This situation explains why so many co-operatives are weak, why there are so many bankruptcies and embezzlements, why so many are placed under supervision. Deprived of support and assistance, many co-operatives have abandoned their democratic base and have been taken over by the wealthy peasants. In the 6th and 7th regions, where a plan to re-launch co-operatives was made with the help of non-governmental organisations, the livestock and fishermen's co-operatives have been the site of endless struggles for control. Co-operatives were established in a society which was already
hierarchically structured; they cannot, on their own, do more than make more formal and more explicit the relationships between the exploiters and the exploited. Within them, the cattle owners and wealthy peasants have real control. Only an effective mobilisation of the peasantry, supported by the state, could reverse this situation. The Malian government, however, is not interested in any such thing.

Ardoux has argued that, 'some agents, well placed in the hierarchy of Government, don’t stop at arranging shortages of consumer goods. They have even established fictitious co-operatives (set up in every detail) to which they market tons of cereals for resale on the black market'.

The more honest officials can do nothing except report on just how bad the situation is. The Ministry of Agriculture (1981) noted:

the total inadequacy of the margins of profit permitted by Government buying organisations; the curious discrimination practised against co-operatives in the allocation of commodities between co-operatives and the private sector on the part of agents of SOMIEX; increasing costs caused by rises in commodity prices and taxes; insufficient resources of their own to permit them to diversify their sources of supply in the absence of positive measures on the part of the local authorities to recuperate bad debts and to suppress the malpractices of which they are generally the victims.

The Pillage of the State

While the population as a whole is getting poorer, some are getting rich. It is difficult to define exactly, however, the membership of the exploiting class. It includes amongst other top civil servants, army officers, traders and middlemen; but the connections between these various groups within and between the public and private sectors, the complexity of the links between the various regional elites, and their connections with foreign interests means that the composition of this ‘bourgeoisie’ is difficult to describe. As a national bourgeoisie it is heterogenous in origin and has at its disposal a variety of subordinate groups, which adhere to its ideology and gather up the crumbs from its table.

The state corporations and the development projects are the essential tools of the bourgeoisie. Representing 70 per cent of national economic activity, the corporations are often run as private businesses. Many have been transformed into half public, half private companies or have simply been privatised. Their enormous debts (OPAM had debts amounting to 77 per cent of its annual turnover, 15 thousand million MF, in 1977), wage costs, general speculation and corruption make state corporations a means of accumulation for the bourgeoisie. With over 13,000 employees, they are at present under attack from international credit organisations (the IMF among others) which want to privatisate the more profitable ones. Recently the Société Malienne de Crédit et d'Aide à l'Equipement Rural (SCAER) was turned into an agricultural credit bank with private national and foreign shareholders. The government, moreover, does not hesitate to stick its fingers into the coffers of the state corporations when it cannot make ends meet. The contradictions between the various fractions of the Malian bourgeoisie and between these and Western (mainly French) imperialism, emerge in the debates over the state corporations. French imperialism, for example, is demanding their dissolution. The Malian bureaucracy resists. But in addition, and for other reasons, their employees and other beneficiaries think they would be better rescued than abolished so that the
state can retain some ability to direct its economic affairs.

A case in point is the Office du Niger through which the state has access to 45,000m hectares of irrigated land which could be used to resolve at least in part the chronic food shortage. But 90 per cent of the land is uncultivated for lack of capital and dynamism. Rather than reorganise it, some senior civil servants are advocating the sale of lands to those who can buy and cultivate it, that is to say, the wealthy farmers and traders.

Other sources of accumulation are available to the bourgeoisie including the black market in petrol and other commodities and smuggling. ‘Political’ appointments are very lucrative; members of the central executive of UDPM are paid 400,000MF in salaries, over 100,000MF expenses plus a house and a car. Army officers get ‘loans’ up to three million MF of which only a third is repayable, and speculate in houses, cars and luxury goods. Misappropriation of external aid is an additional important means of accumulation.

Even when not misappropriated, external aid contributes to the power and wealth of the privileged classes. Food aid and emergency aid, from which Mali has considerably ‘benefited’ since 1973, has not provided the peasants with the means of production but has contributed to the collapse of local production. At Ansogo, north of Gao, we observed the process through which the World Food Programme retards the development of self-sufficiency. Distributed through the co-operatives, food aid increases their membership while undermining the very basis of their organisation for production.

Aid linked to projects, bilateral or multilateral, produces its own unfortunate consequences. It concentrates upon the most viable sectors and regions, promotes large-scale projects not adaptable to village realities and finances building programmes, such as the irrigation of the Senegal River valley, the main purpose of which is to provide huge contracts to Western firms.

Meanwhile, minor civil servants and the urban population in general suffer. With a minimum wage of 5,500MF per month, and an average income of 30,000MF, the worker pays between 17,000 and 22,000MF for 100kg of rice; a loaf costs 110MF, a kilo of meat 1,200MF.* The only way to get by is to take one’s own share in bribes and extortion. For the rest, there is little alternative but theft, beggary and prostitution.

The industrial sector, consisting mainly of small and medium-sized factories for the processing of agricultural products and cotton, cannot employ the surplus labour. Controlled by French or Western capital (through joint stock holding or control of technology), badly run and under-financed, industry is in as bad a way as the rest of the economy. Sunjata comments that:

Malian industry is handicapped by its size and its source of capital. National investment is insufficient and available credit is principally directed towards commercial enterprises so that industrial development depends primarily upon foreign investment. This is a major problem since industrialisation in Mali risks becoming part of the international division of labour which

*Figures here refer to the situation in 1980; since then prices have further increased by at least 45 per cent.
would scarcely favour the establishment of basic industries in a developing country (February, 1981).

All these factors have contributed towards a generally catastrophic economic situation. National revenue has not increased by more than 15.6 per cent per annum since 1972, while expenditure has increased by 18.2 per cent. But there is a limit to the amount of taxation and other charges that the peasantry and the rest of the population can bear. It is not surprising that various pressures from ‘below’ and ‘above’ are demanding changes in the regime’s economic policy; there are many who fear that a further deterioration in the economic situation can only provide even more serious social unrest.

The Recipe of Liberalisation
Since the international economic crisis began to affect the Third World, Western countries and their financial institutions have thrown up a new programme for redressing the situation. In brief, it involves privatisation, opening up to external markets and austerity. The results of such ‘liberalisation’, applied with the greatest vigour, are known. In General Pinochet’s Chile, for example, whole sections of the state have been privatised, social and educational services drastically cut, costs charged to the users and a whole population confined to misery and semi-forced labour. Third World governments which have resisted these policies have had loans refused by international financial institutions. In Jamaica, Manley’s opposition was finally defeated by a right-wing campaign orchestrated by the United States. In Africa, organisations such as the International Monetary Fund have imposed their conditions directly upon Zaire and are threatening Tanzania and other countries.

In January 1981, at a session of the Franco-Malian Joint Commission, Moussa Traoré agreed to put Mali’s finances ‘in order’. The plan for ‘reform’ includes the privatisation of the Cereals Marketing Boards. This would ‘free’ the market and permit private traders to buy and sell cereals. Some 20 state corporations (of the total of 30) would be ‘abolished or, in the case of those of strategic importance such as water, electricity and airlines, would be semi-privatised.

Liberalisation may lead to the privatisation of land belonging to the state, such as that of the Office du Niger, and legal changes permitting the sale and purchase of land. ‘Agrarian reform’ of this rather special kind would permit wealthy peasants and private entrepreneurs to establish agro-industries which would be assisted by a programme of public works (including a dam across the Senegal River) to initiate highly mechanised irrigated production with heavy capital input. This would be a considerable ‘advance’ from the point of view of integrating Mali within the international capitalist economy. The process would be consolidated by re-integrating Mali within the West African currency union, the Bank of issue of the CFA, which includes Ivory Coast, Niger, Senegal, Upper Volta, Benin and Togo. The Central Bank of France controls the convertability of the CFA currency and thus the finances of the member countries.

These ‘liberalisation’ measures might lead to an effective reduction of Mali’s financial deficit and keep the finances of the state in order. The
social consequences would, however, be entirely disastrous. It would add to the pressures forcing the rural population off the land; control over crop prices and the elimination of the small farmer. The employees of the state corporations would be made redundant or forced to accept wage cuts. The few private entrepreneurs, the junior (Malian) management in European companies, the army and the profits of the large Western companies would be the sole beneficiaries.

However, the crisis in Mali makes it extremely difficult to comply strictly with these ‘reforms’. The ‘historic compromise’ — the sharing of power between the army and other fractions of the ruling class — constrains the capacity of the regime to make a U-turn in its policies to the exclusion of a large number of those who up to now have shared its power. Moreover, the urban employed, unemployed and the students are particularly sensitive to all attempts to introduce such a radical change in policy. So, despite the expectations of those who thought, at the time of the extraordinary Congress of the UDPM, that Traoré was going to introduce a major restructuring of the policies of his regime, the latter seems to be looking for alternative ways of meeting the demands for change from France and the IMF.

**A Strange Alliance: France and the USSR**

To these internal problems must be added the relationship between Mali and two powers, France and the USSR. France dominates the Malian economy largely enough through its control, by means of the CFDT, of cotton. In 1977, France was by far the most important of Mali’s trading partners purchasing 17,763,000MF worth of goods. France was also its principal supplier, total exports to Mali amounting to 29,266,000MF, leaving Mali with a deficit of 11,593,000MF. To this one should add the imposing French presence in the domain of co-operation. It is thought that France has contributed some 150 thousand million MF since independence through the Fonds d'Aide à la Coopération, technical assistance, the Caisse Centrale de Coopération Economique and other agencies. With the further addition of the aid and trade of other Western countries (West Germany, Belgium, Britain, the Netherlands, the United States and Canada) Mali is subordinated to the Western capitalist economies of which France is one of the principle leaders in West Africa.

Nevertheless, circumstances have led Mali to accept close links with the Soviet Union. Although these were established during Keita’s government, Traoré has maintained them as much to secure the ‘historic compromise’ between the army and the supporters of the old regime as to allow Mali an additional margin of manoeuvre in the face of France and the West. The USSR has benefited from this situation in Mali and has developed an important diplomatic and military presence. The USSR provides military equipment and training (more than 200 Soviet military experts are stationed in Mali) and has undertaken major military works such as the construction of a runway 3,200m long at Mopti capable of carrying heavy transport aircraft. Although it is not a major trading partner, the Soviet Union benefits from its presence in Mali through its monopoly of gold mining at Kalana. Two-thirds of the 1½ tonnes of gold yielded by the mine in 1981 were destined for the Soviet Union.
The relationship with the USSR has allowed Mali to present a progressive façade in international and African diplomacy. It has recognised the Sarahouli Arab Democratic Republic, supported liberation movements in Southern Africa and so on. Moreover, the common frontier between Mali and Algeria and the proximity of Libya are further factors in the complex and contradictory geo-political situation of Mali.

Dependent economically upon France, but militarily and diplomatically upon the Soviet Union, Mali is therefore the site of a strange alliance. On the face of it, this allows Traoré a greater margin of manoeuvre in the face of Western demands because while maintaining a political and military presence, the Soviet Union appears to have no interest in intervening further. The Soviets seem little inclined to encourage any ‘destabilising’ elements within the country or the army or to get involved in a putsch of the Ethiopian kind. They would prefer to keep a low profile, waiting for the day when its other foreign interventions, such as Afghanistan and Eritrea, might be a little less absorbing and when the situation in West Africa might be more propitious. For the moment, they are content to exercise their influence in military affairs.

This form of ‘peaceful co-existence’ between the two foreign powers allows Mali a limited freedom in the short term but any fundamental transformation which would call into question the foundations of its present dependency upon France and the Soviet Union would lead the people of Mali to a confrontation with two major powers.

**Opposition and Alternatives**

Opposition amongst the urban population is of a contradictory character. The employed, the civil servants, teachers, students and workers who constitute a minority (15 per cent) of the population, struggle to defend their interests through the trade unions. But union demands for 40 per cent wage increases, while naturally in the interests of their members, are to a certain degree against the interests of the peasantry. Moreover, the activities of many of the state corporations in which they are employed are detrimental to the peasantry. As long as the workers do not question the practices of the organisations for which they work, they are protecting a policy which extorts from the peasantry the greater part of the value of their labour.

On the other hand, the demands of the urban population do show up the fundamentally anti-populist character of the regime and in this respect constitute the basis for a potential alliance with the peasantry for an authentic national liberation. The failure of the urban population to renounce its relative privileges has, however, allowed the regime to stay in power and prevented the building of an alliance with the peasantry.

The peasantry is not homogenous; classes, ethnic groups and caste groups divide it. But as we have tried to show, conflicts within the peasantry and between the peasantry and external forces are taking place and have engendered a variety of forms of resistance. In the Koulikouro areas, peasants are refusing to pay taxes and mini-jacqueries have broken out more or less everywhere over the last few years. The peasants are not always duped by the institutions and development projects which are imposed upon
them. At Konseguela, near Sikasso, peasants and artisans have organised to negotiate collectively with CMDT following incessant disputes over its refusal to grade their produce correctly. In some co-operatives, a peasant consciousness is being born as the contradictions traditionally concealed by family and clan relationships become overt. The wealthy peasants who appropriate the credit, the means of production and the resources of the co-operatives and who benefit from the fact that the power of money is stronger than the power of family or age set are becoming more conspicuous to an increasingly resentful peasantry. Silent struggles go on within the co-operatives for control.

The peasants are not against development. Most are very clear about what needs to be done to protect and enrich the environment. Contrary to the widespread image, they are not conservative or opposed to change. But they want change which will benefit the villages. ‘Give us the means of production’, said an old man in Sonanko. The rural environment forms an organic whole. Agrarian reform cannot be limited to the system of land use, but must involve social, cultural, economic and technological changes to modernise the structures which determine the standard of living of the rural population.

The Malian peasantry is faced with two types of aggression of which the common object is to expropriate them from their land and the products of their labour. In the north especially, the drought has intensified the massive uprooting of small farmers and livestock owners who find themselves forced to sell their labour. In the south, the development of agro-industry through private and state companies or large co-operatives is leading more slowly but in the same way to a concentration of land and the means of production into the hands of the wealthy. Only peasant mobilisation, allied and helped by the organisation and consciousness of the radical urban population, can stop and overcome this process.

The Old Society is Dying; the New is not yet Born
This mobilisation demands several political, social and organisational conditions which must be the result of a slow process of struggle. In Mali and in West Africa generally, the process is held back by several factors: the dispersed nature and social fragmentation of the peasantry, the persistence of traditional society which still permits some reactionary defence, and the weakness of the urban petty bourgeoisie which is cut off from the peasantry. But the situation is changing and these factors are getting weaker; the unification of the peasantry is taking place as it is proletarianised. The radicalisation of the urban population is also occurring. In this situation, the destruction of what exists is more readily apparent than the emergency of a new society. And one must suppose that the actual process of decomposition/recomposition will continue over several years.

Popular resistance and particularly peasant resistance must therefore confront what survives of the old society and what is emerging as the features of a new mode of exploitation: on the one hand, the old trade economy, based on export crops, supported by a predatory state and a strong bureaucracy living on the backs of the peasantry and on the other
hand, the new society of private agro-industry directly under the control of European financial interests under a ‘modernised’ regime. The Sikasso peasant and the livestock farmer in Gao are caught between these two strategies but they know that the decline in their standards of living, especially over the last six to seven years, is the result. They are looking for ways of escape; and the question of organisation for survival, for production and for resistance is an idea which is gradually emerging, overcoming individual revolt and the convulsions within the village. On the day when organised peasants will unite with the urban masses, a new social task will emerge.

Bibliographic Note

Pierre François is a sociologist and member of the Comité Québec Afrique, which is a solidarity organisation based in the Quebec trade unions. The committee has published other papers on Senegal, Western Sahara, Eritrea, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Guinea Bissau, etc. This paper on Mali was originally written in French in 1981 after a brief investigation in the field, linked with our campaign on the Senegal River so-called ‘development’ project. Points de Reperes, c/o Pierre François, 3575 boul. Saint Laurent, local 406, Montreal H2X 2T7, Canada.
The Algerian Bureaucracy

Hugh Roberts

Algeria has a form of 'state capitalism' and thus the role of the bureaucracy is crucial. The approach here to this question rejects as simplistic the two polar views: on the one hand, the belief that Algeria is undergoing some kind of transition to socialism and though there may be a 'problem of bureaucracy', this is treated outside the class structure; on the other, the notion that if there is state capitalism then the bureaucracy is a ruling class, which ignores the fact of social as opposed to private accumulation.

Analysing it as a bureaucracy and in its context of the working of the Algerian state, reveals that the relationships between it and a bourgeois class with a separate existence are mediated through and by other features that affect the 'rationality' of the Algerian bureaucracy. Religion plays an important role, but not one that dictates the pattern of politics as in some Islamic or Catholic countries, but as an ideological and legitimating link with the people. The pursuance of personal benefits and traditional obligations through the bureaucratic system limits its effectiveness in pursuing policy goals, however. Patronage in turn feeds into a pattern of factions that rend the bourgeoisie, thus limiting its emergence as a national class, and also the bureaucracy, thus further impairing its efficacy.

This situation may now undergo change as the state tries to respond to demands from below for a second stage of industrialisation going beyond the initial accumulation in heavy industry. But consumer goods production could be met by the expansion of either private capital or state capital. The first would require a shift to economic liberalisation. The second strategy implies greater effectiveness of the bureaucracy and its greater political direction. A political struggle over these two lines is discernible but has not lead to a complete polarisation of the party.

The term 'bureaucracy' is used by contemporary social scientists in two distinct ways. It is used to refer to a form of organisation and administration specified by the combination of characteristics such as strict hierarchy, meritocratic recruitment and promotion and the impartial and impersonal application of clearly defined rules and procedures. As such, 'bureaucracy' has no necessarily perjorative connotations and has indeed been viewed positively by some, as conducive to the rational management of large-scale undertakings. More recently, a negative evaluation of bureaucracy has gained ground, not so much on the basis of its tendencies
to inertia and ‘red tape’ — the basis of public impatience with the thing — as on the basis of an ethical pre-occupation with the individual, the quality of human relations and the general question of ‘alienation’.

The term is also used, however, to refer not to a form of administration (rule by officialdom) but to a social category (the officials) who are often credited with the defining characteristic of any social group, namely a collective material interest. Several Marxist authors have used the term in this way, from Trotsky in his writings on the Soviet Union in the 1930s to more recent authors such as Milovan Djilas, Ernest Mandel, Tony Cliff and Charles Bettelheim. In this perspective, usually concerned with the analysis of avowedly socialist states, the term continues to be used with uniquely negative associations, but the problem is not ‘bureaucracy’ so much as ‘the bureaucracy’, variously conceived as a kind of ‘caste’ or ‘stratum’ or even, by Djilas for example, as a ‘new class’.

Leaving aside for the moment the question of whether it is appropriate to regard the bureaucracy as a social group, with a defining collective interest, rather than merely a social category, we may note three important features of most contemporary Marxist discussion of these phenomena. First, there is frequently a crucial lack of precision regarding the boundaries of this category: the term is used to refer to not only the functionaries of the administrative apparatus of the state but also full-time members of the party and other organisations (trades unions, youth movements, women’s organisations, etc.) and even the military. Second, discussion of the bureaucracy is invariably negative in its evaluation of its role. There is no recognition of the possibility that the bureaucracy performs historically necessary functions and thus plays a progressive role in the process of social development. Third, this negative evaluation is expressed in two quite distinctive interpretations of the significance of the bureaucracy in the context of socialist or post-revolutionary states. The first interpretation is that the bureaucracy is a negative feature of an otherwise sound (i.e. socialist) system: thus orthodox Trotskyist analyses such as Mandel’s, hold the Soviet Union to be a ‘degenerate workers’ state’, that is, socialist but subject to ‘bureaucratic deformation’. The possibility that the bureaucracy has been a necessary feature of the construction and administration of the socialist system in the Soviet Union and elsewhere is not entertained. The second interpretation, put forward by Cliff for example, is that the bureaucracy, taken to constitute a ‘new class’, is proof that the revolution has failed to realise its socialist potential and that a bureaucratic counter-revolution of sorts has taken place and given rise to the rule of a new kind of exploiting class. These two interpretations, evidently, have very different political implications.

**Bureaucracy and State Capitalism in Algeria**

Both of these views have been put forward in Marxist discussion of Algeria. The first, acknowledging ‘the problem of bureaucracy’ while denying the existence of a new exploitive class based on the public sector, is held by the most influential Marxist formation active in Algeria, the *Parti de l’Avant-Garde Socialiste* (PAGS — the Algerian Communist Party under a new name). The PAGS supported Boumedienne and the left wing of his regime from 1971 onwards but has been increasingly critical of the present Chadli
government and accordingly subject to growing harassment over the last two years. Its political stance is based on the view that Algeria is, if not actually socialist, at least in transition towards socialism, a view in turn derived from the fundamental theoretical assumption that state ownership of the means of production is sufficient to guarantee the intrinsically socialist character of the public sector. It thus implicitly rejects the concept of state capitalism as having any application to the Algerian case and accordingly abstracts 'the problem of bureaucracy' from the wider question of the relations between classes in Algerian society.

The second view denies that there is any question of socialism in contemporary Algeria and affirms that the Algerian economy is capitalist and the Algerian state is bourgeois in class character. First propounded somewhat tentatively by Gerard Chaliand and Juliette Minces and more uninhibitedly by Ian Clegg, this thesis has subsequently been restated by Kader Ammour, Christian Leucate and Jean-Jacques Moulin and, more recently, by Marc Raffinot and Pierre Jacquemot. It has thus been the prevailing view of Marxist academics and journalists not engaged in practical political activity in Algeria. It is also the view of the small Parti de la Revolution Socialiste (PRS), an opposition group mounted from exile by one of the founders of the wartime FLN (the National Liberation Front), Mohamed Boudiaf. All variants of this view agree that the Algerian public sector is state-capitalist in character, not socialist, although their grounds for doing so differ. All, moreover, assert that this implies the existence of a new capitalist class, variously referred to as the 'bureaucratic bourgeoisie' or the 'state bourgeoisie'. The error inherent in this view of things is thus the complement of that inherent in the first position. The first holds the problem of bureaucracy to be separate from that of class relations; the second reduces it to a mere instance of these relations, as being essentially no more than the phenomenal form of bourgeois rule. Ironically, therefore, the second position also fails to come to terms with the fact of state capitalism. For all its insistence on the state-capitalist character of the Algerian public sector, its conclusion that a new exploiting class exists, based on the public sector, rests on the failure to acknowledge any difference of substance between state capitalism based upon public property and free enterprise capitalism based upon private property. Just as the bureaucracy is reduced to a matter of phenomenal form, state ownership of the means of production is reduced to a matter of juridical form. The denial of the relative autonomy of the bureaucracy thus corresponds to the denial of the specificity of state capitalism, namely its profoundly contradictory nature which may be summed up in the formulation: capitalism without capitalists.

In short, to assert that the Algerian public sector is state-capitalist, far from implying the existence of a 'state-bourgeoisie', implies the very opposite. In the absence of working class control over production exercised through an effective system of imperative planning, the managers of public enterprises certainly perform the entrepreneurial functions of the capitalist; but state ownership of the means of production ensures that appropriation of the product and thus of surplus labour time is social. To assert that a 'state-bourgeoisie' exists is to presuppose that appropriation is private. It is therefore to deny the fact of public ownership, to dismiss it as a 'fiction', in
which case it ceases to be meaningful or accurate to speak of *state* capitalism as such.

Two variants of the assertion that the surplus labour time of the workers continues to be privately appropriated on capitalist lines have been put forward with regard to the Algerian case. The first is the thesis that the new economic bureaucracy collectively appropriates the surplus through its control of the levers of economic decision-making in the administrative apparatus of the state. There is a fundamental theoretical problem with this conception of things. A bureaucracy does not function collectively as a matter of course. It does so only insofar as its various activities are co-ordinated and orchestrated by a central directing body, such as a government. As Bruno Etienne has pointed out, however, one of the main characteristics of the Algerian bureaucracy is precisely the relative absence of co-ordination between its various branches and levels, and the extent to which the latter have been autonomous in relation to the government, and have acted independently of one another. The second variant abandons the notion that the bureaucracy collectively appropriates the surplus for its own ends, thereby assuming the character of an exploitative class, and suggests instead that individual managers, possessing 'real control' over the means of production, are able, in consequence, to appropriate the surplus. The problem with this view lies in the dichotomy it posits between the juridical form of state ownership and the real relation of private control. The implication of this dichotomy is that in order for the manager of a state enterprise to engage in capital accumulation for his own account he must engage in criminal activity, namely embezzlement or similar practices. Thus the class character of the Algerian state becomes a function of the ability of its ruling class to indulge in law-breaking on a large scale. Of course such practices exist in Algeria. However, the fact that abuse of public property is a crime and is punished with severity — the death sentence exists for certain categories of 'economic crime' and has already been applied — is enough to refute the notion that those who engage in such behaviour constitute the new ruling class by virtue of it.

Both variants of the 'private appropriation' thesis receive superficial support from certain, but by no means systematic, observations concerning the higher salaries, the 'European' living standards, superior accommodation and other material privileges enjoyed by the managers and other senior administrative personnel in the public sector. But their privileges by no means prove the existence of private appropriation or of capitalist exploitation. They are entirely explicable in terms of the differential remuneration of mental as opposed to manual labour which, as Marx and Lenin were careful to note, was to be regarded as regrettably inevitable in the initial phase of socialist development.

I must now make clear my own view of the matter, since it will underlie my subsequent analysis. First, by the 'bureaucracy' I mean a social category consisting of all persons employed in administrative posts within the administrative apparatus of the state, including the state sector of the economy. This excludes the armed services and the police force, which merit separate consideration, and all non-administrative personnel employed by the state; it also excludes officials of the Party and other 'mass
organisations' such as the national trades unions, peasants' union, women's movement, youth movement, and so forth. (Whether these organisations are to be regarded as an integral part of the administrative apparatus of the state is a question of considerable political significance, but a matter for empirical analysis, not a priori classification). The members of this social category do not constitute a social group although they may, and in fact usually do, belong to different social groups, as we shall see.

Second, analysis of the relations of senior administrators and managers within the public sector of the economy to the means of production does not establish their class character as capitalist. In order to establish their class character, it is necessary to take other factors into account. Class character is not only a matter of class situation (relation to the means of production), it is also a matter of class allegiance, and it is the latter which is of primary importance for the purposes of political analysis. Moreover, class allegiance may be an unpredictable and highly fluid affair for certain categories of the population, particularly in the context of rapid social and political change. The most constant of these factors have been two in number and diametrically opposed: on the one hand, the commitment of the political leadership to the construction of a socialist economy; on the other hand, the existence of a substantial private sector capable of exerting a measure of influence on both the conception and, more important, the application of government policy. The commitment has at no stage been unequivocal, for the political leadership has been characterised by a high degree of ideological heterogeneity and even incoherence throughout. Only the left wing of the regime can be regarded as having a consistent socialist economic policy, although it is to be noted that the left was in the ascendant from 1971 until Boumedienne's death in 1978 and that Boumedienne himself was increasingly identified with its perspectives. The relationship between the public sector and private capital has also varied over time and from one branch of economic activity to another, ranging from complementarity verging on symbiosis to competition or indeed, as in the case of agriculture, outright antagonism. In these circumstances, a substantial number of senior public servants in Algeria may be characterised as bourgeois, not in virtue of their relation to the means of production in the state sector but in virtue of their relationship to private capital. That is, the Algerian bourgeoisie properly so called, based on its ownership of the means of production in the private sector of the economy, undoubtedly possesses important allies in the bureaucracy who may be regarded as part of the bourgeoisie by virtue of this relationship and the social and political outlook which goes with it.

Such a state of affairs is highly likely to obtain in the early phases of socialist development, especially in a relatively backward country. It clearly constitutes a major obstacle to the consummation of this development. The particular problem of the bourgeois character of elements of the bureaucracy is, however, reinforced and often overshadowed by a more general feature of the Algerian bureaucracy, namely the absence, except in rare individual cases, of a developed and effective sense of disinterested public service. Put another way, the general problem of the Algerian bureaucracy is that it is not yet a proper bureaucracy: rather than excessively bureaucratic, it is insufficiently so. Unlike its counterparts in, for example, Western Europe, its failure to conform to the Weberian ideal
type is not a matter of marginal shortcomings, it is systematic. This state of affairs is a corollary of the backwardness of the Algerian state.

The Algerian state is modernist but Algeria is not a modern state. The state, in the sense of state machine, is, under the direction of its political leadership, engaged in promoting the transformation of Algerian society through an ambitious programme of economic development. At the same time, the Algerian state, in the sense of a sovereign political community, is not yet a modern state. It will not be so until the transformation in question has been completed. In Marx’s view, two crucial features of the modern state, by which it is distinguished from its predecessors, are the separation of politics from religion and the radical dichotomy between the private and public domains.

**Religion and Politics in Algeria**

In Algeria, the separation of politics from religion is far from complete. The constitution enshrines the role of Islam as the state religion and the Head of State must be a Muslim. Only one non-Muslim has held a ministerial portfolio since Independence. The official status of Islam, established by the Constituent Assembly in 1963, although not without opposition from the Left, was confirmed in the National Charter adopted by referendum in 1976.

Moreover, Islam’s position as the state religion is by no means a matter of form, but is taken seriously by the authorities. **Ramadan**, the month of fasting, is officially enforced, inasmuch as cafes and restaurants are obliged to close and bank, office, factory and school timetables are uniformly altered for the duration. Religious feast days (‘Aid el Fitr, ‘Aid el Adha, Mawlid, etc.) are public holidays. The Ministry of Traditional Education and Religious Affairs runs its own network of seminaries and Islamic Institutes to train the officers of the cult. Each week it decides the content of the khotba — the sermon to be delivered in the mosques on Friday; and every year it organises the pilgrimage to Mecca, the Minister himself going to the airport to see the hajjis off. More generally, much government policy is justified by official spokesmen in religious terms. Thus the ‘Agrarian Revolution’ launched in 1971-72 was presented as an act of national solidarity and hence as a duty which the community (umma) was obliged to undertake in order to maintain its own cohesion and health. We may note, moreover, the frequent identification made in official pronouncements of the umma (community of believers) and the watan (the nation): the latter is effectively defined as the former, that is, in religious terms.

Religion thus plays a substantial role in the affairs of state. It is very important not to exaggerate or misconceive the significance of this, however. Algeria is not a religious state, even if we cannot describe it as a secular one. As Marx pointed out in his polemic against the editor of the *Kölnerische Zeitung*:

The truly religious state is the theocratic state; the prince of such states must either be the God of religion, Jehovah himself, as in the Jewish state, God’s representative, the Dalai Lama, as in Tibet, or finally, . . . they must all submit to a church which is an ‘infallible church’. For if, as in Protestantism, there is no supreme head of the church, the domination of religion is nothing but the religion of denomination, the cult of the will of the government (Marx & Engels: *On Religion*, pp.32-33).
There is no church in Algeria, still less an ‘infallible’ one with a supreme head. It is not the case that Islam, or any more or less organised tendency within it, exercises the kind of conscious and coherent hegemony over state and society that the Catholic hierarchy has exercised over Southern Irish society since the middle of the 19th century and over the state of Eire since 1921. It was, perhaps, conceivable that the Association of the 'Ulama (doctors of religious law) might aspire to the exercise of such hegemony in the independent state, as the Ayatollahs have done in Iran. Unlike their Iranian counterparts, however, the Algerian 'Ulama, despite playing a substantial role in the genesis of Algerian nationalism, at no stage succeeded in constituting the political leadership of the national revolution. Since Independence they have been obliged to accept a subordinate and dependent position vis-à-vis the political leadership in the Algerian state. As Fanny Colonna has pointed out, the significance of the Ministry of Traditional Education and Religious Affairs in Algeria is that it is the institutional expression and organisational instrument of the hegemony of the state over the religious field, not of religion over the political field. In Southern Ireland, the Catholic hierarchy has never brooked the slightest interference in its affairs on the part of the political leadership, and this autonomy has been a precondition of its hegemony over the politicians. In Algeria, the religious leaders collectively have little practical autonomy from the political leadership. Insofar as they constitute an organised force, this is principally in virtue of their orchestration by the state which pays their salaries and supervises their activities in accordance with its 'reasons'.

The corollary of this domination of the religious by the political is that the two spheres, although analytically distinct, are empirically confused, at least to the extent to which they overlap. Theoretical distinctions which the sociological observer is capable of making do not necessarily correspond to the experience of Algerian Muslims. In addition the state’s supervision of the religious sphere undoubtedly represents a strategic decision by the Boumedienne regime (to which its successor has so far adhered) to make a virtue out of necessity. The conditions do not yet exist for a secular, let alone anti-religious, stance on the part of an otherwise effectively modernist regime. For the regime to forsake Islam in the name of modernity would be to break the single most important ideological and cultural link between it and the mass of the population. It would also, of course, deprive the regime of much of its historical legitimacy as the heir to a revolution which was popularly conceived of as a jihad (Holy War) fought by moujahidin (warriors of the Faith). For the social and political mobilisation of this population to be effective, it must be conducted in terms intelligible to it, that is, inter alia, in religious terms.

The brand of Islam which constitutes the state religion in Algeria is substantially appropriate to the performance of this political service. Official Islam is the puritan, scripturalist, nationalist and modernist Islam of the Reform movement (islah) led by the Association of the 'Ulama, whose founder, Abdelhamid Ben Badis (died 1940), is one of the principal national heroes of the independent state. The modernism and nationalism of the regime’s policies therefore find ready legitimation in religious terms. Insofar as socialist policies appear necessary to the realisation of the programme of modernisation, they too can claim this religious legitimacy.
Insofar as such policies involve egalitarianism and 'social justice' and so require measures of expropriation and redistribution, they can seek legitimation in religious terms as being necessary for the preservation of the cohesion and unity of the *umma*. Official Islam in Algeria is thus precisely 'the cult of the will of the government', which is why popular resistance to that will is frequently expressed through 'unorthodox' or dissident versions of the faith, as has been seen in the revival of the Sufi brotherhoods during the 1970s and, more recently, the growth of the Muslim Brethren. At the same time, this overlap between religion and politics testifies to the lack of modernity of the Algerian state in that it directly reflects the degree of confusion which exists between private and public domains.

**Private Domain and Public Domain**

By private domain I mean the domain of private (or particular) interests, be they those of an individual, a family, a firm, an association or whatnot. By public domain I mean the domain of the public (or general) interest. In Hegel's political theory, Civil Society was the arena for the play of private interests, the State was the arena for the determination and realisation of the public interest. The distinction between private and public domains is not yet fully established in the social consciousness in Algeria. There is, however, a radical difference between the two main sectors of the economy in this respect.

In the capitalist private sector (which accounted for 37 per cent of industrial production and 47 per cent of industrial employment in 1975), the distinction is clear. The conflict between the rival private interests is recognised and allowed for, for example the conflict between labour and capital and between competing capitals. The private domain has a clear material basis in private property, including the property of workers in their own labour power and the corresponding right to withdraw it.

In the public sector, the distinction is obscured. Private interests and the public interest are systematically confused. The bureaucracy does not predominantly, let alone exclusively, represent the general interest over against particular interests, it is pervaded by particular interests. The reason for this is linked to the fact that the emergence of the state sector of the economy has not been, for the most part, the economic corollary of the growth of the power of the state at the expense of domestic private interests, as it has been elsewhere, whether in revolutionary fashion, as in the Soviet Union, or through an evolutionary mode of development, as in the United Kingdom. Undefeated and largely unscathed in Algeria, but denied the opportunity for unlimited development by the expansion of the state sector, these private interests have taken their revenge by systematically infiltrating the administrative apparatus and thereby impeding the coherent collective management of the public sector of the economy. Decisions at every level of the administration are taken in the name of the 'People' but determined to a considerable extent by the play of private interests. Bruno Etienne, who has provided a most penetrating analysis of this phenomenon, suggests that the influence of private interests decreases in intensity the higher up the bureaucratic hierarchy one goes, and it is very likely that this is the case. In general, however, with the exception of a small number of conscientious or merely prudent (because highly remunerated) senior functionaries at the
apex of the administrative pyramid and a scattering of idealists at other levels, there is little practical recognition of, or respect for, the concept of disinterested public service. The bureaucracy does not function primarily in accordance with a rational-legal code; such a code exists, of course, but is subject to extensive manipulation when it is not simply honoured in the breach. On the contrary, administrative action is determined in large measure by personal ties and obligations and is characterised by the preferential treatment of friends and relations. If bureaucrats in Algeria appear much less inert than their counterparts in many other countries, this is only partly to the credit of the government. To a substantial extent, it is in virtue of their need to 'render service' (ma'ouna) in order to honour a debt to, or contract a debt from, kinsmen and allies, whose pressure is all the more intense for the fact that Algerian society is undergoing an extremely disorienting process of unusually rapid economic and social development. In such times, those without allies are not simply left behind, they are liable to lose what they have.

In the private sector, the explicit recognition of the existence of competing and conflicting private interests simultaneously permits both the continued development of these interests and the social forces which embody them and the intervention of the state as the public power guaranteeing the general interest of the community as a whole by subjecting the interplay of these interests to the rule of law. Recognition of the private domain and of the public domain, and of both the distinction and the relationship between the two, is thus free to develop and attain a good deal of clarity in the social consciousness. Thus in the private sector the distinction between Civil Society and the State is clear.

In the public sector, on the other hand, the existence of private interests is clandestine. Here, the private domain has no clearly demarcated material basis of private property and its rights, for these are, of course, non-existent in the state sector — even in regard to rights of an individual's labour-power, for strikes are illegal. At the same time, public property rights are not sufficiently backed up by a public power capable of enforcing them fully; they thus tend to fall prey to particular private interests. Because private interests are illegitimate, the only recognition officially accorded them is that implied by the intermittent presidential denunciations of nepotism and corruption, notably in the series of extremely forceful speeches which Boumedienne delivered in the summer of 1974. The existence and importance of these interests is thus the open secret of Algerian politics, the scandal of Algerian public life.

In these circumstances, the illegitimacy of these interests means that their development and that of the social forces and individuals which embody them have been continuously impeded, headed off by irregular clampdowns on corruption and generally discouraged and frustrated. But, because these particular interests have not been allowed to achieve an explicit existence, their development has not simultaneously permitted the general interest to be clearly distinguished from them and acquire public recognition as such, as has been possible within the confines of the private sector of the economy. The resulting confusion not only impedes the rational management of state property, it also engenders massive popular cynicism,
since every Algerian is in turn accomplice and victim of this confusion, obliged to profit from such ‘contacts’ (*ma’arifa*) and ‘pull’ (*piston*) as he possesses within the bureaucracy when he can do so, denied the treatment to which he is, in principle, entitled when such privileged access is lacking.

Since the state sector as a whole (in agriculture and services as well as in industry) is hugely dominant in terms of the proportion of GNP it accounts for and, although less decisively as yet, the workforce it employs, the social relations and the corresponding forms of consciousness which obtain within it determine the general character of the state as a whole. Thus the Algerian state is not yet a modern state, for the distinction between State and Civil Society is not yet generally established in the social consciousness. This situation finds its ideological reflection in the survival of highly charged vestiges of the Arab-Muslim political order in which, of old, state power had its origin in ‘a people formed by a community’ instead of, as in modern Western states, ‘a people composed of citizens’ (Flory, p.19). The order itself has not survived, for the colonial disruption of Algerian society destroyed its material basis. But its vestiges are being shrewdly enlisted, as we have seen, to perform a last historical service, that of legitimising policies which are consummating the transformation initiated by the French.

In the meantime, however, confusion reigns. And it is here that we can see in its fullness the profound ambiguity of the dominant role of the state in Algerian society at the current stage of its development. On the one hand, only the state could impel the rapid economic development which is creating the material basis for a modern political order. On the other hand, the massive expansion of the state apparatus and the fact that the state is the principle allocator of the society’s resources have given a new lease of life to the traditional solidarities based on family, clan, village, tribe and religious brotherhood, to the variable but often substantial extent that these have survived the colonial impact. It is only by invoking these solidarities (and more recent ones, for example those born of service in one or other branches or regions of the wartime liberation front) that the majority of Algerians can obtain access to the administration. It is also, to a great extent, on the possession of such a clientele that the ambitious bureaucrat is obliged to build his career. These circumstances, by no means peculiar to Algeria, have given rise to a number of studies on the theme of ‘patron-client’ relations, among which, for the Algerian case, that of Bruno Etienne holds price of place. As he remarks, ‘today, the system of patron-client relations can either gangrene the state apparatus or serve to diffuse the new rationality of Algiers’ (p.92). In fact, however, it does both at once, for

... as a mechanism through which to integrate a marginal and peripheral population which possesses its own system of values, the system of patron-client relations is used by the elite which dominates the Nation-State in order to impose its own system of values and reinforce its power.

As in the case of Reformist Islam, a virtue has been made of necessity. But while the political use of Islam for modernist purposes has required no justification, since to most Algerians it appears as its own justification, the use of patron-client relations in this way has been surreptitious and the object of a good deal of double-think. It has also been much more of an
objective process than the product of a conscious strategic choice. But at the same time it has meant that the importance of the private interests involved in the system of patron-client relations within the public sector has been systematically under-estimated in the official discourse of the regime. The government simply has not possessed, at any rate until very recently, the political resources to police, let alone purge, the administrative apparatus. Official regulation of the interplay of private interests within the state sector has been out of the question since these interests within the state sector have been out of the question since these interests have no official existence. Yet political suppression of the interplay of these interests has also been impossible.

Clannishness and the Political Development of the Bourgeoisie

The reasons for this lack of effective curbs in the past and also whether the assertion of systematic political control over the administrative apparatus is now becoming possible will be examined later. But, first, we need to consider the relationship between these general features of the Algerian bureaucracy and its mode of operation on the one hand and the development of the Algerian bourgeoisie on the other. The connection between the two is an intimate one. There exists a plethora of patron-client networks, but also a definite tendency for them to cohere into factions or "clans". Many clans, naturally, are rather short-lived affairs, but equally many may well possess a certain corporate stability, although their membership will usually include a "floating" element. This phenomenon, usually referred to as 'clannishness' in the Algerian case, has been widely noted. As Etienne has remarked, if the bureaucracy has varying relations with its environment,

... at the level of the capital, Algiers, it is more a question of clans within the administration and the power structure, which confront one another over questions of patrons, that is, questions of personality and recent history rather than over doctrinal debates ... Often one has the impression that certain administrative services constitute veritable segments opposed one to another, the ties of blood being interwoven with the legitimacy of the various coteries of the war period ... (p. 105).

Accordingly, the specific and principal problem of the bureaucracy in Algeria is not so much that patron-client relationships, articulating private interests, pervade the apparatus. Rather it is that crucial decisions, particularly at higher levels, are taken in virtue of factional struggles, and so are determined as much by the state of play between opposed clans as by the requirements and priorities of government policy.

Problem number one of the Algerian bureaucracy, then, the phenomenon of clannishness, also forms the link between the general system of patron-client relations on the one hand and the bourgeois leanings of important elements of the bureaucracy on the other, for it is precisely through these factional struggles that the Algerian bourgeoisie is developing itself as a national class. That clannishness has to be the vehicle for formation of this class is in part a measure of the extent to which this bourgeoisie has come to depend upon its relationship with the state sector of the economy — a dependence accentuated by the loss of major areas of economic activity in agriculture (since the launching of the 'Agrarian Revolution' in 1971/72) and the wholesaling of agricultural produce (since 1974). It is also a measure
of its general political immaturity and its substantial incoherence as a ‘class for itself’.

The notion of a class weakened by internal divisions arising from conflicting material interests within it is a familiar feature of Marxist theory since Marx’s own analysis of Bonapartism in mid-19th century France. In Algeria, however, the incoherence of the bourgeoisie has not been a matter of the competing and, at least temporarily, irreconcilable interests of agrarian, merchant, industrial and finance capital. In a mature capitalist society where the bourgeoisie is the ruling class, political factions within it may we predominantly represent different fractions of capital. In a country where the bourgeoisie is not yet the ruling class, where it is still, in fact, engaged in simultaneously acquiring power and becoming a class for itself, the divisions within it are likely to reflect rather the competition for political power and for membership of this rising class. The two are in fact indissociable inasmuch as participation in or access to political power is a prerequisite for obtaining, consolidating or simply preserving economic power. Moreover, those engaged in this competition are likely to invest, for reasons of political rather than economic prudence, in a wide range of activities, agrarian, commercial, financial and so on. Such competition is, by definition, between social groups in transition, groups which have emerged from the previous social order and which are defined at least partially in terms of this order. They use the mechanisms of social solidarity and political mobilisation offered by this order to gain a position in the emerging class structure, in which they will finally become independent of these old ties.

In Algeria, the transitional social groups engaged in this competition for membership of the emerging bourgeoisie are constituted on the basis of three types of social origin. First, there are the remnants of the old, essentially mercantile, bourgeoisie of pre-colonial Algeria, which has survived principally in the two inland cities of Constantine in the east and Tlemcen in the west and, to a lesser extent, in smaller towns such as Mila, Bejaia and Jijel in the east and Mascara, Nedroma and Mostaganem in the west. Second are the descendants of the old tribal nobility, both military (jouad) and religious chorfa). Third are the more vigorous and dynamic elements of the detribalised peasantry which, through access to French education during the colonial period, acquired the cultural prerequisites for subsequent upward social mobility.

It is largely out of these three elements that the modern Algerian bourgeoisie has been forging itself but it appears that the integration of formerly noble or peasant families into the bourgeoisie has been accompanied by the reinforcement of the regional fragmentation of the class as a whole. The reason for this is that the principal arbiters of this process of integration have been the great bourgeois families of Constantine and Tlemcen, notably through the orchestration of marriage alliances but also through a multitude of less visible procedures. The multi-faceted process of absorption of new elements into the bourgeoisie of Constantine and Tlemcen has entailed the extension of the hegemony of these bourgeoisies over their respective hinterlands (eastern and western Algeria) and, at the same time, has tended to accentuate the political divisions within
the bourgeoisie as a whole.

In the past, there has been very little connection between the bourgeoisies of Constantine and Tlemcen. Prior to the colonial period, eastern Algeria had possessed much stronger economic and cultural links with Tunisia than with western Algeria, while the latter had been primarily oriented towards Morocco. Before the advent of Turkish rule in the 16th century, these two regions had been the more or less autonomous peripheries of the Tunisian and Moroccan states. The Turks formally unified Algeria in administrative terms, but did very little to integrate its various regions into a national economic community. French colonialism laid the foundations for the subsequent integration of the Algerian economy, but in the short run the customs union with the metropolis largely undermined the traditional artisanate of the towns and the old commercial networks upon which the prosperity of the Muslim bourgeoisie had been based. The new commercial networks which replaced them were dominated by European capital. Thus, before 1962, the changes which had occurred had done little to unify the Algerian bourgeoisie. It was for this reason that the Algerian bourgeoisie never developed a coherent and united attitude towards the colonial regime. Although elements of it played an important part in the genesis of Algerian nationalism, notably through the Association of the 'Ulama, this did not represent the collective outlook of the bourgeoisie as a whole. On political questions there was no collective outlook. It was this lack of coherence which prevented the bourgeoisie from assuming the political leadership of the nationalist movement and thereby acquiring hegemony over the Muslim population. The failure of bourgeois leadership permitted the emergence of autonomous and more radical forces, which have retained political power in Algeria ever since.

If the structure of the national economy prior to Independence was not conducive to the integration of the Algerian bourgeoisie into a national class, we might, nonetheless, expect subsequent economic changes to have favoured such a development. It is certainly possible, even likely, that this will be the long-run effect of the changes which have occurred since 1962. In the short run, however, it would appear rather that these changes have led to the loose links that characterised relationships between the regional components of the bourgeoisie, to be superceded, generally speaking, by intense rivalries. The state rapidly assumed a dominant role in the economy after 1962 and the private sector accordingly became increasingly dependent upon the public sector. Moreover, the personnel of the crucial administrative apparatus was, initially, drawn very largely from precisely those sections of the population with access to French education out of which the modern Algerian bourgeoisie has been constituting itself. As a result, competition for social and economic advancement within this developing class, or for entry into it, has been inevitably accompanied by political competition for influence and representation within the bureaucracy. Insofar as access to the administration depends upon personal ties of kinship and alliance and to the extent that such ties are, for the most part, geographically circumscribed, the resulting factions within the administrative apparatus have tended to assume distinct regional complexions. While clans of a kind exist at every level of the Algerian bureaucracy, the most stable of those at the national level, in the sociétés
nationales (public enterprises), the other state economic organisations (offices nationales, etc.) and even the various government departments, usually have their social basis in the regional fractions of the bourgeoisie.

Bureaucracy and Party

How, then, are we to characterise the principal contradiction within the system of state capitalism as it exists in contemporary Algeria? The burden of my argument thus far can be summarised as follows. The development of state capitalism has entailed the massive expansion of the administrative apparatus of the state but has also, at least initially, permitted a substantial development of private capitalist enterprise. The pervasive presence of patron-client relations within the bureaucracy, corollary of the backwardness of the Algerian state, has seriously interfered with the efficient management of the public sector. More important, the combination of this general feature of the bureaucracy with the specific mode of development of the regionally fragmented Algerian bourgeoisie has given rise to the far more acute problem of ‘clannishness’. There is then an incessant struggle between factions, which intervenes in the determination of administrative action at every level but with particular effect at the national level. The general phenomenon of patron-client relations, particularly important at the lower levels of the administrative hierarchy, can to some extent be allowed for and discounted by the architects of government policy. But ‘clannishness’ poses a far more serious problem, since it characterises administrative action at the highest levels of the hierarchy as well as lower down and interferes in the functioning of the bureaucracy at crucial moments in ways which are inherently unpredictable.

The inefficiency and incoherence to which the management of the public sector has accordingly been prone could be and has been regarded by the government as an acceptable and, in any case, unavoidable price to pay for the state-directed primitive accumulation necessary for the construction of a modern industrial economy in Algeria. Once this primitive accumulation had been achieved, however, the case for the continuing domination of the state sector and the corresponding restrictions placed upon the private sector could be strongly challenged on the grounds of the superior efficiency and profitability of private enterprise.

Moreover, the phase of primitive accumulation has entailed, in Algeria as elsewhere, a long period of austerity and the comparative neglect of the consumption needs of the population, notably in housing. Social pressure on the government to pay greater attention to these needs has been building up since the early 1970s and the Chadli regime has made clear its intention to respond positively to this and has already begun to do so. But any significant shift in the relative importance accorded to the production of consumption goods as opposed to production goods must involve either a substantial expansion of the private sector, which has throughout been largely concerned with this type of production, or the development of a large state sector of light industry. The first option is likely to reinforce the social pressure for a more thorough-going economic liberalisation of the kind which has been attempted in Egypt in recent years. Because of the unpredictable but probably disruptive social and political repercussions of such a development — quite apart from other considerations — this option
is likely to be resisted by the political leadership. The second option entails the considerable expansion of the administrative apparatus of the state. In view of the generally more complex nature of both the functions of management in, and the central planning of, light industry producing for the consumer market as compared with heavy industry engaged to a large extent in the production of capital goods, the capacity of the state to assume responsibility for this type of production would be gravely prejudiced by the persistence of administrative irrationality and inefficiency. Accordingly, the choice of the second option is likely to be accompanied, if it is to be effective, by attempts by the political leadership to tighten its control over this apparatus — attempts which will, among other things, threaten the existing prerogatives of senior functionaries and which are therefore liable to be strongly resisted by them.

The conflict between advocates of these alternative lines of development has a direct bearing on the continuing controversy within the regime over the role and prerogatives of the Party, the *Front de Liberation nationale*. Since Independence the FLN has possessed neither the authority nor the technical competence to orient and supervise the activity of the administrative apparatus of the state. Its function has been rather to orient and control the population, through its control of the ‘mass organisations’ — the trades union, the peasants’ union, the youth movement, the women’s union and so forth. Neither armed forces nor bureaucracy have been subject to its authority. In a sense, therefore, the Party and its ramifications could be regarded as part of the bureaucracy, performing essentially a public relations function on its behalf. Until recently the Party apparatus was meagre in the extreme. It possessed neither central committee nor political bureau. No debates of substance took place within it, since it was not where power lay. Its job was to explain and justify decisions taken elsewhere, not to reason why.

But, if the Boumedienne regime actively connived at this state of affairs from 1965 to 1971, Boumedienne himself began to express increasing dissatisfaction with it thereafter. On 31 October 1972, in the early phase of the ‘Agrarian Revolution’, he proclaimed the necessity of ‘a radical transformation of the FLN’, both in its ‘modes of leadership’ and in its ‘methods of action’. Shortly afterwards, the conservative Party chief, Kaid Ahmed, was sacked. No successor was named, however, until five years later, in October 1977, when Colonel Mohamed Saleh Yahiaoui, a member of the Council of the Revolution and director of the Combined Services Academy at Cherchell, was appointed Co-ordinator of the Party. It appears that Boumedienne was relying on a new generation of activists committed to socialism to emerge in the course of the sustained popular mobilisation which occurred from 1972 to 1977 over a series of government policies. These included the ‘agrarian revolution’, the introduction of ‘socialist management’ in the public sector, the launching of the national health service, the reform of higher education, the public debates over the National Charter in the summer of 1976 and the national mobilisation over the Western Sahara crisis. Alongside Yahiaoui, a number of other ambitious and influential figures were drafted into the Party apparatus in 1977. Their task was to prepare for a full-scale Party Congress, the first since 1964, to be held in late 1978. Boumedienne’s death delayed the
holding of this until January 1979, but the Congress nevertheless went some way towards launching the Party on its new career at the centre of the political stage, equipping it with a 160-person Central Committee and a Political Bureau of 17 members, plus 11 commissions with responsibility for the principal areas of government policy.

In the struggle for the succession to Boumedienne, Yahiaoui appeared as the standard bearer of the Left, advocating a hardline socialist perspective. He was opposed by Abdelaziz Bouteflika, Boumedienne's Foreign Minister, who was known to favour economic liberalisation. Thus the two principal contenders for the presidency were publicly associated with the two alternative lines of development now open. However, neither of the tendencies within the regime favouring these alternatives was strong enough to secure the victory of its candidate. Instead, the army's nominee, Colonel Chadli Bendjedid, emerged as the compromise choice. Thus, if the divisions within the regime which were revealed in late 1978 suggest that Algeria had entered a period of crisis of the state capitalist form and of the balance of forces which underlies it, Chadli's victory indicates that this period is far from over. Since taking office, Chadli has persistently tacked between the two wings of the regime, balancing certain measures of liberalisation with selective tightening of political control in other spheres. He has also succeeded in clipping the newly fledged wings of the Party, dissolving several of its policy commissions and reducing the Political Bureau to five members, while further enlarging the Central Committee and thereby rendering it a less coherent and functional body.

These developments, combined with the elimination of both Yahiaoui and Bouteflika from the political scene, are evidence of the limits to which political polarisation is possible within the current form of government of the Algerian state. These limits are ultimately determined by the political weight of the army, which has been the effective arbiter of the competition between factions within the national leadership since before Independence, and clearly does not intend to surrender this role. In acting, through its political representatives, to constrain the development of the Party as an autonomous centre of power within the regime, the army has incidentally secured a new lease of life for bureaucratic irrationality in Algeria.

**Bibliographic Note**


French Militarism in Africa

Robin Luckham

In the annals of foreign military intervention in independent Africa, it has been French forces that have been involved far more often than any other outside power. At least eighteen times in the last twenty-five years French troops have invaded African soil. But equally significant, and indeed providing the platform for the more dramatic interventions, are the extensive networks of regular military co-operation.

Several single explanations of France’s militarism in Africa are explored: that it preserves French capital’s interests; that it protects multinational, especially US, interests; that it promotes the interests of a military-industrial complex; that it cements alliances with African states, but particularly with certain ruling classes and regimes. An effort is made to situate these perspectives in a more nuanced view of French imperialism and the French state. Finally, the new departures and the continuities of policy under the Socialist government are reviewed.

N’Diambour II

In November 1979 country Blue mobilises its forces following tension in relations with its neighbour, Red. It fears Red may invade the Casamance region of Blue and carry out commando raids against garrisons and administrative centres. On 19 November the government of Blue asks for help from the government of Azure, with which it has a defence agreement. Azure responds promptly, mobilising seaborne intervention forces near the Blue coastline. On 7 December Red forces invade Casamance. Azure despatches aircraft and paratroops to Dakar. On 8 December there is a new threat on the flank of Blue’s Eastern military group, from country Orange. As a result Blue activates its defence agreement with Azure. In a combined operation, from 9 to 13 December, the Red and Orange invaders are caught in a pincer movement between motorised and airborne troops sweeping in from the East and an amphibious force carried by Azure landing craft to the Western beaches.

The war-games over, President Senghor, his Prime Minister and his Minister of the Armed Forces, the Chiefs of Staff of the Senegalese and French Armed Forces (Generals Fall and Mery) and the Inspecteur des Troupes de Marine et des Forces Extérieures (General Duval) preside over a parade and banquet for the troops. On the French side these include a mechanised detachment of four hundred men of the 21st Infantry of Marine, two companies of the 1st Regiment of Chasseurs Parachutistes, a logistics unit of the 14th Regiment Parachutiste de Commandement et de Soutien, helicopter units from the 5th Regiment of Helicoptères de Combat and the 33rd Helicopter flotilla of the French Navy, Breguet-Atlantique reconnaissance aircraft, Jaguar fighter-bombers, the ubiquitous Transall transport aircraft, the aircraft carrier Foch and six other naval craft, including the landing craft which had disgorged armoured cars and armoured personnel carriers on to the beaches of Casamance.*

*Details of N’Diambour II are to be found in Frères d’Armes, No.103, March-April 1980, pp.23-32. (Lest there be any doubts about the identity of ‘country Blue’, Casamance is an area in the south of Senegal! — Eds.).
N'Diambour II was probably the most ambitious of a series of African wargames in which France has participated since 1965, when the first joint Franco-African manoeuvres, Gaur VI, were held in Senegal. These wargames have all taken place in that core of neo-colonies with which France maintains close military relationships — Senegal, the Ivory Coast, Gabon, Togo, Djibouti and (after 1978) Zaire. They have trained France’s intervention forces in tropical conditions and at the same time given African armies operational experience. The lessons of N’Diambour II, for example, were applied a year and a half later by Senegal in its own counter-revolution in the Gambia (country Orange).

In a more general sense the appearance from the skies of paratroops and Jaguar fighter-bombers, the feasting and the publicity, have provided symbolic support to African ruling classes. The joint exercises have reaffirmed the ideological complicity on which the Franco-African brotherhood of arms is based. A not-so-subtle indicator of this complicity is the colour scheme of N’Diambour II and most similar operations: blue, azure or green for the French and government forces; red or orange for the ‘subversives’ or ‘invaders’ against whom they always win.

France’s Military Presence in Africa
I begin in this way because I want to emphasise that France’s military intervention in Africa has two faces; the one erratic and conditioned by changing political circumstances; the other arising from France’s routine military co-operation with its former colonies. It is the former which has attracted public controversy, all the more because of the overtly interventionist policy of the French government during the Septennat (seven years Presidential term) of Giscard D’Estaing. Yet it is the latter which has created the military infrastructure that makes intervention possible. The presence of French troops and military advisers, the consolidation and reproduction of national military structures through external support and the transmission through military training of metropolitan skills, tastes and ideologies constitute a permanent intervention: one which cannot but have an effect on the configuration of class forces, the role played by the state in development and the external alliances of African ruling classes.

The planning of the transfer of military functions to the new African States at the time of independence was carried out by the General Staff of the French Armed Forces, although the task of obtaining the agreement of African governments to the blueprint, the Plan Raisonable as it was called, was undertaken by the Ministry of Co-operation. The African leaders themselves took relatively little interest in the military aspects of independence, being preoccupied with securing their domestic power base and launching programmes of economic development.

The immediate objectives were the creation of small national armies to replace France’s colonial forces, the regrouping of African soldiers serving in the latter into the new military units and the accelerated training of African officers and non-commissioned officers (NCOs) to command them. Beyond these practical plans, however, were two broader goals. The first was to ensure the security of the new African States themselves, and of the group of leaders to whom power was being transferred. The security thus
### Table I: French Military Commitments in Francophone Black Africa

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Former French Colonies</th>
<th>French Bases (B)</th>
<th>Defence Agreements (D)</th>
<th>Joint Military Manoeuvres (M)</th>
<th>Military Technical Assistance Agreements (TA) in force January 1980</th>
<th>French Troops in Bases and Military Installations</th>
<th>Number of French Military Advisers</th>
<th>Share of Arms Imports purchased from France (%)</th>
<th>Total Imports from France (Million of French Francs)</th>
<th>French Residents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Djibouti</td>
<td>B + D + M + TA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3,900</td>
<td>3,500</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gabon</td>
<td>B + D + M + TA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>200</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>28.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ivory Coast</td>
<td>B + D + M + TA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>330</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>97.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>B + D + M + TA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2,080</td>
<td>1,200</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>97.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cameroun</td>
<td>(D) + TA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>80</td>
<td>2 or 3</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>75.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central African</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republic</td>
<td>(D) + TA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>120</td>
<td>1,100</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>75.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Togo</td>
<td>(D) + TA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>94.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chad</td>
<td>TA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>730</td>
<td>144</td>
<td></td>
<td>81</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mauritania</td>
<td>TA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>94.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niger</td>
<td>TA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>230</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>69.5</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Volta</td>
<td>TA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benin</td>
<td>TA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congo</td>
<td>TA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>49.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madagascar</td>
<td>TA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2,650</td>
<td>411</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>73.3</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mali</td>
<td>TA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guinea</td>
<td>—</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Countries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burundi</td>
<td>TA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rwanda</td>
<td>TA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>71.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zaire</td>
<td>M + TA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>68.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Notes
1. Includes both bases and garrisons, as in the Ivory Coast where there is a French contingent but no major installations under French control. Most African governments claim that France only has 'facilities' on their territory, on the legalistic grounds that there is no cessation of sovereignty over the bases to the French military authorities. Such arguments have significant implications for the ECOWAS Defence Pact, which specifically excludes bases once the new ECOWAS defence arrangements are in operation.
2. Cameroun and Togo agreements not published. That with the Central African Republic may have been formally abrogated before the 1979 coup against Bokassa, but was subsequently restored.
3. Abrogated in the course of 1980.
France's military planners drew on the experience of a decade and a half of bitter anti-revolutionary warfare in Indo-China and North Africa, which had a profound effect on their military doctrines. They were engaged (on a much smaller scale) in just such a war against the UPC in Cameroun. It was indeed the arrangements made for establishment of a Camerounian military force that became the model for the other Francophone armies (see Ammi-Oz).

The second basic objective was the continued integration of the Francophone states within the framework of French geo-strategic planning. In theory there was to be a division of labour between the new national armies and gendarmeries, which would ensure internal security, and France whose intervention forces would guarantee the region against any external aggression. But in practice internal and external security could not be separated. The military arrangements made with African states were part of the dense network of economic and political co-operation agreements, through which the latter were tied to France and from which they cut themselves off at their peril (as the ex-communication of Guinea by de Gaulle after it rejected the French community was intended to demonstrate).

The new defence arrangements were formalised in a series of Defence and Military Assistance Agreements negotiated for the most part in 1960 and 1961, some on a bilateral basis, others in the form of collective sub-regional defence agreements like that between France and the four countries of Central Africa. Not all the ex-colonies signed Defence Agreements. Others were later to withdraw, notably the Congo in 1972 and Mauritania and Madagascar in 1973. The denunciation of the agreements by the latter exposed other African governments to criticism for adhering to texts which so nakedly exposed their neo-colonial status; and there was a series of renegotiations in the mid-1970s. Nevertheless the changes were mainly symbolic. At the same time the network was expanded, to bring in countries outside France's traditional sphere of influence, including Zaire, Rwanda and Burundi.

The texts of the agreements vary from case to case; and in any event are a poor guide to actual behaviour. In some instances (like France's Defence Agreements with Cameroun and Togo) they are shrouded in official secrecy. France has intervened in application of existing accords. It has moved its troops in without such agreements or in advance of them as in Zaire.* And it has intervened in spite of them as in Central Africa.** To be sure, the accords have provided a tissue of legitimacy for French policy, but one which rough use has twisted beyond recognition: as in the case of the French coup against Bokassa (Operation Barracuda) in the Central African 'Empire' in 1979 which according to at least one official document the author has seen was carried out 'à la demande du Président Dacko!'

*There was a military assistance (but not defence) agreement between France and Zaire, signed in 1974 but not made public until later when its publication was used to deflect parliamentary criticism of the Shaba operations of 1977-78.

**It is not clear whether the existing defence agreement had been abrogated before the coup or had simply lapsed by default. The official fiction that France intervened in application of the agreement could only be maintained if the latter were the case.
The juridical form is in any case less important than the substance, which has changed remarkably little since Independence. As can be seen in Table I, all the Francophone states except Guinea maintain Military Assistance Agreements with France; and a nucleus among them (Senegal, Ivory Coast, Gabon, the Central African Republic, Djibouti, Togo and Cameroun) are protected by Defence Agreements in addition.

To be sure, France has greatly reduced its direct military presence from over 60,000 troops in more than ninety garrisons in Black Africa and Madagascar in 1960 (Dabezies, 1980), to over 23,000 in almost forty garrisons in 1964, and finally down to about 6,700 troops in six countries in 1981. The greater part of this withdrawal took place by the late 1960s, the only major changes in the 1970s being France’s twice accomplished retreat from Chad (1975 and 1980) and her ejection from Diego Suarez by Madagascar in 1975. During the first 15 years of independence, however, France kept the three bases that were of most strategic importance, namely Dakar, Fort-Lamy and Diego-Suarez. The loss of the two latter in the mid-1970s did mean that she had to re-group her forces, to Gabon and to the Central African Republic in Central Africa, and to Djibouti and Réunion in the Indian Ocean.

The withdrawal of French troops from Africa and their replacement by intervention forces stationed in the metropolis was an integral part of the reorganisation of French defence begun in 1959 under General de Gaulle and continued by the successive governments of the Fifth Republic. Large French garrisons were too much of a political risk in independent Africa, although transit, refuelling and support facilities in the continent were still considered essential. Sea-borne forces — as the Franco-African manoeuvre were to demonstrate — were by themselves insufficient as they could not get to the scene of the conflict quickly enough to be effective. The emphasis therefore was increasingly placed on the development of mobile airborne forces with appropriate equipment for the task (Transall transport aircraft, helicopters, light armoured cars and armoured personnel carriers, mobile anti-tank weapons, paratroopers and Jaguar fighter-bombers for ground support). This consolidation of the intervention forces was sharply accelerated during the septennat of President Giscard d’Estaing, being part of the reorganisation and strengthening of France’s ground defence forces embarked on between 1974 and 1976.

The intervention forces thus created currently comprise two Divisions and one armoured and motorised demi-Brigade — the 11th Division Parachutiste of 15-16,000 men in the south-west of France, the 9th Division d’Infanterie de Marine of 7,600 men in Brittany and the 31st Demi-Brigade of 3,500 men (still in the process of creation) in Provence — with a carefully integrated apparatus of support units (combat helicopters, artillery, portable missiles, armour and logistical support). In addition there are France’s tactical airforces and the naval squadrons at Brest and Toulon which patrol the African and Mediterranean coasts.

There are some major deficiencies: including the fact that only part of these intervention forces would actually be available in time of emergency (perhaps only five regiments of 800-900 men each, Le Monde, 20 May 1978);
and the short range of the Transall transport aircraft* which obliged France to rely on American logistical support for the 1978 Shaba operation in Zaire. Yet even so France’s intervention forces are probably in a better state of military readiness than those of any other military power, including the hastily created Rapid Deployment Forces of the United States.

Francophone Africa has been crucial in the formation of the intervention forces for a number of different reasons. The military installations still in French hands are vital for logistics, the more so because of the temporary lack of long-range military transport aircraft. Further they are part of the global military communications system that France still maintains, which is second in its geographical scope only to that of the United States.** And France’s joint military manoeuvres with the Francophone countries have not just provided training but have also constituted a symbolic affirmation of France’s ability to project its power in foreign parts.

It is against this background that one must look at the long list of French interventions that have taken place in Africa since independence, summarised in Table II. France made frequent use of her troops during the early crises of independence in the 1960s, both to put down riots and to keep governments in power. There then followed a period in the mid-60s when direct military involvement was limited to Chad. Finally there was a renewed wave of interventions from 1976-1980 during the septennat of President Giscard d’Estaing.

These later interventions can in part be considered a response to a series of crises on the African continent, triggered off by the Ethiopian and Portuguese revolutions. Nevertheless France’s propensity to use force in dealing with them was shaped by the military preparations it had begun much earlier. These preparations included not only the creation of intervention forces in the metropolis, but also the consolidation of national military structures and behind them of national ruling classes in Africa itself.

France has participated in the latter task at several different levels. The French General Staff prepared the original Plan Raisonnable on which the Francophone armies were based. It has assisted in the organisation of African armies during the whole post-independent period, notably in the preparation of reorganisation plans for a number of African military establishments after 1974, at a time when it was also restructuring its own armed forces. There was an especially sharp rise in military co-operation expenditures during the high noon of French intervention in the mid-1970s (Table III), during which expenditures on military material outstripped

---

*Admiral Antoine Sanguinetti (see Note at end) argues that this deficiency was deliberate, being part of the unstated agreement to co-ordinate French forces with the NATO command. It is more likely that the deficiency resulted from the complacent assumption of French defence planners, that France would continue to dispose of air bases and staging posts in Africa, such as that which it lost in Fort-Lamy. The Giscardian defence programme provided for the relancement of Transall production. From 1981 the Transall’s range will be significantly increased by the addition of extra fuel tanks and flight refuelling facilities.

**Information from Owen Wilkes of the Stockholm International Peace Research Association. The USSR’s military communications system does not have the global span of that of France, although it is of course much more dense within the confines of the Socialist block itself.
Table II: French Military Interventions in Black Africa

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cameroun</td>
<td>1959-64</td>
<td>Counter-revolutionary war against UPC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>1959-60 and 1962</td>
<td>Support for President Senghor during break-up of Mali Federation and attempted coup by Mamadou Dia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1964</td>
<td>Prevention of military coup against President Mba.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chad</td>
<td>1960-63</td>
<td>Suppression of riots and minor uprisings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1968-75</td>
<td>Counter-revolutionary war against FROLINAT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1977-80</td>
<td>Counter-revolutionary war against FROLINAT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mauritania</td>
<td>1961</td>
<td>Suppression of riots.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1977-78</td>
<td>Air support in counter-revolutionary operations against POLISARIO.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Djibouti</td>
<td>1976-77</td>
<td>Operations Lovada and Saphir against Somali irredentism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central African Republic</td>
<td>1979</td>
<td>French coup against Bokassa (Operation Barracuda).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
1. This Table only lists the most overt and ‘military’ of the French interventions. There is room for dispute about what should or should not be included and about how to describe the French role in each case. Of course there is a whole range of situations in which France has intervened more covertly, or more or less openly condoned interventions by her own citizens: notably French participation in plots and attempted coups in Guinea (before relations were normalised); the co-operation between the SDECE and the CIA during the latter’s attempts to destabilise the MPLA in Angola in 1975-76; the ‘mercenary’ invasion of Benin in 1977; France’s approval if not participation in the coup against a revolutionary government in the Comores in 1978; and her covert assistance to Hissan Habre between the withdrawal from Chad in 1980 and the election of the Socialist government in 1981.
2. There is room for dispute about whether it is proper to talk about a French intervention during these events. The French presence, however, was clearly a factor, as was the fact that there were French officers in command of Senegalese military and gendarmerie units who were obliged to make choices about whom among the competing local authorities they should obey, presumably in accordance with instructions from Paris.

Table III: French Military Co-operation Budgets since 1970

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Budget Definitif (billions of francs)</th>
<th>Excess of Budget Definitif over Budget Initial (billions of francs)</th>
<th>Supply of Military Material Percent of Budget</th>
<th>Military Co-operation as Percent of Total Co-operation Budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>+ 9.7</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>- 6.0</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>+ 5.5</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>+ 78.1</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>414</td>
<td>+ 151.0</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>644</td>
<td>+263.6</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>634</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>636</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>652</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table IV: Dependence of Ex-French, Ex-British and Ex-Belgian Black Africa on Supplies of Major Weapons from former Metropolis

1. Former French Colonies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suppliers</th>
<th>1960-69</th>
<th>1970-80</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other NATO</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socialist</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Former British Colonies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suppliers</th>
<th>1960-69</th>
<th>1970-80</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Britain</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other NATO</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>41.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socialist</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Former Belgian Colonies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suppliers</th>
<th>1960-69</th>
<th>1970-80</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other NATO</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socialist</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


those on training. France has remained the main supplier of weapons to the majority of the former French colonies (Tables I and IV) at the same time as pushing beyond them into new military markets such as Zaire and more recently Nigeria.

France has also maintained its Military Technical Assistance Agreements with all the ex-French countries except Guinea as well as signing new agreements with Zaire, Rwanda and Burundi in the mid-1970s. Under them there has been a steady flow of military co-operants to Africa and of African soldiers to France for training. The number of the former has declined over the years, although the latter have tended to increase (Table V).

Broadly speaking, the level of French influence on African armies has not been reduced since independence so much as shifted up the hierarchy of military reproduction: from the exercise of day-to-day command functions and the provision of basic military training in the 1960s, to the provision of more advanced staff and technical training in France, often related to sales of complex hardware, and the establishment of academies and specialised training schools in Africa — some on a regional basis — in the 1970s and 1980s. There has developed, moreover, a dense network of personal contacts between African and French military men and a series of specialised military publications, like Frères d'Armes, a semi-official journal for African armies edited at the Centre Militaire d'Information et
de Documentation sur l’Outre Mer, and Afrique défense and Revue Africaine de Stratégie.* The two latter maintain close contacts with the French defence industries, whose products they advertise extensively.

Through the transfer of military technology and the diffusion of military culture France exercises an influence that will continue to be felt long after the removal of its last troops from the African continent. In the words of a leading French military sociologist (and former paratroop colonel):

*Whose title has recently been altered to Stratégie Afrique/Moyen-Orient, reflecting France’s greater interest in Middle East military markets. The publishers of the same review have also helped produce glossy military magazines for the armed forces of Senegal, Togo, Cameroun and Zaire.
If the concept of defence, by its very nature political, is developmental and changeable, the same cannot be said of the concept of military technical assistance. Indeed, the latter is not only the source of close and permanent bonds. It loses all governmental connotation, and is understood quite naturally within the army in concrete terms of connection and complicity, hierarchy and comradeship, promotion and seniority. The persona of General de Gaulle, the shared culture of the officer class, and the ‘specificity of the military’ have been perhaps, the three major bases of our success and our permanence in Africa since independence (Dabezies, p.241).

The effects of this reinforcement of la spécificité militaire on African armies and political systems are still poorly understood, despite the proliferation of case studies of African military establishments. One effect is clearly on the position of the military elite itself, relative to other fractions of the existing ruling class or power bloc. Another is greater reliance on the repressive apparatus of the state under civilian as well as under military regimes, thus bringing into question the distinction between the two. The military and police apparatuses are as much features of political life in the Ivory Coast and Cameroun as they are under ‘military’ governments like those of Togo, Mali or Zaire, although we know more about the latter as there have been almost no studies of the military or police in civilian regimes.

In this paper, however, the main concern is the relation that la spécificité militaire establishes between French and African military men and between French and African ruling classes. Within this brotherhood of arms there is a well defined stratification, under which some are more brothers than others. Broadly speaking, the closeness of ties increases the greater the extent of French economic interests, the more the French residents (see the right-hand column of Table I) and the deeper French commitment to the ruling circles of each country. At the centre is a group of neo-colonies, the Ivory Coast, Gabon, Senegal, Cameroun and perhaps Togo, where French capital has most at stake, whose economies have benefited most from the franc zone and whose ruling groups have been stable since independence (with the exception of Togo whose stabilisation dates from 1967). The Ivory Coast, Gabon and Senegal still play host to French garrisons. All five countries have both defence and military assistance agreements with France and all except Cameroun take part in regular military manoeuvres with the French Armed Forces. In all of them France has been the single most important supplier of weapons and military equipment during the post-independence era. To them one may also add (since 1976/77) Zaire, although there is a military assistance rather than a defence agreement, and Zaire is less exclusively dependent on France because of its continued links with the United States and Belgium.

Next there is that group of poorer, mostly Sahelian states — Upper Volta, Niger, Mauritania, Central African Republic and, until 1980, Chad — in which France has taken some interest, either because of their natural resources (Niger, Mauritania, Central African Republic) or their strategic position (Chad). All have suffered military coups, and all (except Upper Volta) French military interventions. None of them, however, has been tied to the French military system as securely as the core neo-colonies; and in other respects their relations with France have been quite diverse. Chad is unique among them, both for the size of the French military presence (up to 1980), and for the latter’s ultimate failure to contain the tide of revolution.
Finally, there are those countries which have set themselves apart from the French military system: Guinea, Mali, Benin, the Congo and Madagascar. Only in Guinea was the break total, because of the special circumstances of decolonisation. The others, though abrogating their defence pacts, have maintained at least minimal links with France through the military cooperation programme (although they receive the greater part of their equipment, training and support from elsewhere, mostly from the socialist countries). The survival of such ties is nonetheless important since they thus remain connected to the cycle of French military reproduction, leaving open the possibility of a fuller re-integration within that cycle, as is now to some extent occurring under France's socialist government.

A brief comparison with Britain's role in Africa may illustrate the uniqueness of France's position. The last time Britain intervened in force in Black Africa was to suppress the army mutinies which took place in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania in 1964, although British troops helped to guarantee the transfer of power in Zimbabwe in 1980. British troops have undertaken joint training exercises with African armed forces, but no fully fledged manoeuvres. There are British training facilities in Kenya and this is the only country in which the British role might be comparable to that of France in French-speaking Africa. The defence of British interests in Africa is not a major concern of British defence planning. Non-intervention has not, however, been a conscious choice, so much as a result of Britain's decline as a global power, the reorganisation of defence priorities in terms of the Atlantic alliance and the deep fissures appearing in British society itself. Northern Ireland, one might say, has taken the place of Africa in British military concerns. British capitalism in decline has turned in on itself rather than expanding out into the Third World (at least until the Falklands crisis).

Moreover defence arrangements comparable to those established between France and Africa would have been unacceptable to the Anglophone countries, due to their size, economic diversity and relatively greater ability to provide for their own defence. As may be seen in Table IV, the former British colonies diversified the sources from which they obtained military equipment much more rapidly than Francophone Africa; and the same goes for their training and other support. In contrast to the total French military presence of 7,800 men (6,700 operational troops and 1,100 co-operants) there are at most 300-400 British soldiers serving in Africa, nearly all in training rather than operational positions. Britain's own intervention forces, the Special Air Services, are comparable to but one section of the French intervention forces, the French Foreign Legion. There is currently a debate in British military circles about whether Britain should be prepared to intervene more actively in the Third World. The fact is, however, that it has fewer resources with which to do so.

Interestingly, however, the higher up the chain of military reproduction one moves, the more the British influence is present. It is to the British armed forces that Ghana and Nigeria contracted in 1976 the formation and staffing of the Staff Colleges which indoctrinate their rising Majors and Lieutenant Colonels; and it is to Britain that Zimbabwe turned to transform its warring revolutionary and counter-revolutionary forces into an
integrated military force. Both powers, in sum, have formed and reproduced military structures and behaviour after their own image, with profound effects on African armies and political systems. The main contrast remains that the armed forces of France are still physically present and capable of intervening directly in political conflicts, whilst those of Britain for the present are not.

I now propose to examine France’s interests in this unique set of military arrangements. One of the main difficulties is the virtual absence of methods for the critical understanding of international relations, comparable to those available for the analysis of the capitalist and post-colonial state in the work of authors such as Poulantzas, Miliband, Alavi, Saul and Leys. If such methods were to be found anywhere, it would be in the theories of dependence, and of imperialism. Yet the monism of such approaches, or rather that of some of their principal exponents, (that is not to say either theory cannot be developed in a less monist manner, as in Fernando Enrique Cardoso’s work on dependency) does not lend itself well to analysis of a fluid and contradictory international system, nor to that of the secondary imperialism of a country such as France, which is constrained in very real ways by the imperialism of other powers, especially that of the United States.

Furthermore we have to choose between several conflicting explanations of France’s role, explanations which do not simply conflict, but are themselves ideologies arising out of ongoing political debates, and hence are part of what we have to explain. This is why I shall proceed by analysing a number of what I shall call ‘projects’ behind France’s military presence. Each project simultaneously functions as ideology and provides its own characterisation of the situation. Each builds from the same materials but situates them within a different framework of action and perception. By examining each in turn we may learn something both about the underlying realities and the way they are interpreted in the discourses of politics and of strategy.

The Co-operation Project
‘L’Afrique aux Africains’ (Giscard d’Estaing and other French leaders).
France complies with the wishes of its allies in Africa. They rightly believe that development cannot take place unless there is security. Credits for military assistance are the answer to such concerns. (French Parliamentary Report, Document 1292, Session 1979-80).

In matters of security, France has been until now the only major power which has shown itself to be firmly in support of Africans. It is the only power which has committed itself to honour the agreements it has made with its friends in the field of defence. The African continent is the object of a veritable ideological onslaught and the attitude of France in such circumstances is a source of hope. . . I am astonished that some have welcomed Cuban intervention. . . and yet accuse the French of colonialism when they come to the aid of those of their friends who are under attack. (President Mobutu, Le Monde, 16 May 1978).

The official view has always been that France’s military presence is inseparable from its development assistance. By creating effective national armies France has contributed to stability, hence development. It has concentrated on Francophone Africa because of historic ties, its post-colonial obligations and the under-development and weakness of the Francophone countries compared to their neighbours (France’s special portion of the white man’s burden).
This view has some ideological force, and one need not doubt the sincerity of the politicians, administrators and army officers who have put it forward. Black Africa had a special place in the affections of General de Gaulle and of many Frenchmen of his generation because it was the sanctuary of the Free French forces in World War II. These historical considerations also affected French strategic thinking, which still emphasises the importance of Africa for the defence of metropolitan France (although that this may perhaps exemplify the tendency of generals to fight the next war with the methods of the last).

The idea that security is required for development to take place has had a tangible effect on France's military assistance to its former colonies. From the beginning, military aid has been managed through the Ministry of Co-operation rather than through Defence or Foreign Affairs, in contrast to most other donors. The original *Plan Raisonable* for the creation of national armies envisaged very small and lightly equipped forces. Although the Plan's targets were quickly exceeded, the armies of the Francophone states and their military expenditures have remained low by international and indeed African standards, with corresponding economies in finance. The indigenisation of African armies under French tutelage proceeded more slowly and on the whole more carefully than in former British Africa. (On the fragmentation of the Nigerian military created by rapid indigenisation, see Robin Luckham, 1971). French military aid officials stress the importance of 'valorising' existing facilities and equipment rather than supplying expensive and complex new hardware. Although they have not always succeeded in deflecting the efforts of French arms salesmen (who have managed, for example, to sell Mirages to Zaire and Alpha-jets to Gabon and the Ivory Coast) the main sales drive has been in non-Francophone Africa and the Middle East.

Nevertheless this official view of French military co-operation is both disingenuous and incomplete. It is far from certain that the French presence has in fact created security. In certain cases, like Chad or Central Africa, quite the reverse. In the former the limits of French military intervention against determined popular resistance (partly caused by that intervention) were sharply exposed — though France did not commit her forces on anything like the scale of the colonial wars in Indo-China and Algeria. In Central Africa in 1979 France actually overthrew an established, although corrupt and repressive, government it had earlier supported. Previous to this the French military co-operation programme had supported a bootmaker and tailor for Bokassa and his imperial guards (during his last years almost the only form of assistance to continue). France also helped to organise personal bodyguards for the Presidents of other African states, such as Gabon. Military co-operation thus tended to support the corrupt network of personal ties President Giscard d'Estaing built up with African leaders (sometimes against the protests of the Co-operation bureaucracy itself).

Even where France has provided stability, it is that of a particular ruling class and a path of dependent capitalist development, as in the Ivory Coast. One may argue that this is better than political instability and reversed development, of the type experienced in Ghana, with which the Ivory Coast
is often compared. But not all the Francophone countries have benefited as much from the French presence as the latter. Nor does it follow that the mass of the Ivory Coast’s workers and farmers could not be better off under a different development strategy and distribution of power and wealth than that which prevails at present.

The Suppression of Crisis Project
The security and interests of France could be put at risk not only in Europe, but also in those areas of the world where a strategy of development is emerging which indirectly menaces our sources of supply of primary materials and energy. Such threats are as dangerous to our country as an attack upon our frontiers. It is not an accident that there have been a succession of crises in Africa and the Middle East. The natural wealth of these areas is of vital importance to the industrialised nations. Stability in Africa and in the Middle East is just as indispensable to the security of our country as equilibrium in Europe (General Michel du Peyrat, 1979).

We do not understand the protests which have been raised by the French decision to give logistical support to the Moroccans fighting in Zaire . . . Doing nothing is a dangerous attitude for the West and a policy of wait and see had to end if one was not to see the whole of Africa run the risk of going Communist (Abdou Diouf, at the time Prime Minister of Senegal, Le Monde, 17 April 1977).

The view that there exists a ‘climate of instability’ in Africa, as General Mery puts is (see quote below), fomented by the communists from the outside and threatening vital Western interests, has come to prevail both within the French security establishment and among the leaders of African states. It has been used by both to justify French intervention. Such a view does at least call attention to the growing crisis in Africa, even though one may disagree with its explanation of that crisis and the appropriateness of intervention as a response. The years 1974-78 marked an important historical turning point: the Ethiopian revolution; the termination of the Portuguese empire in Mozambique, Angola and Guinea-Bissau; the gathering momentum of the liberation struggle in southern Africa; the guerrilla wars in Chad and the Sahara; and the physical presence, for the first time, of large numbers of Soviet and Cuban troops and advisers on the continent.

Everything turns, however, on how such events are interpreted. Are they part of a conscious Soviet push into Africa, facilitated, to be sure, by African conflicts and the indifference of the West? Or do they arise from conjuncture of quite different factors: the effects of the oil crisis and international recession on weak African economies; the political bankruptcy of the existing ruling classes in most of the countries of the continent; and the triggering of a wave of demands for a ‘second independence’ following the success of the liberation struggles in the south (the Shaba uprisings affording a striking example)?

For us the important thing is that it was the first of these interpretations which prevailed among French statesmen and military thinkers, as also among the leaders of ‘moderate’ Francophone countries. Although there undoubtedly is a crisis in Africa, the nature of the French response to it requires more analysis.

The Neo-colonial Project
As for France, it was well within the bounds of hypocrisy of the members of the present government to sound off about the invasion of Afghanistan at the same time as they instigate, glorify or loudly approve, according to their position within the system, our own armed
interventions into various parts of Africa (Admiral Sanguinetti, 1981).

Just as much as I am sure that at the political level Africa must belong to Africans, I am convinced that at the economic level, Africans would be the poorer for limiting their interests to their continent alone (President Giscard d'Estaing, opening the Franco-African Conference, May 1978).

The first point to be made about Africa is that between this continent and France there exist a host of links established by geography and history which has been reinforced by the complementarity of their economies based on raw materials on the one hand and their transformation on the other. But nobody can deny that in Africa there is a climate of instability to which we cannot remain indifferent for two principal reasons which I shall link to the notions of security and responsibility.

The security of France does not depend, of course, solely on the security of Africa but it is, it seems to me, strongly associated with it.

— first, because French territory is close to Africa in the Mediterranean and in the Mozambique Channel because of Mayotte and Réunion.
— second, because 260,000 French nationals live and work in Africa.
— finally and perhaps most significantly because the maritime routes around Africa carry the greater part of the oil and raw materials upon which we depend ...

Our responsibility arises from these historical links and from the role we have played in many African countries during the period of colonialism until their independence, for which we have nothing to be ashamed (General Méry, 1978).

There is no absence of French and African critics of France's military presence in Africa (see Richard Joseph in ROAPE No.6). According to them this presence followed directly from France's economic interests: the fact that Africa is France's most important source of raw materials; the privileged trade and financial relationship of the Franc Zone; the size of French investments and the many French working in Black Africa. There is considerable empirical support for such arguments. The fact that they are so often found in the public statements of French officials, businessmen and military officers is itself evidence that they have a real influence on French policy.

The Defence Agreements signed between France and the newly independent African states in the early 1960s were complemented in certain cases (CAR, Congo, Gabon, Chad, Madagascar and Senegal) by agreements giving France privileged access to strategic raw materials and the right to limit or prohibit their export in the interest of common defence.* These agreements have either lapsed or been re-negotiated, but France's concern with raw materials has not diminished. All its major interventions in the 1970s (Chad, Shaba, Mauritania and Central Africa and the covert intervention in Angola) have been in situations where control over raw materials was at issue.

Nevertheless it is important to disaggregate the different forms of neo-colonial interest and control. France's interventions under President Giscard d'Estaing led her outside her traditional spheres of influence, for instance in Zaire and Angola, and involved co-operation with other Western powers, notably the United States. Further, most were in that second layer of Francophone states described earlier in the article, rather than in the core neo-colonies. It seems that in the former a degree of

*See Lellouche and Moisi, (1979), pp.112 and 116; and 'Les Moyens de la Coopération Militaire Franco-Africaine, Europe-Outremer, 54, April-May 1977, p.30. France's right to limit strategic raw material exports fell into disuse and was not included in the re-negotiated agreements.
political instability, military regimes and even left-wing governments* could be tolerated without necessarily disturbing the conditions of raw material exploitation. Only when instability began to draw in other powers did France intervene, as for instance in the Central African Republic, where Bokassa's approaches to Libya were among the justifications for Operation Barracuda in 1979. (In interviews with French officials I was told that the Libyans had begun to install anti-aircraft batteries around the airport in Bangui, and that Operation Barracuda would have been much more difficult to pull off had it occurred a week or two later).

In the core Francophone states, on the other hand, those in which French investment is more broadly spread and the community of expatriate Frenchmen is large, things were not permitted to degenerate to the point where such intervention was needed. With the current exception of Senegal they all have authoritarian single-party regimes, under-pinned by tightly controlled internal security services.** In all, France's military weight has been cast firmly behind the ruling class, a good indicator being its role as their major weapons supplier.

The third group of countries, those which have distanced themselves from France and turned to the socialist bloc (Guinea, Mali, Congo, Benin and Madagascar), have neither benefited much from French military support, nor been the object of its interventions — or at least of its overt interventions, since the French secret services were probably indirectly involved in more than one plot against Guinea as well as the abortive mercenary 'invasion' of Benin in 1977. Nevertheless, France has neither abandoned her investments in these countries, nor ceased to trade with them, her non-military trade falling much less sharply than her military exports.

Thus France's military interventions and her economic interests have been imperfectly correlated. Moreover, transformations occurring in French capitalism have made it less dependent than before on its chasse gardée in Africa. Trade with Francophone Africa has declined sharply as a proportion of total French trade. French foreign investors have diversified their holdings to other regions. In sub-Saharan Africa itself France's sales and investments have grown faster in the large markets to be found outside its former colonial empire, especially in South Africa, Nigeria and Zaire.

This has brought a marked peripheralisation of the former French colonies within the scheme of French interests. France depends less on them than before; but their own economies and ruling classes still largely depend on France. Most, to be sure, have diversified since Independence, but not enough to stand alone without French trade, investment and above all the financial umbrella of the Franc Zone and the political protection of French intervention.

---

*For instance in the Congo Republic and even in Guinea, where French Companies continued to have mining interests after the schism with France in 1958.

None of this means, of course, that traditional arguments about French neo-colonialism cease to apply. Though the large colonial trading houses have declined relative to other fractions of French capital, they still have political influence and are closely integrated with France's major financial groups, such as Paribas and Suez. The greater part of French direct investment in the Third World is in the petroleum and mineral sectors, much of it in Africa, and a considerable proportion undertaken by French state enterprises. The influence of this on France's military role cannot be discounted. Moreover, the system of class alliances created in Africa during the period of decolonisation has continued to have an influence all of its own. It was, after all, Presidents Senghor and Houphouet Boigny who prevailed on President Giscard d’Estaing to take part in the 1977 Shaba operation, according to *Le Monde* (21 April 1977).

The Franco-African summits of that year and of 1978 endorsed France’s role and were to a large extent taken up with discussions of collective security,* and led indirectly to the signature of the CEAO (West African Economic Community) Defence Pact and the participation of Francophone countries (Morocco, Senegal, Togo, Gabon and the Ivory Coast) in the Inter-African Intervention Force which helped 'stabilise' Shaba in 1978. This does not mean that French interests have ceased to count; but merely that they are exercised within a more complex terrain of alliances, both with African ruling classes and with other imperial powers.

**The Military-Industrial Project**

The export (of arms) is an economic necessity. It allows France to maintain an industrial capacity in case of war and to reduce the costs of armaments for its army... Finally, arms exports force us to maintain a permanent confrontation in foreign markets with foreign companies (*The Operational Strength of our Armies*, Information and Public Relations Service of the Army, Paris, 1980).

A good example of military-industrial imperatives was the 'technological safari' into Zaire in the mid-1970s (Williame, 1981) during which France made major sales of weapons (notably of the Mirage F1 fighter-bomber) and of the products of its electronic and electrical goods industries. These exports were facilitated by loans guaranteed by the French government. They thus added to the indebtedness which strangled Zaire’s economy and were part of the chain of events which almost brought down its ruling class during the Shaba uprisings of 1977 and 1978 and led to France’s interventions.

Such connections between France’s armaments sector and its African policies are undoubtedly important. Nevertheless they seldom fit together in so neat a causal chain. To begin with France does not have a military-industrial complex in quite the same sense as the United States. There is a large arms industry which owes its expansion to decisions made by General de Gaulle and more broadly by the classes controlling the French state under the Fifth Republic to pursue an independent defence strategy based on self-sufficient arms production. Although an important part of the

---

*The final communiques of both summits were studiously vague because there was a majority but not unanimity on both points. See for instance the interview with President Kountche of Niger in *Le Monde*, 28 May 1981 in which he rejects the idea of a joint intervention force as premature.*
industry remained in private hands (until 1981), it was tightly supervised by the Ministry of Defence through the Delegation Générale de l’Armament. The consequent growth of the military sector was rapid, and depended increasingly on exports, which are currently about 40 per cent of total arms production and 58 per cent of the aerospace industry’s total military output. Military production is 72 per cent of the total value of the aerospace industry’s output.

There is dispute about how precisely the pressures to export weapons are generated: whether by the logic of arms production (the need to keep production lines full and to recover the costs of research and development in a limited domestic market) or by the search for profits by the arms manufacturers.* That the latter is the case would seem to be suggested by the high profits of the arms firms, the increasing privatisation of the industry and the tendency of exports to influence or even compete with France’s own defence requirements (Kolodziej, 1980, pp.61-65). Yet these high profits partly arise from subsidies given the industry by the state, subsidies it has been willing to provide lavishly because of the priority accorded rearmament by all French governments since de Gaulle. Arms transfers grew from around 3 per cent of France’s total exports in 1972 to almost 5 per cent by 1980; a higher proportion than any other major Western arms supplier. Moreover the effect on France’s foreign trade is greater than those figures would suggest because of the relative homogeneity of the military sector and the support it receives from the state.

However the main thrust of France’s arms export drive has not been to Black Africa so much as to the Middle East and Latin America. Exports to Black Africa have been no more than 3-4 per cent of France’s total trade in arms (see Table VI), and of this a substantial proportion has been sold to new clients like Zaire and Nigeria, rather than to France’s own former colonies.

Table VI: French Arms Exports to Africa

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Value of Arms Exported to Africa Millions of Current Francs</th>
<th>Arms Exports to Black Africa and Middle East as % of Total Arms Exports</th>
<th>Total Value of French Arms Exports in Current Francs (millions)</th>
<th>Arms Exports as a % of Total French Exports</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>14,680</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>695</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>17,170</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>20,460</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>870</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>23,440</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


*The former has been the official view; the latter is put forward among others by Pierre Fabre, ‘Les Ventes d’Armes de la France’ in Beaud (1979), pp.229-232. Some arms firms, like Matra, have used their super-profits to diversify into other areas of production. Others, like Dassault-Breguet, have reinvested in the armaments sector itself.
Thus the direct importance of Francophone Africa for France’s arms industry is small. Yet there remain significant indirect links. France’s military presence in Africa, its manoeuvres and its interventions provide a testing ground, almost the only one it has, for its forces d’intervention. In its absence there would be no rationale for a sizeable segment of France’s armed forces and for the production of the equipment it utilises. The intervention forces, moreover, are regarded by the French military establishment as crucial for its own professionalisation, being mainly composed of career soldiers rather than the conscripts who fill the ranks in other sections of the armed forces. Finally, by enabling France to keep at least half a boot placed in Africa, they contribute to her image as a global military power and probably therefore to her ability to sell weapons in other regions.

On the other hand, France’s arms export drive has at times come into serious conflict with its African policies, notably in the case of its arming of South Africa. Between 1963, when it abstained from voting in the UN Security Council debate on the arms embargo, and 1977 when its exports were finally brought to an end, France was that country’s largest supplier of weapons. Its exports to South Africa much exceeded those to the remainder of sub-Saharan Africa. In addition France transferred her military technology, in some cases through the joint development of weapons, including the Cactus missile (the French version of which, the Crotale, is in use by France’s own armed forces); in other instances through the sale of production licences, notably for the Mirage F1 fighter-bomber, at the time France’s most advanced military aircraft. Production of Mirages in South Africa still continues under licence, thus circumventing the export ban. It is most probable that this production has continued to depend on parts exported covertly or indirectly from France.

It was, however, the protest of the other African countries,* rather than those of France’s traditional partners which persuaded her to cease supplying South Africa. France was more disposed to pay attention to such protests because the eruption of armed conflict in southern Africa (following the Portuguese revolution of 1974) greatly increased the risk that French weapons would actually be used against Black African states and liberation movements, as indeed they have been. Nor did the ending of supplies to South Africa seriously disrupt France’s own arms production, for by the mid-1970s even larger markets had already opened up in the Middle East.

The Atlantic (or ‘Gendarme of NATO’) Project

The world is over-armed from a very particular perspective which is that of the conflict between East and West. Of course, one speaks about it since the object is not to indicate who one’s enemy is. So in the document presented to the National Assembly, it is not clearly specified who might be the principal enemy of France in any confrontation. Nevertheless, the conception of the world arms race at the moment is that of an East-West conflict (President Giscard d’Estaing, quoted in a document prepared by the Defence Commission of his own party, May 1980).

*Notably Nigeria and Zaire. The latter concluded significant contracts with France for weapons and other high-technology goods and significantly it was on an official visit to Zaire in 1975 that President Giscard d’Estaing announced that all but naval deliveries to South Africa would be terminated.
I have heard or read . . . that people are talking about 'Nato-isation'. In my view, this is a weak argument hiding behind a slogan . . . The question of whether France, alone, would decide to intervene in a territory not covered by NATO, an organisation intended to provide assistance to Europeans . . . under threat, has absolutely nothing to do with any of the problems which NATO is competent to deal with (President Giscard d'Estaing, Le Monde, 16 June 1979).

One of the most frequent criticisms of President Giscard d'Estaing's African policies, both from the socialist left and from the Gaullist right, was that France had sacrificed its independence of action and become little more than an enforcer of the interests of the Atlantic alliance in the region, the 'gendarme of NATO', or the 'Cuba of the West' as Mitterrand still more bitingly expressed it.

Though denied by the former President himself, the 'Nato-isation' thesis accounts for certain facts that are otherwise difficult to explain. First, was the reinforcement of the intervention forces during the defence reorganisation of the mid-1970s along with other changes (less emphasis on the independent nuclear deterrent; larger conventional forces; and the doctrine of French participation in a 'bataille à l'avant' (forward battle) outside France's own boundaries in the event of a Soviet invasion of Western Europe) which brought France into closer co-operation with the NATO command. The second fact was that France's military ventures in Africa seemed to be increasing at the very time that its own direct economic interests in its former colonies were declining. And third, the fact that it seemed prepared (as never before) to intervene outside the traditional area of French hegemony. Moreover, the thesis would seem consistent with the general trend of French capital to become penetrated from the outside, especially by American multinationals, and to shift its own investments back from Africa into Europe. And with the tendency of transnational enterprises (including those of France) to shift the locus of their profit-making during the 1970s from direct investment in the Third World (which had been the trend of the previous twenty years) to sales of technology (the supply of weapons and factories) and bank lending (the recycling of petrodollars) by which such sales were financed.

In Africa this has brought a marked multilateralisation of imperial interests: new trade, aid and investment flows competing with the former metropolis, but also forming new combinations with the latter in joint investments, multilateral aid projects and loans arranged by international consortia of banks. France, it has been argued, has been increasingly pushed into 'a supporting role to US imperialism' (Beaud) although this perhaps overstates France's dependence on American capital and understates her successes outside her own traditional markets. At the same time the African crises of the 1970s awakened anxieties in the West about raw materials, sea lanes and the recovery of their bank loans in countries, like Zaire, which had borrowed heavily from the international financial system. The United States, which had previously regarded the continent as peripheral to its security, began for the first time to share in these anxieties. Yet despite the fact that the Western powers had inter-penetrating interests to protect, Africa was not covered by their joint security umbrella, being regarded as outside the purview of the NATO command structure.

France is probably the only Western nation that remains equipped to
intervene in Africa. Britain has run down its overseas military forces. The United States has not reorganised its Rapid Deployment Force sufficiently to play a major role. France has not only been willing to step in on behalf of other Western powers, but has done so in close collaboration with them: most notably in Shaba in 1978 where American transport aircraft and logistical support were crucial for the success of the operation; and in the co-ordination between the CIA and the French secret services during the attempt to destabilise the MPLA government in Angola during 1975-76.

Once more we are faced by a plausible scenario, which, however, omits certain crucial scenes. It may help explain why President Giscard d’Estaing plunged France into fresh military ventures in the 1970s, but it does not account for the long-standing French military presence in Africa which enabled him to do so. It is true that Giscard d’Estaing strengthened the intervention forces. Unlike the remainder of the defence reorganisation of which it was part, however, it did not represent a real departure from the Gaullist design. Of the two important policy documents on defence produced in 1980 by the parties of the ruling coalition, it was that of the Gaullist RPR which gave the most emphasis to the need for a mobile intervention force and a powerful navy to protect French interests in the Third World. One of the main lessons the Gaullists extracted from the Shaba affair was the need to increase the mobility and range of the intervention forces, so that they did not have to depend again on American logistical support. Even if the economies of France and its African clients were penetrated by American capital, the French state still clung to its precarious autonomy relative to American imperialism.

The Globalist (or Gaullist) Project

France, because she can, because everybody wants her to do so, because she is France, must carry out in the eyes of the world a truly global policy. (President de Gaulle, Le Monde, 2 January 1964).

Who can seriously believe that the recent French military interventions in Zaire, in Mauritania and in Chad, were just a matter of protecting the interests of French or other multinational companies, for which the French state is no more than an instrument (what a curious conception of the state!)? The multinationals are only the top of the iceberg of French imperialism (Palloix, 1979).

In the increasingly dangerous world of the 1980s, our country can play a special role, in part dictated by geography, but resting mainly and above all upon our own will. The geographical and political situation of France places us at the centre of the great axes along which run contemporary international relations: North-South relations on the one hand, East-West on the other. This is the reason why the policy of the President of the Republic is to be constructed along these lines (Charles Hernu, Socialist Minister of Defence, quoted in Défense Nationale, December 1979, p.9).

The arguments that French militarism preserves French capital (the neo-colonial project), that it protects multinational, especially American capital (the ‘gendarme of NATO’ project), that it promotes the interests of the military sector itself (the military-industrial project), or that it crystallises an alliance with African ruling classes (the co-operation and neo-colonial projects), each contain conflicting portions of the truth. None, however, deals adequately with the role of the French state. This has not simply mediated between the different fractions of capital, but has carried through a project of its own, albeit with the support of those fractions of capital (the
financial oligarchy, the high technology sector etc) which have benefited most from its policies.

France’s African policies form part of the strategy for the resuscitation of the French state and of French capitalism advanced by General de Gaulle and followed by his successors with remarkable consistency — despite controversy about how best to implement it, despite all the nuances of the rift between Gaullists and Giscardians and the tendency of the latter to privatise the economy and to take France back towards NATO. This strategy is based on a deeply mercantilist view of the relation between state, economy and international system. The state has actively intervened to encourage the restructuring and concentration of French capital in close cooperation with the financial oligarchy. It helped plan accumulation in both the public and private sectors through its Five-Year Plans and it has encouraged high-technology industries like electronics, informatics, nuclear energy and arms production. The military sector has had a key part to play in this restructuring of the economy. Although the Defence Budget is only 4 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product, it funds about 25 per cent of total Research and Development. Since 1961 the growth of the defence sector and the reorganisation of France’s military establishment has been planned under a series of *lois de programme* (literally, ‘programme-laws’) the most recent of which (1977-1982) is especially comprehensive.

France’s military and diplomatic efforts abroad are closely linked to this strategy for economic expansion. A considerable proportion of its exports are of political technologies (including weapons), sales of which are actively promoted by the state. Although most arms contracts are negotiated directly — between French firms and their buyers (normally governments) — they all require French government approval. Most are backed by credits guaranteed by the French state. And government-to-government relationships (for example appropriately timed state visits by the French President) have a crucial effect on the success of negotiations for large contracts for weapons as for all other political goods. The two most persuasive sales arguments for French weapons are (a) that they are in use in France’s own armed forces; and (b) that France does not attach political conditions to its sales because it is ‘independent’ of the two major power blocs.

Such a strategy requires that France should be (or be seen to be) a military power in her own right. It is, moreover, easy to legitimise as it draws deep upon the residues of nationalism. Just as France’s cultural identity is enhanced within the cultural space of Francophonie, so too its political identity is asserted within the strategic space opened up by its defence and foreign policies. By asserting France’s interests as a nation, French governments believe they contribute to a multi-polar world no longer completely dominated by the superpowers.

To be sure, French military doctrine tends to justify itself in the language of external threat rather than that of expansion. An independent nuclear capability (the *force de frappe*) is required to ‘deter’ the Soviet Union. But it also creates new roles for France’s conventional forces (Soppelsa, 1980). Intervention forces guard investments, raw materials, trade routes, French citizens and client ruling classes in traditional areas of interest. They also
assert France’s claims to global influence.

In this strategy the Third World and Africa have a crucial part to play. It is in the Third World that France finds the political and economic space within which to disengage from superpower hegemony. French strategists and statesmen (like Defence Minister Hernu, quoted above) often emphasise the intermediary position of France, between West and East and between North and South. Among the industrial countries France has most consistently supported the initiatives for a New International Economic Order and North-South dialogue, this in spite of the fact that it has (until May 1981) been ruled by conservative politicians throughout the Fifth Republic.

As we have already seen, Francophone Africa has an important historical position in Gaullist mythology and in French strategy. It is one piece of global real estate France can equivocally consider to be inside its sphere of influence. It is thus the natural starting point for the construction of broader coalitions in the Third World. Thus, since they began in 1973, the annual Franco-African conferences of heads of state have been used to reaffirm relations with former colonies and to establish new connections outside France’s traditional sphere of influence. Hence the recruitment to these meetings, not only of the former Belgian countries (Zaire, Burundi, Rwanda), but also some of the smaller Lusophone and Anglophone countries (Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde, Sierra Leone and Mauritius). It was moreover at the 1979 and 1980 conferences that President Giscard d’Estaing promoted his idea of a ‘Trialogue’ between Europe, Africa and the Arab World.

Furthermore it was at the Franco-African Conferences (especially those of 1977 and 1978) that France and the so-called ‘moderate’ states mobilised support for French interventions and for the creation of inter-African defence arrangements. France helped organise and provided logistical support for the Inter-African Force which replaced Belgium and French troops in Shaba in 1978. She has put her diplomatic support firmly behind proposals for regional defence arrangements, including the defence pact signed by the six Francophone members of the CEAO in 1978, that were signed by the members of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS — French abbreviation CEDEAO) in 1981 and the OAU Peacekeeping Forces put together in Chad in 1980 and 1981. Both France and the Francophone countries regard such arrangements as a way of spreading their political risks.

In the case of Chad, the constitution of an OAU Peacekeeping Force provided a formula behind which first France (in 1980) and later Libya (in 1981) could withdraw their forces. Nevertheless it is clear that neither France nor its African clients think that inter-African agreements are sufficient replacement for French military protection. The latter still indeed potentially conflicts with the new regional defence arrangements. One of the Articles of the ECOWAS defence agreement, for example, commits member states to remove foreign bases from their soil when the pact comes into force. I asked the Minister of Defence of Senegal if this would apply to the French military installations in his country. His reply was that ‘we have no French bases, they are just facilities’; a response that might satisfy the
letter of the agreement, but would hardly reassure the other countries which signed the pact.

Of all the explanations that have been given of France's role in Africa, the globalist project is the most general. Moreover it synthesises elements of the others, notably the crucial role of the armaments sector, technology and finance in the resuscitation of French capitalism, the incorporation of France's traditional neo-colonial interests in Africa into a broader strategy for expansion, and the restructuring of 'co-operation' with Francophone states into a wider system of Third World alliances.

Yet in being general it glosses over important contradictions. Even as the state was trying to establish France's military and political independence, the economy was becoming more dependent on foreign capital (Mori; Beaud). State intervention tended to hasten the concentration of capital and subsidise its profits more than it encouraged growth or created employment. One of the standard arguments for French weapons exports and for state subsidisation of the arms industry is the latter's employment effects. Yet what is seldom emphasised is the very limited capacity of this sector to create new jobs. Although the drive into foreign markets was remarkable successful, it was based on capital goods and political technologies (including weapons), leaving the economy vulnerable to political changes in the Third World and to global recession. This vulnerability was increased by the close involvement of the banking sector, whose credits (often guaranteed by the state) financed such exports,* and which would be at risk from any default by Third World debtors like Zaire.

There is a real contradiction, in sum, between the Gaullist image of France as independent of the superpowers, mediating between them and the Third World, and the reality of her position as a secondary imperial power, included in the Western economy and its system of defence. It is by reference to this contradiction (and not merely the failings of President Giscard d'Estaing) that one must analyse the controversy over whether France was becoming 'the gendarmes of NATO in Africa'. France's neo-colonial position in the Francophone countries in some respects has facilitated the extension of her global influence; but in other respects has been an obstacle to it, especially in Anglophone Africa. Her military presence and interventions have 'stabilised' the governments and ruling classes of some African states; but have helped create a suppressed instability from which France will not extricate herself easily.

Nevertheless for many outsiders the puzzle has been 'how France can do everything that it does in Africa and can get away with it' (as one article by Golan in *African Affairs*, 1981, put it). One reason may be the forceful application of the strategy 'à tous azimuts' (in any direction) itself: that in trade as well as in military affairs the advantage goes to he who keeps the initiative. Yet it is clear that by the end of President Giscard d'Estaing's septennat France's African policies had begun to come apart. Operation

*See Palloix (1929) who emphasises the restructuring of French imperialism consequent on the shift from the internationalisation of production to the Third World, to the internationalisation of credit (and of sales by the export industries of the industrial countries based on the extension of such credit).
Barracuda in Central Africa in 1979 and the withdrawal from Chad in 1980 were in their different ways confessions of this failure.

Towards a Socialist Project?

It will be incumbent upon France to bring into being effective means to strengthen the progressive regimes which exist or which may emerge, but at the same time permit the democratic expression of the contradictions inherent in neo-colonial societies, their class contradictions, so that their governments may become the expression of their own will and not that of a dominant power (Report of a CERES — Socialist Party — working group, April 1980).

The justification of principle of the French government can scarcely be disputed: the African states need stability for their development and must be protected against external efforts to destabilise them. That is not in doubt. One can certainly argue that the legal government of a country, supported by the Elysée Palace, is not the true government of that country and that despite its assertions to the contrary French co-operation is supporting regimes and not states. The argument is not without validity, but it is dangerous. If it were used too much, it would verge upon ‘leftist interventionism’ which we would not be able to support (Policy document on Sub-Saharan Africa of the Socialist Party, 1981).

The Socialist Project of 1980 stresses that the struggle for social justice in the industrial countries cannot be separated from the struggle for development in the Third World. There is no doubt but that President Mitterrand and the members of his government are sincerely committed to changing France’s relationships with the developing countries. They have committed themselves more than any other Western government to the New International Economic Order, and have made it clear that they think this requires a restructuring of the industrial economies themselves* and not merely the transfer of resources to the Third World. At the same time, however, the Mitterrand government has committed itself to more than doubling aid as a percent of GNP (to 0.7 per cent by 1988) and to increasing the proportion which goes to the least developed countries. It has stressed that it is committed to avoid using force in international relations (Mitterrand in *Le Monde* 11 June 1981) to promote the settlement of conflict by negotiation and to encourage regional zones of peace, as in the Indian Ocean.**

In opposition both Socialists and Communists roundly criticised French military ventures in Africa. Their main policy statements suggest that they possess a depth of understanding of African problems that their predecessors lacked. Since they took office firm policy guidelines have been laid down on a number of important issues: non-interference in the internal affairs of African states; self-determination in Western Sahara; disengagement from South Africa and support for the Frontline states; better relations with non-Francophone countries.

Moreover some of those policies have already been put into effect. The most objectionable features of politics à la Giscard — the personal bodyguards for African heads of state, the intrigues and covert activities —

---

*See for instance M. Cheysson’s (the Foreign Minister) speech to the UN General Assembly, 23rd September 1981.

**Le Parti Socialiste et l’Afrique Sud-Saharienne, (the policy document quoted at the beginning of this section) pp.23-24. The position the Socialists take in favouring participation in such talks on the Indian Ocean as a ‘zone of peace’ is qualified by the insistence that France should maintain the right to keep a military presence because she herself (by virtue of her position in Réunion and other other islands) is one of the countries of the region.
have been curtailed. French arms firms have been ordered to ensure that none of their products reach South Africa, even indirectly (although France’s civilian nuclear contracts have not been cancelled). Soon after taking office the government of the left cut off the covert assistance France had provided to the Hassan Habre faction in Chad. Instead it pursued a policy of isolating Libya diplomatically in order to secure the latter’s withdrawal; and it encouraged an ‘African solution’, in which the stabilisation of the country is being undertaken by an OAU Peacekeeping Force, not France’s own intervention forces.*

Yet in spite of all this we are entitled to ask if there has been a fundamental change in direction or merely a less repressive (and perhaps more efficient) version of old projects. The main structural elements of French militarism remain almost untouched. Well before they came into office the parties of the left had adopted the principles of Gaullist defence policy as their own (despite the protestations of Mitterrand to the contrary), including the independent nuclear deterrent, the priority for domestic arms production and the maintenance of a military presence abroad.**

In power they have dropped some of the strategic doctrines (like the bataille à l’avant) which had seemed to be taking France back into NATO, but they have not yet (at the time of writing this article) put forward anything one could recognise as an alternative, socialist, strategy for defence. To be sure most of the private arms manufacturers (like Dassault-Breguet and Thomson-CSF) have now been placed under state control through the acquisition of majority shareholdings by the government. Yet I was told by representatives of the industry that they find it easier to obtain permits to export weapons than under any previous administration of the Fifth Republic. (Officials and party members to whom I have talked insist, however, that this is merely because the government has a much clearer policy on arms transfers than before, including the ban on transfers to fascist countries like Chile and South Africa). Furthermore members of the French government and parties of the left, including President Mitterrand himself (on British TV, September 1981), have continued to justify arms exports in exactly the same manner as their predecessors: that the arms industry is necessary for an independent defence policy; that exports keep its production lines open and pay for R and D; that cutting back would take jobs and orders away from French industry; that if France did not supply weapons other countries would; and that the availability of arms from France enables purchasers to avoid dependence on the superpowers.

The Socialists still pursue the project of extending France’s global influence by building on its position at the confluence of the two great axes of international relations, between East and West and North and South. For them (as for their predecessors) France’s presence in Africa ‘is nowadays essential to maintain our weight in international affairs. It is not negligible

*A decision of principle was taken not to send any French troops at all to Chad. Nevertheless France provided transport (e.g. for the Senegalese component of the OAU Force) and logistical support; and no doubt will provide military training once the situation is stable.

**This has not always been so. See the analysis by Jean Klein, ‘La Gauche Francaise et les Problèmes de Défence’, Politique Etrangère, 43(5), 1978 of the manner in which the priorities of both the Socialist and the Communist parties have been turned upside down over the past two decades, especially in regard to the nuclear deterrent.
from the point of view of our economy. To a considerable degree it is upon its African policy that our country will be judged in the Third World' (Socialist Party Policy Document, again). That weight will, one trusts, be cast behind more worthy causes than in the past.

On many occasions since the May 1981 elections, most comprehensively at the Franco-African Summit of November 1981, French statement have reiterated that France will stand by her existing commitments in Africa. For the time being the military co-operation programme remains untouched (and indeed was slightly increased in the 1982 budget both in absolute terms and as a proportion of the total co-operation budget). The intervention forces are to be kept and with them the existing framework of bases, facilities and co-operation agreements. Some of the justifications are new — peace-keeping, logistical support for inter-African forces (according to Hernu) — but they are in Africa all the same.

What are the reasons for the apparent absence of fundamental change, comparable to that embarked on by the Socialists within France itself? In the first place Gaullist policies are implanted in nationalist reflexes and in the way the Presidential system operates. During previous administrations, there was little effective parliamentary or public criticism, either of France's arms sale or of its interventions, still less of the military co-operation programme. France's continuing military presence in Africa is still defended by socialists with reasons that are redolent of the past: Africa is vital to French strategic interests; the numerous French nationals resident in Africa have to be given protection (Hernu's argument in *Le Monde*, 11 July 1981); and French troops are in any case there at the request of France's African partners and will be withdrawn whenever the latter ask. One can think of no other region (except possibly the banana republics of Central America and certain countries in Eastern Europe?) where the right of an outside power to maintain troops and use them to protect its own citizens is so casually accepted. A clear case, one could say, of an imperial system reproducing an imperial ideology, even among those whom one would least expect to hold it?

Such an ideology would not, however, survive unless it had some uses. One of these is to reproduce the existing alliance with African ruling classes. The socialists share the view that this alliance is necessary for an effective foreign policy, even if the goals of that policy have altered. There is nothing unique about France co-operation with conservative African governments. Most coalitions in the Third World itself (the Group of 77, OPEC or the OAU) are extremely heterogeneous in ideology and political composition. And it is with such coalitions that any government has to work, even for progressive ends. Were France to discriminate between countries or to engage in an 'interventionism of the left', the whole edifice of Francophonie would begin to fall apart and France would virtually cease to have a foreign policy. But one passes through this door into a surreal world of political paradoxes: for instance Mitterrand flanked by Mobutu and Houhouet-Boigny at the closure of the 1981 Franco-African Summit; or Zaire, of all countries, taking part (with France's encouragement) in the AOU Peacekeeping Force in Chad, and prising the latter away from its Socialist protector, Libya, and delivering it over to the American-supported Hissan Habre.
The edifice of military bases, defence and co-operation agreements is more than a coalition with the Francophone states and their rulers. It is, as I argued earlier, an intervention in favour of the more privileged neo-colonies and of their ruling classes, helping to keep the latter in power. Thus 'the permanent presence of the French army is a factor causing internal tension; it inhibits in different ways a free dialogue between government and the governed; it has not even guaranteed the permanence of some regimes' (as the Socialist Party document itself realised). But France herself has become in certain respects a hostage to this situation. As long as she maintains the capacity to intervene, African governments will expect her to do so on their individual or collective behalves, and will complain when she fails them (as a number of Francophone governments did, for instance, when President Giscard d'Estaing withdrew French troops from Chad).

The difficulty the parties of the left have in evolving an African policy is just one facet of the contradictions inherent in socialist government in a capitalist system. Even though large sections of French industry and finance are being nationalised, they still have to operate within the logic of a capitalist economy and contend with international competition. The pressures to adopt mercantilism, to use state power to underwrite international economic expansion are just as great if not greater under socialism as they were under more liberal economic regimes. All the more so in the military sector where the competition for markets is closely allied to the goals of the nation state.

The chosen ideological terrain for French expansion remains Third Worldism, especially as it is a terrain within which the real politik of expansion can be reconciled (partly at least) with genuine support for progressive causes. The strategy followed by the left parties in office has been to increase contacts with socialist or left-leaning regimes (Algeria, Ethiopia, Mozambique etc) without dropping the old alliances; hoping the former will eventually outweigh the latter. However, socialism and real politik have often conflicted: for example, whether France should honour its civilian nuclear contracts with South Africa; how far it should be prepared to push its support for self-determination in the Sahara; or whether it should provide military assistance to governments like that of Zaire. In such cases difficult choices have had to be made, and have not always been resolved in favour of the left.

At some point, however, one would hope for a more fundamental change, both in relations with Africa and in the structures in France itself which maintain them. The Socialist Party has already embarked on studies of how the arms industries could be converted, reducing pressure to export, without necessarily weakening France's own defences. In principle this kind of restructuring should be easier to undertake now that the arms industry is under government control, as there will not be the same pressure to earn super-profits for the arms firms by exporting. Nevertheless it is hard to envisage a demilitarisation of relations with Africa (or the Third World more generally) without a basic re-examination of French strategic doctrine, including the role of the intervention forces.

The Socialist Party's Policy Document urged that a government of the left should review the entire French military presence, suggesting that the
military co-operation accords might be retained with slight modifications, while the defence agreements and the French military installations would require more substantial changes. There is little indication that any such review has yet begun. The standard excuse is that it would require the co-operation of African governments themselves. Yet this cannot be considered an adequate reason for not adopting a more forceful policy. A fundamental review of the existing military arrangements could scarcely be regarded as 'interventionism of the left' even if their revision were 'to allow the contradictions inherent in neo-colonial societies to express themselves more freely'.

Bibliographic Note
Among the many works on the military in Africa, see Michel L. Martin, La Militarisation des Systèmes Politiques Africains, Editions Naaman, (Sherbrooke, Quebec, 1976); Samuel Decalo, Coups and Army rule in Africa (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976; Moshe Amml-Oz, 'La Formation des Cadres Militaires Africains lors de la Mise Sur Pied des Armées Nationales', Revue Française d’Études Politiques Africaines No.133, January 1977, which also deals with France’s Plan Raisonnable. Despite their merits, none of these works (nor most of the other literature on African military) gives serious attention to the intervention of the military in domestic class struggles nor to its role as an instrument of neo-colonial domination. Virtually the only writings I am aware of that deal with these topics are T. Yannopoulos and D. Martin, 'Régimes Militaires et Classes Sociales en Afrique Noire: Une Hypothèse', Revue Française de Science Politique, Vol.22, No.4 (August 1972); Eboe Hutchful, 'A Tale of Two Regimes: Imperialism, Military Intervention and Class in Ghana', Review of African Political Economy, No.14, 1979; Robin Luckham, 'Armaments, Under-development & Demilitarisation in Africa', Alternatives (VI, No.2, July 1980; Ruth First, The Barrel of a Gun, (Allen Lane, London, 1970), and Roger Murray’s seminal 'Militarism in Africa' New Left Review 38 (July-August 1966).


A French version of this article has appeared in *Politique Africaine*, Vol.1, Nos.5 and 6, February and May, 1982. These issues contain several other articles of interest on France's relationships with Africa.
All my life I have been a rebel and a dreamer. All my life I have kicked around on the margins of society and the fringe of the law, an aimless wanderer with no sense of purpose to my life. As a youth I rebelled from my family. They arrived in Mocambique 40-odd years ago, already a rich and powerful family in Portugal. They came here to get richer and more powerful and they did. But that was no life for me. I was suffocated by the city life of Laurenço Marques; the mindless formality and racist oppression of the Portuguese fascist state smothered and stifled any spark of life in our get-rich culture. I left home as a youth and went into the bush living as a hunter with the Africans, then as a game fisherman. Then together with some friends I started a farm. We were a wild bunch. When the PIDE (Portuguese secret police) finally busted us they surprisingly found no dope — but that didn't matter, we were labelled 'subversives' and thrown in jail. My uncle was then a high court judge and I and my friends were out in a few months.

Then I was drafted into the army and stationed here in Niassa. My god what a stupid war! My captains in the garrison gave me my orders to go out in the bush and fight an enemy I couldn't see. They received their orders from Portugal and told me to get out on the tracks and in the villages to fight the people. What was I fighting to defend? Who was I fighting against?

In the army too I was a rebel. I gave literacy classes to the soldiers. My view of life spilled over into my classes. One day a soldier who had become a close *companionheiro*, came to me and quietly confided that he was going to run away to Malawi, and across Tanzania and join the national liberation movement FRELIMO to continue the war on the other side. Would I join him? Now Jorge's voice started to crack nervously. 'But', I said, 'I am white. For you it is easy you are black'. He protested that it didn't matter, that we are all Mocambican under the skin. I wished him well but didn't go with him. Besides he was caught in Malawi. I saw him recently in Maputo. He still has the scars on his face from the cigarette burns the PIDE gave him.

Then in June 1975 came Independence, and my family and most of my friends left — over 90 per cent of the 200,000 colonists left within the first two years. They left an economy in ruins and a nation with 95 per cent illiteracy and only a few hundred Mocambicans with any secondary education.

I completed a course at the university, married Theresa and together we worked at the Ministry of Education. It was good and important work, but I grew restless in the city. When a friend in Fisheries said they were looking for somebody to open up the fishing on lake Niassa I jumped at the chance.

Jorge smiled after finishing telling me his story, his lanky frame towering head and shoulders above the rest of us, and he threw back a long arm to the sun falling blood red into the Malawi hills on the other side of the lake. 'Now I am no longer a rebel, but I am still a dreamer'. He picked up a twig and started to scratch in the rich African soil dyed an even deeper red in the last light of the setting sun.

And here we should build the dock, it will be 35 metres long and at its deepest point will be eight metres deep. No, a wooden jetty won't do. One day Metangula will be an important port exporting agricultural produce to neighbouring states. And over there will be our refrigeration
unit and artificial drying trays. And over there under those mango trees we should breed the ducks, and the offices and repair workshops will be over there, and . . .

And I thought, 'Jorge you are crazy. It's just taken 20 of us all day to dig the jeep out of the mountain dirt track that links Metangula with the rest of the world. The boat I went out on this morning turned back when the exhaust pipe broke (again) and tomorrow or the next day someone has to take it a 125km to Lichinga to be welded (again). All the materials to realise Jorge's dream will have to come from the capital Maputo, a journey which is nearly as far as from London to Leningrad across roads which wash out during the rainy season. Another dreamer! As I travelled across Mocambique I stumble from dreamer to dreamer.

Within five days Jorge da Silva e Sousa, director of the fisheries project had sold me his dream hook, line and sinker. Jorge would resent it being called 'his' dream. The fisheries project at Metangula is part of an integrated development plan called the 'Niassa Programme'. Niassa, in the north-west corner of Mocambique has a frontier with Tanzania to the north, and the shore line of Lake Niassa to the west. The province having just less than the area of the UK has a population of only 504,000. Although rich in coal, iron and untold other minerals, and forests of exotic woods, the high fertile plain has only two decent roads. Niassa bore the brunt of the 10-year liberation war, but in 1979 when president Samora Machel toured the province he found widespread hunger and unspeakable poverty such as Niassa had always known. 'Where are the fruits of independence?' he asked. 'The war with Rhodesia has forced us to turn our eyes inwards, and Niassa has been forgotten'. He then launched the Niassa Programme, as what Mocambique calls a 'model for the struggle against development'. The novel features of the programme include volunteer youth brigades drawn from all over the country building roads, bridges and houses. It includes pardoning prisoners in two camps in Niassa and releasing them to build a new city and co-operative workshops for themselves in a piece of scrub land which is called Unango. These are not any prisoners; many of them were terrorists infiltrated by the Portuguese army into the liberated zones to massacre and terrorise the population which was supporting FRELIMO's liberation war against the Portuguese colonialists.

There are many other novel features to the Niassa Programme, but I want to draw them out by looking specifically to Metangula. I want to draw out what is special about the fisherines project by looking at it through two pairs of eyes. First through FRELIMO socialist development strategy, and second through the kind of 'development' that the World Bank and IMF fosters.

Traditional fishing has gone on along the shore line of Lake Niassa for centuries. It is based on dug-out wooden canoes cut miles away high in the mountains, and then transported down the mountains and through the bush slowly and painstakingly on the broad backs of troops of porters singing and chanting all the way. The fishing techniques, based on simple nets and hand lines, have only a very low return for the hours spent away fishing. The productivity is so low that I could see virtually no signs of accumulation or differentiation between the fishermen and the subsistence peasants alongside them.
There is, however, a tradition of fishing and therefore something to build on. The question, as ever, is how. How to introduce new techniques to harvest the rich protein and vitamin potential in the lake, at the same time making sure that it goes to feed the poorest peasants, who have little or no means of exchange. And how to ensure that this 'development' should not conflict with FRELIMO's declared socialist aim of creating a society free from exploiting classes, but rather a society of workers 'socialised' into collective work units.

The first experiment in forming a co-operative was a total failure. In 1976 the newly formed local administrative and political organisations got together a handful of abandoned fibre glass boats, a loan from the bank, and a group of fishermen, and declared the result to be a co-operative. It was left to fend for itself and within months it fell apart. The money was stolen, the motors were all ruined, and nothing was gained except the experience of how not to organise a co-operative.

Following the presidential offensive in October 1979, Niassa became a national priority and plans and resources of the national fisheries directorate, which is a sub-division of the Ministry of Industry and Energy, were given a new impetus. Mocambique's general development strategy is to concentrate high technology capital intensive development in a series of strategic state enterprises, and then to circle these with satellites of co-operative development. Concretely in agriculture this would mean that the state farm would have a series of specific facilities like a tractor repair shop, improved storage techniques, perhaps a seed and fertilizer research project and infrastructural support in terms of access road and services. Also political and administrative resources would be concentrated there.

In theory the state farm would then service and help 'dynamise' the co-operative sector. In practice this has not always been the case, with the state farm managers more preoccupied with their fulfilment of plans and target yields than with the socialisation of the countryside into collective production.

This general approach is being applied in the fisheries project at Metangula. At the highest level it is a research project financed by a Scandinavian aid grant and the FAO. The aid includes an ultra-modern boat weighing 20 tons which was brought on the back of a lorry up the tracks and across the mountains. I am sure that that story itself is an epic to equal Hannibal's elephants. Equipped with sona equipment, it is engaged in charting the waters along the shore and tracing, quantifying and identifying the fish resources, so that a long term fishing strategy can be formulated which avoids depletion from over-fishing. Training is also being given to Mocambicans (notably to Jorge's wife Teresa Tete) in the theory and practice of lake fishery control.

Already I can see contradictions emerging between some Mocambicans and some 'experts' from FAO. The former would like to see the boat (which can hold 15 tons of fish) out fishing between its investigating missions, and the latter who jealously guard the independence of the research activities.

The nature of the UN 'experts' is for me a source of endless wonder. I meet them up and down Mocambique, and I am shocked by their general
insensitivity and conspicuous consumption in a country with a per capita income of only slightly more than 100 dollars per annum. Certainly not all, but many in my experience, are incapable of comprehending Mocambique's socialist strategy of bottom-up development. For them there exist only technical problems' which can be resolved with optimum strategies — invariably the same strategies used to solve the same problem they have already met in Kenya, Bangladesh, the Philippines or Korea.

Margaret Sketchley, who worked for two-and-a-half years in a self-help project in the shanty towns of Maputo tells a story which for me sums up this attitude. A Swedish UN 'expert' was sent up to the north of Mocambique to help with the building of a communal neighbourhood in a provincial capital. It was necessary to put in a pipeline through very rocky soils. 'Fine', he said, 'next month I will get the project bulldozers and excavators brought up from Maputo and we shall have the pipeline laid in a couple of weeks.' The local political leaders said no. They wanted to lay the pipe using brigades of volunteers from the neighbourhood which the pipe was going to serve, and to draw in representatives from other neighbourhoods to learn from this 'model project'. 'But', he insisted, 'that will take months. It's madness to use manual labour to solve a problem I can solve in days.' The political leaders explained patiently that Mocambique is a poor country without reserves of foreign currency, without skilled maintenance workers or drivers, without fuel . . . without any of the material conditions to permit the generalised use of heavy equipment. The work progressed slowly. The 'expert' became more and more impatient, then cynical, and finally so disaffected that he was asked to leave the country. The pipe was finally connected, the 'technical problem' solved. What the 'expert' would never be able to see was what else was instilled within the block committees who were responsible for mobilising their residents to work Sunday mornings in turn, or the links which were forged between the leaders of the different neighbourhood 'dynamising' groups committees, or the sense of satisfaction and independence that manifested itself at that Saturday afternoon popular dance fiesta held to celebrate the connection of the pipe.

In Metangula I also found examples of this same attitude. A Chilean fisheries expert recruited through FAO was advising on alternative fishing techniques. He gave some new style drift nets to some fishermen to try. He was angry when he went back to visit them and found that the specially imported lead weights which he had flown from Maputo had been cut from the nylon ropes and lay in a heap beside the fishermen's grass huts. In their place were hangin lumps of rock crudely tied on the stands of a local creeping liana. Jorge smiled as he told me the story. 'What the fishermen found was that the lumps of lead caught on the rocky bottom of the lake and tore the nets. They replaced them with a system they have been using for centuries with their chilimalili nets. The point is that when the weight catches the bottom, the liana breaks, and instead of losing a valuable lead weight, or tearing the net, they just have to find another rock.

At the same time Jorge showed me nets dyed a kind of purply-pink. He explained that they soaked the nets in a solution made from a root that grows in Tanzania, and which he would like to cultivate locally for its
exceptional preservative properties. But he shook his head as he saw the nets out drying in the fierce sun. ‘The hardest part of all this business is for us to learn how to listen to them, and for them to learn how to listen to us!’

So much for the research project. In my opinion it is a good project, and essential if Mocambique is to avoid the anarchy that exists in European waters where whole species of fish have been virtually wiped out.

The next level down in terms of sophistication is the state fishing enterprise. This followed the co-operative and has really only been in existence 10 months. The fleet consists of three boats which will be increased to 18 boats this year and 25 boats next year. It is possible that all of these boats will pass to the co-operative sector and that the state enterprise will concentrate on processing, marketing, repair and service facilities for the co-ops. The research ship in the future could be the fleet’s mother ship collecting the catch from the village co-ops. The co-ops have the first call on the 120 fibreglass boats to be built in a factory which prior to independence produced luxury cruisers and ski-boats. Now nationalised, it is producing quite a different boat for quite a different class of people.

The aim of the state enterprise, as already noted, is to serve as the leading edge of technological innovation and to create a supporting infrastructure which facilitates a broader dissemination of more productive technology. Concretely that means setting up departments which function as training as well as service units. For example, in a net-making and repair section new ideas of the fisheries experts are put into practice and the nets used by the fleet are repaired. Whilst I was there the first trawl net ever to be used on this side of the lakes was just being completed. The net workshop is a huge pavilion built of local split bamboo and covered with thatch. It’s shady, ventilated interior and sand floor created ideal working conditions; and it was gratifying to note that two of the workers sitting cross-legged in the sand were cripples who were happy to be incorporated into a productive life.

The enterprise workshops are situated alongside those of the co-operative and I would expect that as the new complex is built a few hundred metres away across the other side of the peninsula, and the co-operative expands, it will take over these premises. By then the young apprentices learning motor repair, welding and carpentry will be assured a regular job.

The new fishing complex is indeed an ambitious dream with its deep water pier and fish processing facilities. From what I have seen of what has already been achieved in the face of overwhelming obstacles, I am convinced that a fleet of trawlers supplying a freezing and drying complex with by-products of fishmeal feeding into duck rearing and pig breeding is viable. The surplus the enterprise will generate will surely be used to build up the local infrastructure for the benefit of the population.

One of the most contentious aspects of the integrated development plan is the idea to build a tourist complex on this idyllic site. It was Tete who put the case against the idea to a young hip white Mocambican friend and his UN friend friends who were looking for a speculative investment in Mocambique. ‘Carlos my dear boy, where are your brains? Our people are crying out for food, health posts and schools and you — you come here
with the idea that what few trucks we have should be carrying steel and bottles of whiskey. My dear boy, do us all a favour and take your damned ideas to the other side of the lake. Fourteen million meticais our country can’t afford.

‘That may be a lot for the state, but for the Indian traders it is nothing’, said our expert friend, with a laugh that was cut short by Tete’s contemptuous and eloquent stare.

A taste of what the future could hold was brought out sharply whilst I was in Metangula when a delegation of local people went to the house of the Administrator to complain of the cultural outrage of these visitors strolling around in swim wear. ‘We mean these people no harm, but for us it is though they are naked. They must respect our feelings’. The foreigners were themselves outraged by this ‘bureaucracy’. Though when the children who had been following around, and holding their hands, started throwing stones at the topless bather, I felt perhaps a lesson had been learned.

The debate about what kind of development Metangula should have will continue. Whilst the state holds tight control of the supply of priority building materials, transport, internal commerce and a monopoly of foreign trade, it remains in a good position to impose its priorities as defined in the national plan for the decade, which places an uncompromising emphasis on the elimination of poverty, disease and illiteracy.

One aspect which will certainly continue to receive the highest priority in this plan is the development of the co-operative sector. FRELIMO quite unashamedly admits that it has opted for co-operatives for strictly ideological reasons. As a form of organisation, it is perhaps the least appropriate of all, requiring a massive political input to persuade a group of people to work together for the good of them all rather than personal gain. It also required a complex system of recording units of work. Its advantage, of course, is that it prevents private accumulation and the resulting growth of an exploiting class. It s also undoubtedly one of the best forms of organisation for promoting a genuine democratic participation of the people in controlling their own lives.

The first co-operative at Metangula, as I have said, failed hopelessly. When they arrived, Tete and Jorge decided to accept the fact that it had failed and to start again. The bank was, of course, reluctant to write its first loan off to experience, and give them more money. The state banks have a flexible credit policy towards co-operatives which recognises that short term viability will be the exception. Fortunately they are also getting to be much more exacting about the degree of organisation and control that the co-op has to show before loans are made. For six months Jorge and Tete did nothing. They just talked to the people, and analysed with them, what had gone wrong before. Then they identified activities — net-making, maintenance, marketing, quality control, book-keeping, etc., and started to organise each activity into a department with someone clearly responsible for overseeing systems which they worked out together. They maintained tight control of each activity for six months, then they pulled out of the co-op completely leaving these newly formed departments to cope for
themselves. It is no over-statement to say that the co-op fell into a state of confusion. When I was there it was in a phase of just trying to rebuild itself, and maintain the control systems that has been imposed. Like a cripple with a crutch the co-op would never be able to walk on two feet whilst they could lean on Jorge and Teté.

Now this process is being repeated in the state fishery enterprise. Taking coffee with Teté on the verandah one morning we were interrupted by a stream of workers. 'We have come to ask for a driver and a lorry to take the nets down to the boats', says the first two. She shouted to Antonio in the office to ask how much diesel they had left. 'That is all we have left, and you want to use it to move the nets. How many men would it take to move the nets?' 'Two for the nets and two for the weights, senhora Teresa'. 'Then I have a better idea. Why don’t you two take the nets, and then go back for the weights?' 'Yes, senhora Teresa.' Patronising? Yes, if you felt uncharitable, you could say it is. I would rather say that it reflects the reality of a workforce which has never had to work in a disciplined way, and is not spontaneously transformed into model workers just because colonialism has been expelled from their country. There are no easy answers to this complex problem of how to motivate people to work in a disciplined way without imposing on them an iron discipline which itself becomes just another form of dependence.

Now the fisheries complex at Metangula has become confused by its own success. Being by far the most successful and developed enterprise in the district, it is forcing the pace for the local political organisations. The time has now arrived to form workers’ production councils in each department to be an independent channel for the workers to meet and raise problems of work organisation and social conditions, and to play a vital role in the formulation and execution of the annual plan for the enterprise. The problem is that the local sections of the production councils still exist in name only and instead of leading the process are tailing behind it. Perhaps the most serious criticism that I have of all that I saw at Metangula is the lack of active participation of the workers in the control and management of the enterprise and a lack of democratic participation in the formulation of the annual plan and longer term perspectives. Perhaps given the newness of the enterprise and relative weakness and inexperience of the local political structures this is to be expected. Many workers wanted to hear of my experiences in the steel rolling mill in Maputo where I worked for two-and-a-half years, and how the production councils were organised. They are clearly not going to wait around for a couple of years for the process to catch up with them!

I saw another aspect of the same process when I went out with Jorge up the lake to the next settlement — it was little more than one big extended family. Jorge greeted the elder under a tree, and exchanged a roll of twine for repairing nets for some fresh roasted ears of maize. After a formal exchange with the elder he moved away to talk to his son by the nets. As ever the son was more prepared to listen to Jorge’s idea to form a co-operative. The state would give them a boat and nets and supply them with salt and then would buy back the fish leaving them to pay for the boat monthly out of the surplus. ‘To work together in a co-operative is very
difficult’, said the man doubtfully. Jorge explained that if they wished to do it, then the state could help them, and they should talk about it more, and start to select suitable people to work with them. The fisherman was enthusiastic when we left, and Jorge told him again that it would take time to organise and it wouldn’t be easy.

As we left I noticed a catfish drying (or should I say rotting) in the sun. ‘That is no way to dry fish.’ ‘I agree’, said Jorge. ‘You know I had a Japanese fisheries technician by the other day offering to teach me to dry and smoke fish. Thanks’, I said, ‘but I have been drying fish and meat all of my life. Now if you want to come here for six months, live in the villages, and teach them how to dry and smoke fish that would be great for sure’. I am still waiting for him to reply.

It was in the boat going back that I asked Jorge what would stop that fisherman from selling his fish to anyone at any price, or, for example, from accumulating money to buy a plough and start to employ his neighbours to work on his land? He replied that the local political and administrative structures would ensure that they pay themselves only up to an agreed wage, and use the rest of the surplus as a social fund as the Metangula co-operative does. The social fund is an important element in the political development of the co-operative. Each month it is allocated on the basis of mass meetings of all members of the co-operative. It is used as social support for members who have sudden illness or death in the family and for trading maize and fresh vegetables from other co-operatives. In the future they say they will use the money to build a creche and later a first aid post. When I pointed out that the local structures were all in Metangula and they only just could cope with what they have there, and that the party didn’t exist this far out, Jorge leaned forwards to adjust the throttle, ‘We shall have to study that problem’, was all he would say. Without a doubt the lack of party members with experience to deal with these new problems being thrown up is one of the greatest problems Mozambique faces. Without the party at the helm, these projects, however well intentioned, could end up making more and more difficult problems for the future. In fact the answer to this problem is the progressive increase in the number of members of the co-op and diversification of its activities to include members working in service functions such as first aid post attendants. That clearly required that those members forming the co-operative are aware of this perspective and accept that the benefits of their work will not come in the form of a continuously rising personal salary. I have the impression that many co-operatives don’t have a clear understanding of this perspective.

It is only in countries like Mozambique that private accumulations is seen as a problem. If Metangula was a typical IMF or World Bank funded project, we would expect to see export oriented, multinational capital in the fisheries complex, perhaps a ‘Holiday Inn’ on the peninsula. Within a short time multinational capital and the new up and coming local wealthies would have the whole thing sewn up. The subsistence farmers would become bell boys, and casual wage labourers, and their land taken over by the local elite growing luxury food for themselves and the hotel. As has happened the world over the poorest would lose even that which they don’t have, in the name of ‘aid’ and ‘development’.
'Dried fish is the answer', said Jorge once. 'That way we know it will get out to the villages. It weighs only one-third the weight of wet fish; it stores and they like it much more — indeed they found in Cabo Delgado province that when the fish arrived at the villages in refrigerated trucks they immediately put half of it out to dry!'

Metangula is one development project where the poorest are benefiting the most. One evening Jorge took me out in a truck to a nearby village that has an agricultural co-operative to exchange some trays of fish for the equivalent number of sacks of maize. We pulled into the village as the sun was setting and stopped alongside the police control post at the entrance of the village. 'Why have we stopped here', I asked. 'You will see', was all he answered. Sure enough, within three minutes we were besieged with people eager to get at our fish. They were marshalled into a line and the fish distributed according to the number in the family. The people were well fed, but believe me, if you lived on maize meal, beans and pumpkin leaves you would welcome some fish. We sat by a hut in the twilight talking to the leaders of the co-operative about this year's rains, and as we left, Jorge stopped the truck in the middle of the village. 'Get out and smell the air', he said, and sure enough, the air hung heavy with wood smoke, and the unmistakable smell of fresh fish being grilled over charcoal. Jorge looked pleased with himself as we left, and I asked him how many men in how many dug-out canoes it would take to catch this much fish. He started to make a calculation on the back of a cigarette packet. 'Hey man, there is not room for all the noughts!' He threw the packet on to the dashboard, and with a comment I can't translate, we lurched forward back up the road.

On the track we met the representative of internal commerce who wanted to know what the hell Jorge was up to. Jorge hit the roof, and said he was not a grocer, and when they could take it over and do it before the fish rotted they would be very welcome. Both left as friends, both knowing that Jorge was right. The lack of trained people, or even people with enough basic literacy to train others remains Mocambique's biggest problem.

It is a problem that manifests itself a thousand ways. It means that the state is weak, and at times appears as no more than hand-painted signs on doors with no-one inside. It also means that the party is not always in control, and where it is, it is still very remote from the capital where the national conferences are held. As a result the process is uneven. In Metangula I found a project that was inspiring in its conception and impressive in its execution. It depends upon just a few individuals who are capable of leading and motivating the rest. But also in Metangula lives the District Administrator — a fascinating character who is a veteran of the liberation war, and has a remarkable insight into the history of Niassa and its future. But he is also capable of using what I can only call brutal methods to ensure complete collectivisation of the only communal village in his district. His methods extend even to burning houses to ensure the participation of the reluctant few peasants who are not yet convinced that the communal village is for them and are way outside the party line. One day for sure, he will get carpeted for what he has done. In the meantime he represents one side of development in Niassa, though fortunately a side which is most certainly not the most decisive, nor even a very significant one (and certainly one it
would be easy for me to leave out of this article).

Metangula, alongside the thousand projects like it up and down the country is what is decisive in transforming Mocambique, and what they all believe will defeat under-development in this poorest of countries within this decade. To do that Mocambique will need aid and funds which it cannot accumulate itself to lay the foundation for the new society they are trying to build. But with aid always comes strings and 'experts'.

As I prepare to leave Metangula I am convinced that Metangula is for me an answer to all those who are cynical about what good aid can do. Today is my last day at Metangula. It rained and tomorrow will surely be spent digging and hauling the Land Rover up and down washed out mountain tracks. The electricity has failed (again) and I sit on Jorge's and Teresa's verandah with my typewriter and a roaring paraffin lamp competing with the monotonous symphony of crickets and frogs. It rained today. That means that the lamp is circled by a swarm of mayflies the size of dragonflies, which hatch when it rains and whirl away the few hours around my light before their wings fall off. Beneath, two lizards are having a fiesta as the flies fall. I feel something crawl over my foot and I jump (I have killed three scorpions on the verandah today already) but it is only a praying mantis.

My thoughts drift through the day I have spent in Metangula and settle on my first day, New Year's Eve and the party. I see us all in a line dancing. A group of workers from the co-operative blow on huge, dried gourds making a noise like paper on a comb, but much deeper and richer. Another group of fishermen lead us in the dance called N'Ganda, a traditional harvest dance. Some of their wives start to sing. They stop and we all start to dance again in a jumble of confusion to an old Rolling Stones record. Italians, Dutch, Canadian, English, Mocambicans and towering head and shoulders above all is Jorge.

The co-operative siren punctuates the festivities to announce the arrival of the new year. Beside me a black fist flies through the air and a deep voice booms 'VIVA FRELIMO' to be followed by a forest of fists and an answering 'viva'. On my other side Saide (who, although carrying the marks of a horrible experience in the jails of the PIDE, remains a person of outstanding warmth and integrity) approaches, grasps my shoulder and with a huge grin cries 'into another New Year. Oh my companheiro Peter, I am so happy. Me and my country, we are Independent. IN-DE-PENDENT.' He pinched the ebony skin on his forearm and my white skin alongside it. 'Now this white skin/black skin means nothing. We are all one people. Beneath our skin we are all Mocambicans. Oh my brother I am so happy. So HAPPY.'

Peter Sketchley

Editor's Note
This is the first of a series of articles Peter has written following his six-month field trip to Niassa. He plans two further articles; one dealing with the state farm/co-operative relationship
and the situation of women centred around interviews with a woman witch doctor and the first commander of the women's detachment of the liberation war. Peter is particularly trying to use his material (slides and contacts) to encourage local groups concerned about 'Third World issues' to learn through involvement in specific fund raising projects. Anyone who would like further details or has suggestions as to where he could raise the financial support needed to enable him to write up this valuable experience should contact him in care of the ROAPE office, Sheffield.

Finally, the results of the research will be published as an illustrated book, which, together with a touring exhibition of photographs (and possible batiks) will be used to promote the Niassa Programme in Europe and North America. Help is urgently needed to raise money to complete this project. Practical help with publishing and translating the book, and relating it (or pamphlets) to specific needs of groups working in development related issues would also be very much welcomed. Please contact Peter Sketchley directly through CUSO/SUCS, 151 Slater Street, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1P 5H5, if you are interested in supporting the project, or would like to receive any future articles he writes.

CASTING NEW MOULDS, a personal view of the struggles and obstacles faced by a Mocambique workforce suddenly taking control of an abandoned steel mill foundry. Available from: IFDP, 2588 Mission Street, San Francisco, Ca (94110).

We hope that having read this article you will feel encouraged to participate actively in this process by raising money to help these important developments, and perhaps more importantly, to stop our own governments' complicity in Reagan-backed aggression of the Apartheid regime against Mozambique & Angola. More details from CUSO, or Co-operacão Internacional, Ave Julius Nyerere, Maputo, Mozambique.

THE WORKERS' STRUGGLE IN SOUTH AFRICA

Since the early 1970s a new wave of independent non-racial trade unionism has grown up inside South Africa. It has organised well over 250,000 black workers, built up its own cadres of trained and accountable officials and shops stewards, won scores of recognition agreements with managements, conducted numerous and often successful strike actions, and has significantly improved the wages and conditions of its members. These unions have quietly emerged as a major force for change inside the country.

We reprint below a key statement illustrating how one set of unions, the federation of South African Trades Unions (FOSATU) see the political task, prefacing it with an introductory comment.

Introduction to 'The Workers' Struggle: Where does FOSATU Stand?
All trade unions in South Africa are forced to confront the issue of the state, for the state forces its presence on trade unions. The apartheid state imposes a myriad of restrictions on the right of black workers to associate, to take industrial action, to affiliate to political movements, to espouse political causes. It backs up these restrictions with an impressive apparatus of repression as well as with more subtle devices aimed at undermining the growth of trade unionism. State repression has had devastating effects on earlier trade union movements. There is no guarantee that it might not do so again. The unions cannot help but address the political question of apartheid.
and the situation of women centred around interviews with a woman witch doctor and the first commander of the women's detachment of the liberation war. Peter is particularly trying to use his material (slides and contacts) to encourage local groups concerned about 'Third World issues' to learn through involvement in specific fund raising projects. Anyone who would like further details or has suggestions as to where he could raise the financial support needed to enable his to write up this valuable experience should contact him in care of the ROAPE office, Sheffield.

Finally, the results of the research will be published as an illustrated book, which, together with a touring exhibition of photographs (and possible batiks) will be used to promote the Niassa Programme in Europe and North America. Help is urgently needed to raise money to complete this project. Practical help with publishing and translating the book, and relating it (or pamphlets) to specific needs of groups working in development related issues would also be very much welcomed. Please contact Peter Sketchley directly through CUSO/SUCS, 151 Slater Street, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1P 5H5, if you are interested in supporting the project, or would like to receive any future articles he writes.

CASTING NEW MOULDS, a personal view of the struggles and obstacles faced by a Mocambique workforce suddenly taking control of an abandoned steel mill foundry. Available from: IFDP, 2588 Mission Street, San Fransisco, Ca (94110).

We hope that having read this article you will feel encouraged to participate actively in this process by raising money to help these important developments, and perhaps more importantly, to stop our own governments' complicity in Reagan-backed aggression of the Apartheid regime against Mozambique & Angola. More details from CUSO, or Co-operacao Internacional, Ave Julius Nyerere, Maputo, Mozambique.

THE WORKERS' STRUGGLE IN SOUTH AFRICA

Since the early 1970s a new wave of independent non-racial trade unionism has grown up inside South Africa. It has organised well over 250,000 black workers, built up its own cadres of trained and accountable officials and shops stewards, won scores of recognition agreements with managements, conducted numerous and often successful strike actions, and has significantly improved the wages and conditions of its members. These unions have quietly emerged as a major force for change inside the country.

We reprint below a key statement illustrating how one set of unions, the federation of South African Trades Unions (FOSATU) see the political task, prefacing it with an introductory comment.

Introduction to 'The Workers' Struggle: Where does FOSATU Stand?

All trade unions in South Africa are forced to confront the issue of the state, for the state forces its presence on trade unions. The apartheid state imposes a myriad of restrictions on the right of black workers to associate, to take industrial action, to affiliate to political movements, to espouse political causes. It backs up these restrictions with an impressive apparatus of repression as well as with more subtle devices aimed at undermining the growth of trade unionism. State repression has had devastating effects on earlier trade union movements. There is no guarantee that it might not do so again. The unions cannot help but address the political question of apartheid.
At one level apartheid is a system of racial oppression which denies democratic rights to all blacks regardless of their class. In response popular movements of national liberation, fighting for democracy and the end of apartheid, have grown up. The economic content of apartheid is, however, a brutal system of class exploitation. In response to this, black workers have formed trade unions in order to defend their particular interests as workers. In this context the relation between the workers’ struggle and the popular struggle becomes a key strategic issue. Since trade unions have been the elementary form of working class organisation, their relation to the wider struggle against apartheid has become an item of hot debate. The speech reprinted here by the General Secretary of what is the largest independent trade union federation in South Africa, FOSATU, directly addresses this question and articulates a perspective that has been given all too little coverage in socialist analysis and strategy.

Foster’s starting point is a critique of a ‘popular front’ politics in which trade unions are seen as the workers’ voice in a broader alliance against apartheid. According to this conception the role of unions is to provide industrial muscle behind the democratic programme of the popular front. Under the slogan of the ‘unity of economics and politics’, the economic struggles of workers are in fact subordinated to an apparently classless or inter-class political campaign for democracy. This model of trade unionism has an obvious appeal for those militants who wish to avoid the pitfalls of non-political, economistic trade unionism. But it carries with it the danger that adherence of trade unions to a popular front against apartheid is secured at the expense of their representation of the interests of black workers as workers. In such an event the specific needs and aspirations of black workers become subordinated to a democratic movement which neglects or even curbs the expression of working class issues and the independent organisation of the working class. ‘Unity’ in this instance means an unequal alliance in which workers are expected to fight for a movement which is led and shaped by forces outside the working class.

These have been the basic characteristics of popular front politics as witnessed in the inter-war years in Britain, France and Spain. Under the guise of a classless alliance for democracy, the democratic movement is in fact led by democratic elements of the bourgeoisie or the petty bourgeoisie. The working class is merely wheeled in and wheeled out like the crowd in a Shakespearean drama.

The effects of popular frontism vary enormously in different situations. But certain common characteristics typically appear; first, workers have less commitment in fighting for democracy and freedom in the abstract than they do in combining their fight for democracy with struggles over immediate social and economic needs. Thus the democratic struggle as a whole is weakened. Second, the petty bourgeois leadership of the popular fronts are as afraid of the independent power of workers as they are of the enemy they have in common with the workers. This too holds back the democratic struggle as a whole. Third, the leadership of the popular front needs to use vestiges of the state in order to maintain its dominance over the working class. Thus the democratic revolution if successful remains incomplete. Fourth, the specific interests of workers are not given any
political voice and may be politically curbed. In some cases a popular front may well be successful in its own terms even though workers get little benefit from it. In other cases the effects of a popular front may be so disastrous as to destroy the democratic movement as a whole.

One major expression of popular front politics has been the rigid application of 'two-stage' theory which characterised Stalinist parties at certain stages between the wars and which continues to exercise an influence inside South Africa (see, for discussion of this, contributions by Ruth First and Archie Mafeje in No. 11 of this Review). According to this theory, the first stage of the revolution is a democratic one in which the posing by the working class of social and economic demands is made secondary or even impermissible. Only in the second stage of socialist revolution will social and economic demands of workers be given precedence. In some instances this means that the social demands of workers are simply relegated; in others that the specific advances which workers have already made (like the seizure of factories and land in early 1936 in Spain) are actively repressed by the leadership of the popular front.

How much has the politics of the popular front characterised black resistance in South Africa? This question needs careful investigation. There are good reasons to believe that this was the basic conception behind the Congress Alliance: namely that SACTU* subordinated the specific interests and organisations of workers first to mass protest campaigns and then to the armed struggle. There is no doubt but that the turn to armed struggle in 1961 broke the bounds of legalism and non-violence. But did it also signify a substitution of armed struggle for the organisation of workers? Did SACTU's support for this tragedy mean that it acted as a feeder for channelling working class militants away from the factory and into the field? Was the disastrous collapse of trade unionism in the 1960s in part at least the product of neglect of workers' struggles? Was working class organisation made subordinate to the armed struggle rather than armed struggle being made subordinate to working class organisation? These questions need to be posed seriously and lessons drawn.

Foster's central theme is the need for independent unions to break with the politics of the popular front. In itself this is not new. Many of the new wave of trade unionists reacted against what they saw as the subordination of trade unionism to petty bourgeois politics by rejecting politics as a whole as 'petty bourgeois'. There was a tendency to interpret trade union independence to mean independence from politics altogether. Trade unionism as such is identified with the interests of the working class. This 'apolitical' stance either took the form of an orthodox model of narrow economistic unionism or of a more syndicalist model of militant unions themselves constituting the political struggle. Either way workers abstained from questions of state power and so left this field free for forces outside the working class.

What is new about Foster's argument is that he recognises the limits of trade

---

*The South African Congress of Trade Unions, affiliated to the African National Congress (ANC) and driven into exile by 1984, which organised non-racial industrial unions in the mid-50s.
unionism as the elementary form of organisation of black workers and at the same time affirms the need for workers to create their own independent political voice. Trade unions comprise the economic foundation of a workers' movement; but a workers' movement itself comprises political and cultural as well as economic forms of organisation and consciousness. The unity of economics and politics cannot simply be asserted in theory; it has to be created in practice. What is crucial is not a formal identity but the substance of the politics to which workers attach their economic and cultural as well as economic means of expression. As yet they do not possess them.

What is the substance of a working class politics in South Africa? Foster spells out some of the implications of workers impressing their own distinctive mark on the wider democratic struggle: on their need to build a national presence within the trade union movement, to have their own newspapers, to build a cadre of trained and accountable officials and shop stewards, to engage in community politics only to the extent that they can maintain their own worker identity, to construct a 'disciplined' unity with other independent unions on the basis of common political purpose and close working links. The workers' task, as Foster sees it, is to 'strive to build their own powerful and effective organisation even whilst they are part of the wider popular struggle . . . to ensure that the popular movement is not hijacked by elements who will in the end have no option but to turn against their worker supporters'.

It still remains an open question, however, what comprises the actual content of 'working class politics'. It is clear that it includes a commitment not to dilute the economic struggles of workers in their unions and a conception that the democratic struggle is at once economic and cultural as well as political. Let me briefly throw open for discussion some ideas on how this question may be pursued. These views are my own and may not accord with those of Joe Foster.

First, a working class perspective demands that in the wider struggle for democracy worker organisations will ally with other democratic organisations on the basis of a 'united' rather than 'popular' front: that is, on particular issues while retaining their own separate identities. The traditional slogan of the united front is 'march separately, strike together'. In the course of an alliance of this kind the working class will strive to assert its leadership of the democratic struggle as a whole. Second, workers will give to the democratic struggle their own specific class content — which may conflict with the aims of their allies. This will include for example the fight for trade union rights and for increasing workers' control in factories as well as the fight for political freedom. Third, workers fight for immediate political concessions from the state, just as they fight for immediate economic concessions from management. They do not put off the struggle for democracy until a future day of reckoning, but in the here and now make their demands on the state. They do not sacrifice the struggles of today, no matter how small, for a promised golden age tomorrow. They do not counterpose reform to revolution. Fourth, it is for workers themselves to wage their own political struggles and not for others to wage struggles on their behalf. Workers do not leave the realm of politics
for outside forces — the petty bourgeoisie — or for small groups of the chosen. They discuss politics among themselves, use their existing organisations as best they can to raise political issues, create new organisations specially designed for political activity, make demands on the state and establish alternative structures independently of the state. A working class politics demands that workers themselves, through their own organisations, their own ideas and their own self-activity take up the fight against apartheid. This is not to deny the important role of the radical intelligentsia in feeding these struggles; rather it is a question of the orientation which they adopt. Lastly, workers take up struggles not only against forms of exploitation which affect themselves directly, but against all forms of oppression which face blacks under apartheid. And they do this without dissipating the strength of their own organisations.

In Britain and elsewhere struggles for unconditional state recognition of free trade unions laid the foundation for the growth of working class political parties. One can only wonder what political horizons might be opened up in South Africa if at an appropriate time in the future such a campaign were initiated by black workers. It is perhaps a sign of that absence of a working class movement to which Joe Foster draws our attention, that this perspective has little weight among the dominant political tendencies in South Africa. These at any rate are the thoughts which Joe Foster’s historic speech has excited in me.

Bob Fine

THE WORKERS’ STRUGGLE — WHERE DOES FOSATU STAND?

Three years ago, almost to the day, we met in this very same place to form FOSATU. Today we have set as our theme, ‘The Workers’ Struggle’ — in a serious attempt to further clarify where we as worker representatives see FOSATU standing in this great struggle.

That we are discussing this theme today and resolutions that relate to it is a justification of our original decision to form FOSATU and shows how seriously we take the new challenges that face us three years after that decision. Clearly any such discussion raises many very important issues and the purpose of this paper is to try and bring together these issues in ways that will help guide our discussions.

It is the task of this Congress to give a clear policy direction to our actions between now and the next Congress. We believe that the issues raised in this paper are crucial to a political understanding of our policies and what we hope to achieve by them. We also believe that it is the task of Congress to add to and modify the views expressed, through open and serious debate.

FOSATU — An Assessment

In the three years that FOSATU has existed there is little doubt that we have achieved a lot in terms of growth and gains made for our members. However, I believe that our greatest achievement is the fact that at this Congress we are determined to re-evaluate our policies. We are determined to respond to new challenges and set new directions if this is necessary. We
for outside forces — the petty bourgeoisie — or for small groups of the chosen. They discuss politics among themselves, use their existing organisations as best they can to raise political issues, create new organisations specially designed for political activity, make demands on the state and establish alternative structures independently of the state. A working class politics demands that workers themselves, through their own organisations, their own ideas and their own self-activity take up the fight against apartheid. This is not to deny the important role of the radical intelligentsia in feeding these struggles; rather it is a question of the orientation which they adopt. Lastly, workers take up struggles not only against forms of exploitation which affect themselves directly, but against all forms of oppression which face blacks under apartheid. And they do this without dissipating the strength of their own organisations.

In Britain and elsewhere struggles for unconditional state recognition of free trade unions laid the foundation for the growth of working class political parties. One can only wonder what political horizons might be opened up in South Africa if at an appropriate time in the future such a campaign were initiated by black workers. It is perhaps a sign of that absence of a working class movement to which Joe Foster draws our attention, that this perspective has little weight among the dominant political tendencies in South Africa. These at any rate are the thoughts which Joe Foster’s historic speech has excited in me.

Bob Fine

THE WORKERS’ STRUGGLE — WHERE DOES FOSATU STAND?

Three years ago, almost to the day, we met in this very same place to form FOSATU. Today we have set as our theme, ‘The Workers’ Struggle’ — in a serious attempt to further clarify where we as worker representatives see FOSATU standing in this great struggle.

That we are discussing this theme today and resolutions that relate to it is a justification of our original decision to form FOSATU and shows how seriously we take the new challenges that face us three years after that decision. Clearly any such discussion raises many very important issues and the purpose of this paper is to try and bring together these issues in ways that will help guide our discussions.

It is the task of this Congress to give a clear policy direction to our actions between now and the next Congress. We believe that the issues raised in this paper are crucial to a political understanding of our policies and what we hope to achieve by them. We also believe that it is the task of Congress to add to and modify the views expressed, through open and serious debate.

FOSATU — An Assessment

In the three years that FOSATU has existed there is little doubt that we have achieved a lot in terms of growth and gains made for our members. However, I believe that our greatest achievement is the fact that at this Congress we are determined to re-evaluate our policies. We are determined to respond to new challenges and set new directions if this is necessary. We
could have made this Congress a great occasion open to all to parade our successes and hide our failures. However, we have chosen otherwise.

We have chosen to keep it closed and to once again self-critically examine our position. I believe that this shows our determination to take the great militancy of our members and use this to build a just and fair society controlled by workers. We have no intention of becoming self-satisfied trade unionists incapable of giving political direction to the workers' struggle.

Yet we would only be dreaming of change if we do not strengthen and build our unions into large and effective organisations.

At our Inaugural Congress we stressed certain policies and set ourselves the task of establishing a tight federation of non-racial, national, industrial unions, based on shop floor strength. We set ourselves the task of sharing resources between affiliates and of building up an educational programme. We further stressed our independence in regard to party political organisations and from international trade union organisations.

Now it is not my task to assess every success and failure of FOSATU. There are reports tabled that will allow delegates to draw their own conclusions. However, it is important to make certain assessments in order to go further and identify why we need to clarify our position and set new and clearer directions.

I believe that we have to ask ourselves two crucial questions:

— have we established an effective organisation based on shop floor strength and non-racial industrial action?
— has our organisational activity developed worker leadership that can give guidance and direction to all workers?

In answer to both questions it would be wrong to expect a positive answer after only three years. However, we should be able to assess if we are going in the right direction.

Clearly in regard to the first question we made progress — it could even be said to be considerable progress — with NAAWU (National Automobile and Allied Workers' Union), NUTW (National Union of Textile Workers) and MAWU (Metal and Allied Workers' Union) beginning to be a significant presence in what are major industries. However, there is a long way to go both in these cases and more so in those of the other affiliates.

It is, however, the second question that poses more problems. As the unions grow and are faced with new challenges it becomes crucial that the leadership knows what direction it is going in. What are the organisational strategies that are necessary as the unions become larger and more effective? What dangers to worker militancy lie in recognition and stability?

As these unions grow then the question is what role do they play in the wider political arena. There has been a great upsurge in political activity over the last few years and many different political groups are looking to the union movement to state its position. We must be sure our organisation and our leadership can confidently state its position and continue to organise in the way that will strengthen and not weaken the position.
The purpose of this paper is to set out the issues we should debate if we are going to meet the challenges.

**Working Class Movement**

As a trade union federation we are clearly concerned with workers and their aspirations. If we were to think in terms of our members only, we would have a very limited role. If, however, we are thinking more widely of the working class then we have to examine very much more carefully what our political role is. In particular we need to look at this role in the South African context.

If we look at the advanced industrial countries then we see what can be called working class movements. There are a number of different organisations — trade unions, co-operatives, political parties and newspapers — that all see themselves as linked to the working class and furthering its interests. These working class movements are, therefore, powerful social forces in those societies.

In the capitalist economies these working class movements have power and organisation, yet politically the working class is still subject to policies and practices that are clearly against their interests, as the activities of Thatcher and Reagan show. This is increasingly leading to intense political and organisational activity to give the working class and the union movement a clearer direction so as to gather together the working class movement into a force that will more definitely put workers in control of their own destiny.

In the socialist countries similar battles are being fought. Whilst social, political and economic relations in these countries have been greatly altered and there have been great achievements to the benefit of workers, there is still the need for workers themselves to control their own destiny. So Solidarity was not struggling to restore capitalism in Poland, its struggle was to establish more democratic worker control over their socialist society.

Now my purpose in briefly looking at the working class movements in the advanced industrial countries was two-fold. First, so that we can be clear that worker activities such as strikes and protests do not in themselves mean that a working class movement or working class politics exist. These later are more than that — they are large-scale organisations with a clear social and political identity as the working class. Second, I wished to show that the pure size of working class organisation is itself no guarantee that workers will control their own destiny. In fact as the struggle of Solidarity shows, even the fact that a country is said to be socialist does not guarantee that workers control their own destiny.

In short it could be said that workers must build a powerful and effective movement if they are to succeed in advancing their interests against some very hostile forces, but they must also ensure that this movement is able to take a clear political direction.

The experience of the great working class movements in the advanced industrial countries is a very important guide and lesson to us. However, it cannot provide all our answers. First, in South Africa we cannot talk of a working class movement as we have defined it above. Second, whilst there is undoubtedly a large and growing working class its power is only a potential
power since as yet it has no definite social identity of itself as working class. The questions we should, therefore, address ourselves to, are:
— Why has no working class movement emerged?
— What are the prospects for such a movement emerging?
— What role can FOSATU play in such a process?

The Workers in South Africa’s Political History

It is not possible in a paper such as this to deal fully with all the developments in South Africa’s history that have led to the non-existence of a workers’ movement in South Africa.

South Africa’s history has been characterised by great repression and the major political and ideological instrument for this repression has been racism. Yet the major effect of this repression has been to very rapidly establish a large capitalist economy.

Racism and the violence and injustices associated with it is a very stark and clear form of repression. Alongside this only about 5 to 10 per cent of the population has ever had the franchise. Clearly, therefore, there is a very identifiable oppressive force and the major political task of the oppressed peoples has always been to attack that oppressive and racist regime.

So what has developed in South Africa is a very powerful tradition of popular or populist politics. The role of the great political movements such as the ANC and the Congress Alliance has been to mobilise the masses against the repressive minority regime. In such a situation mass mobilisation is essential so as to challenge the legitimacy of the state both internally and internationally.

Where virtually all the population is voteless and oppressed by a racial minority then a great alliance of all classes is both necessary and a clear political strategy. Furthermore, building such an alliance was a great task.

The ANC had to overcome racial division so as to rise above the divisive racism of the oppressors. They had to deal with opportunistic tribal leadership, to organise thousands upon thousands of people and they had to do all this in the face of harsh repression by the state. In achieving this there is little wonder that the ANC rose to be one of the great liberation movements in Africa.

In this context it is also easier to see and understand why the trade union movement acted in a particular way. The racial divisions in the working class, linked as they were to other objective factors, made it possible for capital to quite quickly suppress any serious challenge to their supremacy. It was possible to create the conditions that led to a politically tame union movement and thereby forced more militant and progressive unions to bear the brunt of state action, which in turn affected the politics of these unions.

Furthermore, at all times there were occasions when workers resisted by strike action, protest and organisation. Yet this by itself cannot constitute a working class movement. Whilst the unions were often prominent they were always small and weakly organised both nationally and in the factories. They could not provide an organisational base for a working class movement as we have defined it above.
Progressive and militant unions were continually the subject of state harassment, but, never managed to seriously challenge capital nationally or on a sustained basis. As a result the effective political role of progressive unions and of worker activity was to provide a crucial part of any popular struggle and that was to give it its ‘Worker Voice’. No mass popular movement can be effective or be seen to be effective if it does not have some worker involvement or representation. By the 1950s with the growth of South Africa’s industry and the working class the need to include workers became essential and as a result SACTU became an important element of the Congress Alliance.

In these circumstances the progressive trade unions became part of the popular struggle against oppression. They did not and probably could not have provided the base for working class organisation. There is of course no doubt that their activities have been very, very important in creating the conditions that led to the emergence in the last 10 to 15 years of the present progressive trade unions. However, these unions are operating in a different environment.

Workers and their struggle became very much part of the wider popular struggle. An important effect of this development was that capital could hide behind the curtains of apartheid and racism. The political energies of the oppressed masses and of international critics were focused on the apartheid regime and its abhorrent racism. The government and Afrikaanerdom become the focus of attack. In fact the position was such that learned liberal academics saw in capital the great hope for change despite the fact that capital and its lackeys were undoubtedly the major beneficiaries of apartheid.

Capital did its very best to keep in the political background and as a result this helped prevent the creation of capital’s logical political opposite which is a working class political movement. However, of crucial significance was that capital was growing rapidly and changing its very nature into a more monopolistic, technologically advanced and concentrated form. Its links internationally were also growing as was its importance for international capital.

We find, therefore, that behind the scenes of the great battle between the apartheid regime and its popular opponents that the capitalist economy has flourished and capital emerges now as a powerful and different force. It:

— is highly concentrated in truly gigantic corporations;
— has access to international information on how to deal with working class challenges;
— has access to the state’s security information;
— is able to rapidly share and assess information;
— is able to use the objective circumstances in its favour such as unemployment and influx control to weaken worker organisation;
— is now an important part of international capital and cannot, therefore, be lightly discarded by international capital;
— is able to hide behind politics and as a result can hide its sophisticated attacks on labour because no one is paying any attention;

Yet as the upsurge of popular political activity emerged again in the 1970s
some of its new forms such as Black Consciousness also place little emphasis on capital. So there is a growing gap between popular politics and the power of capital and as a result the potential power of workers. It is in this context we should look at the likelihood of a working class politics emerging.

The Need for a Working Class Movement in South Africa

The growing size of the economy and the dramatic changes taking place in capital laws have created important new conditions in the economy. We also have to take into account the speed and manner in which the economy has developed. In discussing the working class movements in the advanced industrial economies, we have to bear in mind that in most cases they took about 100 years or more to fully develop. Industry started first by building larger and larger factories and bringing people together in these factories. The new capitalists had to struggle politically with the older ruling classes over labour, land, taxation policy, tariff protection, political rights and political power.

Then mechanisation became more important and there was a definite change in production processes. As this happened the skilled workers who had usually given leadership to the craft unions found themselves in a very difficult position. As a result leadership problems in the organisation of trade unions and the political environment developed in a complex and relatively slow way.

In South Africa this has been condensed into 60-70 years and from the outset large scale capitalist enterprise dominated. The birth of capitalism here was brutal and quick. The industrial proletariat was ripped from its land in the space of a few decades. At present capitalist production massively dominates all other production. There are no great landlords on their agricultural estates and there is no significant peasantry or collective agriculture. Virtually everyone depends for all or part of their income on industry or capitalist agriculture.

The working class have experienced a birth of fire in South Africa and they constitute the major objective political force opposed to the state and capital. There is no significant petty bourgeoisie or landed class with an economic base in our society.

In the economy capital and labour are the major forces yet politically the struggle is being fought elsewhere.

The existence of this industrial proletariat and the rapid transformation of capital are very powerful reasons why a working class movement could rapidly develop in South Africa. There are a number of factors that will assist in the organisation of workers:

- The great concentration of capital has also meant a greater concentration of workers. These workers generally have a higher level of basic education and skills than before and their links with the past identities are all but broken so that more and more a worker identity is emerging.
- This is reinforced by the sophisticated strategies that are designed to 'de-racialise' industry and some other areas of society. The effect of this is to divide off certain privileged members of Black society leaving workers at
the bottom of the privilege pile.
— The concentration of workers in industry has also concentrated them in the great urban townships.
— The particular structure of the South African economy with its high degree of state involvement, price controls and heavy dependence on international markets has made it a very sensitive economy. As a consequence attempts to ‘buy off’ the major part of the working class will fail. It is more likely that as some readjustments of privilege are attempted that it will have to be workers that suffer through inflation and lack of basic commodities.
— The above factors and South Africa’s international economic importance are likely to force capital into the political open and as a consequence develop a worker response.
— Although capital can at present hide behind apartheid it is also the case that if workers organise widely enough they can get great support from the international labour movement. Also international public opinion has to be very carefully watched by capital because both international and South African capital are so dependent on their links with the rest of the world.

These then are some of the important factors that are favourable to the development of a working class movement in South Africa. However, this does not mean that this will automatically happen. To understand this, we need to look at the present political environment more carefully to see both the present political tendencies and to establish why some active leadership role should be played by the unions and FOSATU in particular.

Workers need their own organisation to counter the growing power of capital and to further protect their own interests in the wider society. However, it is only workers who can build this organisation and in doing this they have to be clear on what they are doing. As the numbers and importance of workers grows then all political movements have to try and win the loyalty of workers because they are such an important part of society. However, in relation to the particular requirements of worker organisation mass parties and popular political organisations have definite limitations which have to be clearly understood by us.

We should distinguish between the international position and internal political activity. Internationally it is clear that the ANC is the major force with sufficient presence and stature to be a serious challenge to the South African state and to secure the international condemnation of the present regime. To carry out this struggle is a difficult task because South Africa has many friends who are anxious to ensure that they can continue to benefit from her wealth. The fact that the ANC is also widely accepted internally also strengthens its credibility internationally.

However, this international presence of the ANC, which is essential to a popular challenge to the present regime, places certain strategic limitations on the ANC, namely:
— To reinforce its international position it has to claim credit for all forms of internal resistance, no matter what the political nature of such resistance. There is, therefore, a tendency to encourage undirected opportunistic political activity;
— It has to locate itself between the major international interests. To the major Western powers it has to appear as anti-racist but not as anti-capitalist. For the socialist East it has to be at least neutral in the superpower struggle and certainly it could not appear to offer a serious socialist alternative to that of those countries as the response to Solidarity illustrates. These factors must seriously affect its relationship to workers.

— Accordingly the ANC retains in exile its tradition of the 1950s and 1960s when, because there was no serious alternative political path, it rose to be a great populist liberation movement. To retain its very important international position it has to retain its political position as a popular mass movement. This clearly has implications for its important military activities.

Internally we also have to carefully examine what is happening politically. As a result of the state’s complete inability to effect reform and the collapse of their Bantustan policy, they are again resorting to open repression. Since 1976 in particular this has given new life to popular resistance and once again the drive for unity against a repressive state has reaffirmed the political tradition of populism in South Africa. Various political and economic interests gather together in the popular front in the tradition of the ANC and the Congress Alliance. In the present context all political activity, provided it is anti-state, is of equal status. In the overall resistance to this regime, this is not necessarily incorrect. In fact without such unity and widespread resistance it would not be possible by means of popular mass movements to seriously challenge the legitimacy of the present regime. However, the really essential question is how worker organisation relates to this wider political struggle. I have argued above that the objective political and economic conditions facing workers is now markedly different to that of 20 years ago.

Yet there does not seem to be clarity on this within the present union movement. There are good reasons for this lack of clarity.

As a result of repression most worker leadership is relatively inexperienced and this is made worse by the fact that their unions are weak and unstable organisationally. The union struggles fought against capital have mostly been against isolated companies so that the wider struggles against capital at an industry or national level have not been experienced. This also means that workers and their leadership have not experienced the strength of large-scale worker organisation nor the amount of effort required to build and democratise such large scale organisation. Again state repression and the wider political activity reinforce previous experiences where the major function of workers was to reinforce and contribute to a popular struggle.

Politically, therefore, most unions and their leadership lack confidence as a worker leadership. They see their role as part of a wider struggle but are unclear on what is required for the worker struggle. Generally the question of building an effective worker organisation is not dealt with and political energy is spent in establishing unity across a wide front.

However, such a position is clearly a great strategic error that will weaken if not destroy worker organisation both now and in the future. All the great
and successful popular movements have had as their aim the overthrow of oppressive — most often colonial — regimes. But these movements cannot and have not in themselves been able to deal with the particular and fundamental problem of workers. Their task is to remove regimes that are regarded as illegitimate and unacceptable by the majority.

It is, therefore, essential that workers must strive to build their own powerful and effective organisation even whilst they are part of the wider popular struggle. This organisation is necessary to protect and further worker interests and to ensure that the popular movement is not hijacked by elements who will in the end have no option but to turn against their worker supporters.

Broad and complicated matters have been covered and it is difficult to summarise them even further. However, I shall attempt to do so in order for us to try and examine the role that FOSATU can play in this struggle.

1. That worker resistance such as strike action helps build worker organisation but by itself it does not mean that there is a working class movement.
2. There has not been and is not a working class movement in South Africa.
3. The dominant political tradition in South Africa is that of the popular struggle against an oppressive, racist minority regime.
4. That this tradition is reasserting itself in the present upsurge of political activity.
5. However, the nature of economic development in South Africa has brutally and rapidly created a large industrial proletariat.
6. That the size and development of this working class is only matched by its mirror image which is the dramatic growth and transformation of industrial capital.
7. That before it is too late workers must strive to form their own powerful and effective organisation within the wider popular struggle.

**FOSATU’s Objective**

From what has been said we believe that FOSATU must set itself the task of giving leadership and direction to the building of a working class movement. Our efforts so far have equipped us to do this. Our organisation is nationally based, located in the major industries and the militancy of our members has generally developed a politically aware and self-critical leadership.

FOSATU as a trade union federation will clearly not constitute the working class movement nor would this place FOSATU in opposition to the wider political struggle or its major liberation movement.

FOSATU’s task will be to build the effective organisational base for workers to play a major political role as workers. Our task will be to create an identity, confidence and political presence for worker organisation. The conditions are favourable for this task and its necessity is absolute.

We need have no fear of critics — our task will contribute to the wider liberation struggle and will also ensure that the worker majority is able to protect and further its interests. Ours is a fundamental political task and
those who ask of workers their political support without allowing them the right to build their own organisation must answer for their real motives.

As was said above, capital has transformed itself and has a greater capacity to tolerate worker organisation because it is now more powerful and better able to deal with a worker challenge. Also because of its absolutely central position it will have the full support of the state in its actions and in the bitter struggles that are to come.

This requires a very much greater effort to establish worker organisation and requires thorough organisational work and ceaseless mobilisation of our members. The growth and transformation of capital has created the very pre-conditions for large-scale worker organisation.

**Our Concrete Tasks and Challenges**

If we set the above as our general direction then we must deal with concrete tasks and challenges.

*Organisation.* What is crucial in organisation is the quality of that organisation — the quality that gives it its overall political direction and capability. As is clear from the experience of the advanced industrial countries that we looked at earlier, organisational size alone is not enough, yet without size there can be no effective counter to capital.

Broadly one can distinguish three factors that affect the quality of worker organisation — the structure of organisational strength and decision making; the location of organisational strength; and the political qualities of its leadership structures.

*Structure.* The structure of an organisation should be such that it correctly locates worker strength and makes best use of that strength.

FOSATU’s experience in this has been very important. Our organisation is built up from the factory floor. As a result the base of the organisation is located where workers have most power and authority and that is where production takes place. This also has the effect of democratising our structures since worker representatives always participate from a position of strength and authority in the organisation. By stressing factory bargaining we involve our Shop Stewards in central activities and through this they gain experience as worker leadership, it could be said that they do battle every day.

These factory-based structures are the key to transforming pure quantity of members into a flexible and effective quality. Capital’s hostility to factory organisation forces members and Shop Stewards to struggle continuously or else to have their organisation crushed.

At the union level FOSATU has attempted to build broad industrial unions on a national basis. We in effect have a position of one affiliate per industry. We have chosen industrial unions because of the organisational advantages we gain in our struggle against capital. However, FOSATU’s role is to link these industrial unions into a tight federation that is based on common policy and a sharing of resources. Our aim is to keep a unity of purpose among affiliates at all levels of their organisation.
Our task in the three years to come must be to consolidate and develop factory organisation, a national presence for our unions and to re-assert unity of purpose among affiliates.

The structures we are developing are an essential basis for effective and democratic organisation and are the basis for greater worker participation in and control over production.

**Location.** The question of location is closely related to structure. Without correct structures then the location of one's organisational strength is not as important.

We must accept that it will take many years to organise all workers and at present that should not be our aim. Our present aim must be to locate our organisation strategically. We need to look at the location of our organisational strength in relation to the industry, geographic area and the points at which we can most effectively carry out collective bargaining.

Our major affiliates should be located in the major industries. Within those industries we must become a substantial presence by carefully building our organisation in major factories, companies and areas.

Geographically we must clearly aim to be a national presence both as FOSATU and as the affiliates. Our organisation should be able to dominate major industrial areas. By doing this we create the major means whereby worker organisation can play a significant if not dominant role in the communities that surround these industrial areas.

Successful collective bargaining requires that the organisation is capable of mobilising members behind demands. Thus far our unions have only really been able to mobilise at the plant level. However, the experience of NAAWU which is exceptional in FOSATU has shown what can be gained by mobilising across companies. We have flexible structures and we must use them if we are to serve our members. We must be able to mobilise across factories and in local areas across industries. We must see industry bargaining or regional bargaining not as something to be feared but as the logical extension of our present structures and practices.

**Worker leadership.** Here we must be immediately clear that we are not talking about leadership in the sense that it is usually discussed which is in terms of individuals and 'great men'. This view of leadership is not what is important for a worker organisation. What we are interested in is the elected representatives of workers and the officials they appoint to work within the organisation.

We are interested in how the leadership is elected or appointed; who it is answerable to and how this accountability is achieved; how experienced leadership is and how it gains this experience and how they develop means of training and educating leadership so that it remains self-critical and politically active.

The challenges facing worker leadership are undoubtedly different to other leadership groups. For worker leadership in a capitalist society one's everyday struggle is related to your job and therefore your wage and therefore your very ability to survive. The most appropriate comparison is
with that of the guerrilla fighter who has to develop the strength to resist daily, the knowledge of his terrain that will give him every tactical advantage, and the support of those for whom he is struggling. Probably most important, because both the worker leader and the guerrilla are fighting a powerful enemy, is the development of a sense of when to advance and when to retreat.

These skills are not easily learnt and not easily replaced. So worker leadership cannot be wasted by opportunistic and overly adventuristic actions.

We are also concerned with worker leadership in a wider arena than only that of the union struggle. Giving leadership to the working class requires an organisational base. Without this base then the poverty and the lack of education, information and time that workers are struggling against will be the very factors which will force workers to surrender leadership of the community to other strata in society.

Our aim is to use the strength of factory based organisations to allow workers to play an effective role in the community. Worker leadership will have:

— gained invaluable political experience from their factory struggles;
— organisation and resources behind them;
— organisational structures and location that will give them localised strength;
— the ability to speak with a clear and democratically established worker mandate.

The points made here should be our guide for action and we have a long way to go in building a larger leadership structure that has the political qualities of clarity, determination, discipline and the ability to be self-critical.

Working Class Identity. The task of organisation outlined above and more important, the quality of that organisation, will absorb most of our energies in the next three years, and is, therefore, our major priority. Yet to give leadership in the building of a working class movement we must start to build a greater identity for worker organisation.

In a very important way the building of effective trade unions does create a worker identity. However, there is the danger that the unions become preoccupied with their members and ignore workers generally. By establishing a clear political direction we can avoid this.

One answer that is often proposed is to be more involved in community activities. That FOSATU should be involved in community activities is correct since our members form the major part of those communities. However, as we have argued above we must do so from an organisational base if we are truly to be an effective worker presence.

Without this base it is more likely that we will destroy a clear worker identity since workers will be entirely swamped by the powerful tradition of popular politics that we examined earlier.

It is also the case that there has emerged into our political debate an empty
and misleading political category called the community. All communities are composed of different interest groups and for a worker organisation to ally itself with every community group or action would be suicide for worker organisation. Under the surface of unity, community politics is partisan and divided. FOSATU cannot possibly ally itself to all the political groups that are contesting this arena. Neither can it ally itself with particular groups. Both paths will destroy the unity of its own worker organisation.

This simple political fact is the reason for one of our founding resolutions. It has nothing to do with not wanting to be involved in politics. Our whole existence is political and we welcome that. Our concern is with the very essence of politics and that is the relation between the major classes in South Africa being capital and labour.

We need to state this more clearly and understand it ourselves more clearly. There is also no doubt that we must take our own newspaper very much more seriously as it can be a major instrument in building a worker identity.

At the level of organisation we have a sound base on which to work. Probably our main problem has been that we did not clearly state why we had chosen certain structures and what could be achieved by them.

As our political clarity and confidence grows, so we must state our position more clearly in our meetings, among our members and through our own newspaper.

Unity in the Labour Movement
Our first step must be to address ourselves to unity in the labour movement. If we are to create a working class movement then trade union unity has to be dealt with very early on in our struggle. Because we take working class politics seriously we must take trade union unity seriously.

At present there is a very great momentum to unity in the labour movement and we have to carefully consider and analyse what is happening.

The first point to understand is that all the unions involved in the talks are relatively weak in relation to their potential — some appallingly so. Many are too easily fooled by their own propaganda and the great interest shown by everyone into believing that they are now a strong force.

Furthermore, with a few exceptions (mostly in FOSATU), these unions are not yet a national or an industrial presence. Their strengths lie in isolated factories and very few have any real geographic concentration. As a result both the leadership of these unions and their membership have no clear conception of the organised power of capital nor for that matter of its weakness. There is no real experience of the difficulties of large-scale worker organisation nor of the difficulties in building democratic worker structures. The bulk of the present leadership has no clear conception of the needs of worker struggle or of a worker dominated society. There is all too often a contradiction between the political position and organisational practice. Radical political positions are adopted but the organisational practice makes little headway into the power of capital nor is it effectively democratic. A number of factors result from this — often capital is
attacked in the 'abstract' by making it all powerful and accordingly seeing an attack on the state as the only answer, or political energies are spent in widespread campaigns whilst actual worker organisation and advance is left weak and based on sporadic upsurges rather than on organisational strength.

As a consequence of these factors it is not possible for people to draw any distinction between worker struggle and popular struggle let alone understand the relation between the two in South Africa. The unity talks are therefore conceived of as being within the wider popular struggle and as another area where anti-state unity can be achieved. A formal unity rather than a working unity against capital is therefore seen as the prime object.

There are broadly speaking three forms of unity open to the union movement at present and we should look at each fairly carefully:

'Ad hoc unity'. This is what has occurred at present where unity is issue located and attempts to take a common stand. At present this unity is significant in that it creates unity out of apparent disunity. However, its significance will rapidly decline. Such ad hoc unity can only achieve anything on specific issues and it is inevitably forced to take more and more concerted and concrete actions unless it merely wants to be the source of endless press statements. Such further actions require a more permanent organisational link.

'United front unity'. Here the organisations remain autonomous but they set up a permanent platform of contact. Some people seem to see the solidarity committees as such a platform. However, although this provides a more definite organisational link considerable new problems are posed. Again the movement is towards more and more significant gestures of protest and the problem now posed is how are decisions to be taken and on what mandate? Does each organisation have an equal vote or is voting by size? If decisions are on a consensus basis — then on what mandate? Should each organisation get a formal mandate on each issue and if they don’t, how representative of rank and file membership is each decision? Is there not a greater than usual danger of decisions being taken by a few officials who have easy access to the meetings?

A permanent organisational link requires a process for making decisions that is democratic and equitable. Furthermore, if solidarity actions are to be successful they require organisational co-ordination — this in turn requires the power to sanction. How can this be done if participants are entirely autonomous?

A further step in this type of unity can be a 'loose federation' such as TUCSA, where the unions are now all in the same federal organisation and the symbolism of unity is far greater. However, such a federal body — not being based on any clear principles — is unlikely to generate working unity as it would contend with numerous problems of jurisdiscion between unions and it is unlikely that organisational rationalisation could take place without firm policies and particular structures.

In fact 'United front unity', with or without a loose federation, can destroy the hope of greater unity by creating unresolved differences and no acceptable way of resolving these.
‘Disciplined unity’. This requires common political purpose, binding policy on affiliates and close working links based on specific organisational structures.

If such a federation is based on industrial unions then FOSATU is the closest to being an example of such ‘disciplined unity’ — in the present circumstances.

If the federation were not based on an industrial structure but on a Regional one then it is more difficult to set out its working structures since there is no clear experience of how this would work. However, there is no doubt that some allowance would have to be made for industrial considerations and the industrial organisation of capital. In FOSATU we have argued that industrial unions in a ‘tight federation’ allows for maximum flexibility and efficacy.

It is clear from this that unity means little unless these factors are taken into account. To talk lightly of unity is to keep it within the framework of ad hoc or united front unity. The effectiveness of such unity would rapidly disappear. So if that is what is meant by unity we have to imply certain possible motives of its proponents:

— inexperience and lack of thought on the matter;
— political expediency whereby this unity is for specific limited ends of embarrassing certain organisations;
— a preoccupation with popular politics and a lack of commitment to the building of a working class political position.

However, if we in FOSATU are to take our objective seriously and that objective is the building of a working class movement then we have to take unity very seriously. Clearly by unity we should strive for ‘disciplined unity’ since it is only such unity that can possibly meet our objective.

We must ourselves work out a programme for unity and on the basis of that programme we should not hesitate to attack those who are impeding the development of a working class movement.

Conclusions
The issues that have been covered in this paper are important and complicated — they are the basis for an understanding of the true nature of the workers’ struggle in South Africa and the political role our organisation must play in that struggle.

We believe that in FOSATU we have a firm base on which to build organisationally. Our task in the three years to come is to firmly commit ourselves to a working class political position. With this greater political understanding we must:

— consolidate our organisational structures;
— give guidance and leadership in the building of a larger working class movement in South Africa;
— seek out comrades and allies who will join us in this struggle;
— and in this way make our fundamental contribution to the liberation of the oppressed people of South Africa.

In doing this we must all be clear that we shall never be so petty as to insist
on our organisation’s name as the only one in the trade union movement who can carry out this task — it is what the organisation does that is important — not what it is called. Yet equally we shall never be so politically foolish as to abandon the Worker Struggle.

Joe Foster, FOSATU General Secretary
Keynote Address, Second FOSATU Congress, 10-11 April 1982

NOTES ON THE POLITICAL AND ORGANISATIONAL OFFENSIVE IN MOZAMBIQUE AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO AGRICULTURAL POLICY

Oscar Marleyn, David Wield and Richard Williams

In the article ‘Mozambique’s’ Presidential Offensive — We are declaring war on the enemy within (Peoples’ Power, No. 16, 1980) Richard Williams made an interpretation of the organisational and political offensive launched at the beginning of 1980 in Mozambique. The main aim of the article was to argue against the simplistic views prevalent in the British press at that time that Mozambique was lurching to the right. Marcelino dos Santos and Jorge Rebello had been moved from their ministerial positions to full-time party work. This has been described as demotion following the defeat of an imagined left-wing faction. The country’s attempts to attract foreign investments and the encouragement of local private traders was said to indicate a return to ‘the capitalist road’.

The article argues: 1) that the offensive was a response to concrete problems by attempting to strengthen party control over the state and maintain the development towards socialism; and 2) that the offensive would have to develop and take on a ‘permanent’ character in order to be effective. These Notes use recent observations to confirm these arguments, particularly focusing on agricultural policies and practice.

The Offensive is Permanent
A Frelimo journal recently stated:

The campaigns of the Offensive are precisely what allows us to submit, periodically, the correctness of our theoretical conceptions and analysis to . . . the criticism of practice . . . which permits us to direct our actions more and more to the causes of the disease, not just to its symptoms (Voz da Revolucaö, No. 73, 1981).

So the Offensive has continued and is clearly seen as the process by which interventions are made to resolve concrete problems in Mozambique.

Initially the organisational problems in the ports, needed to re-open Zimbabwean exports, and the queues for basic supplies triggered the offensive. In 1981 the offensive was in the police and security forces, the prisons and re-education camps, and in the defence forces (see Tempo of 15 November 1982), particularly against corruption and abuse of power. The offensive also began in other areas, like education and agriculture.
on our organisation’s name as the only one in the trade union movement who can carry out this task — it is what the organisation does that is important — not what it is called. Yet equally we shall never be so politically foolish as to abandon the Worker Struggle.

Joe Foster, FOSATU General Secretary
Keynote Address, Second FOSATU Congress, 10-11 April 1982

NOTES ON THE POLITICAL AND ORGANISATIONAL OFFENSIVE IN MOZAMBIQUE AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO AGRICULTURAL POLICY

Oscar Marleyn, David Wield and Richard Williams

In the article ‘Mozambique’s’ Presidential Offensive — We are declaring war on the enemy within (Peoples’ Power, No.16, 1980) Richard Williams made an interpretation of the organisational and political offensive launched at the beginning of 1980 in Mozambique. The main aim of the article was to argue against the simplistic views prevalent in the British press at that time that Mozambique was lurching to the right. Marcelino dos Santos and Jorge Rebello had been moved from their ministerial positions to full-time party work. This has been described as demotion following the defeat of an imagined left-wing faction. The country’s attempts to attract foreign investments and the encouragement of local private traders was said to indicate a return to ‘the capitalist road’.

The article argues: 1) that the offensive was a response to concrete problems by attempting to strengthen party control over the state and maintain the development towards socialism; and 2) that the offensive would have to develop and take on a ‘permanent’ character in order to be effective. These Notes use recent observations to confirm these arguments, particularly focusing on agricultural policies and practice.

The Offensive is Permanent
A Frelimo journal recently stated:

The campaigns of the Offensive are precisely what allows us to submit, periodically, the correctness of our theoretical conceptions and analysis to . . . the criticism of practice . . . which permits us to direct our actions more and more to the causes of the disease, not just to its symptoms (Voz da Revolucao, No.73, 1981).

So the Offensive has continued and is clearly seen as the process by which interventions are made to resolve concrete problems in Mozambique.

Initially the organisational problems in the ports, needed to re-open Zimbabwean exports, and the queues for basic supplies triggered the offensive. In 1981 the offensive was in the police and security forces, the prisons and re-education camps, and in the defence forces (see Tempo of 15 November 1982), particularly against corruption and abuse of power. The offensive also began in other areas, like education and agriculture.
Already there have been some successes. The newly introduced rationing system in the cities has greatly improved the distribution of basic foodstuffs and eliminated the worst queues. The ports have seen an internal reorganisation and bottle-necks in the flow of goods have to some extent been resolved. A similar reorganisation has taken place within LAM, the national airline, and in APIE, the state organisation in control of housing. At the same time the Kafka-esque bureaucratic processes in the state organisations are gradually being untangled and streamlined. Many problems remain. The commercial network only functions effectively in a few areas through lack of organisation within the state enterprises, while small traders still complain about too many controls and not enough profits. In the meantime the peasants can't sell their surplus produce or buy certain essential commodities.

The Offensive and Agriculture
If the Offensive is so important to an understanding of recent Mozambican political developments, then it should be of relevance to agriculture. Agricultural production constitutes the base for internal capital accumulation. FRELIMO in its Third Congress in 1977 defined agriculture as the base, and industry as the dynamising factor, for the development of the Mozambican economy. Recently Mozambique has needed to import more rice, wheat and maize, causing a drain on scarce foreign exchange, adversely affecting economic decisions.

Eighty-five per cent of the population live in the rural areas, most of them peasants cultivating 94 per cent of all arable land presently under cultivation. These people live mainly in scattered households, producing the vast majority of food for their own consumption and 80 per cent of the gross value of all marketed agricultural produce, including very important export crops such as cashew, cotton and copra (see Tempo, 18 October 1981). This peasantry formed the base for FRELIMO during the armed struggle and presently constitutes one arm of the worker-peasant class alliance. The transformation of the agricultural base is therefore a very important element in FRELIMO's policy of socialist transition. It is for these reasons that we think an understanding of agricultural policy and practice is so important.

The Peasantry and Colonial Capital Accumulation
At the end of the colonial period in Mozambique the peasantry was geared away from subsistence production towards petty commodity production — the sale of foodstuffs and other crops — and was dependent on both these and cash inputs from wage labour for its reproduction. The peasantry was thus integrated in the colonial capitalist economy (itself strongly tied to the dominant economy of the region, South Africa) and was not a subsistence peasantry locked in production of food and other articles mainly for individual consumption. There had been some development of a rural proletariat, but no substantial proletariat displaced from the land. This integration was accelerated by the extraction of surplus labour in different forms:

Forced Labour: Until the early 1960s most men in certain parts of the country had to work six months in every year on road building, ports etc.
Many escaped the forced labour system to work in Rhodesia and Malawi and Tanzania while almost all able bodied men in the south were recruited to the South African mines.

**Forced Agricultural Production.** Cash cropping, particularly of cotton for the Portuguese textile industry. In many areas both cash cropping and forced labour were applied to the same peasant families.

*‘Free’ Cash Cropping:* In 1961 the practice of forced labour was juridically abolished. Although in some form or other it continued until the 1970s, the system was less rigorously enforced and the peasants started marketing their surplus produce. Peasant cotton production dropped as forced cropping ceased. In some areas with better agricultural conditions the peasants were given incentives to increase their marketed produce in the late 1960s but by independence these peasants had by no means reached the position of being independent of wage labour.

Capitalist enterprises profited from the pool of cheap migrant labour from the peasant sector, but did not bear the cost of reproduction of this labour force which depended on the continued existence of the family plot. The transfer of labour out of peasant agriculture meant that peasant families increasingly had to labour for wages to buy certain commodities and more important means of production, such as hoes and ploughs. Colonial capitalism neither produced an independent peasantry nor a fully developed proletariat.

**Colonial Economy — Approximations**

1. *Gross National Product 1975:* Industry 15 per cent; Agriculture 41 per cent; Services (including rail and port changes, gold for migrant labour) 44 per cent.

2. *Balance of Payments:* Exports (sugar, tea, cotton, cashews) covered half imports. The budget balanced through ‘services’.

3. *Employment 1971:* Settler employment 100,000; Temporary workers 600,000; Migrant abroad 200,000; Permanent workers 250,000; Total 1,150,000; Population 9,000,000.

**Colonial Agricultural Production and Regional Imbalance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centre (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North (%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population (Labour Reserve)</th>
<th>South</th>
<th>Centre (Plantations Predominate)</th>
<th>North (Peasants Predominate)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population (%)</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Agricultural Output (%)</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subsistence Production (%)</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marked production of which</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peasants produced (%)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plantation produced (%)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Settlers produced (%)</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

South: Maputo, Inhambane, Gaza Provinces.
Centre: Zambesia, Manica, Sofala and Tete Provinces.
North: Cabo Delgado, Niassa, Nampula Provinces.

**The Post-Independence Crisis**

During the immediate post-Independence period the links which allowed the
reproduction of the peasantry were broken in several ways:

The Collapse of Internal Trade: The commercial network in the rural areas by private traders collapsed so that foodstuffs were not taken to be marketed, and the incentive to market produce for cash decreased as no commodities became available to buy.

Collapse of Capitalist Settler and Plantation Agriculture: During transition and immediately after independence a large proportion of the colonial settlers left, taking with them expertise, livestock, and equipment. Animals that could not be moved were slaughtered and equipment was sabotaged. Abandoned farms were taken into the state sector in an attempt to maintain food supply to the towns. Large enterprises controlled by foreign capital adopted a wait and see policy, but many, including British Sena Sugar Estates, used the disorganisation and weakness of the emergent state to drain Mozambican capital abroad.

Reduced Labour Recruitment Particularly to the South African Mines: Partly due to internal economic problems and partly as a move to undermine Mozambique, South African recruitment of Mozambican miners dropped precipitately. The Rhodesian war cut labour migration to that country. Local jobs in agriculture and domestic service also almost disappeared. The combined effects of these factors was to drastically reduce cash flow to the peasant sector and to starve it of means of production (hoes, ploughs, improved seeds, etc.). This crisis lead to the withdrawal of the peasantry from the market and an overall drop of marketed agricultural produce.

FRELIMO’s Policies
We have already pointed out the political and economic importance of the Mozambican peasantry. The fundamental aim is to increase surplus agricultural production by increasing productivity and the area of land under cultivation in order to promote the process of internal capital accumulation. FRELIMO’s concept of the socialist transformation of agriculture has been outlined in several documents (see the documents of the Eighth Session of the Central Committee of FRELIMO and of the Third Congress for example) and is generally seen as a process of socialisation of the rural areas (see Eighth Session of the People’s Assembly — Noticias of the 7, 8, 12 October 1981).

This socialisation process has the following fundamental objectives:

1. The collectivisation of production through the transformation of the family sector into a co-operative sector and the expansion of the state farm sector.

2. The spatial reorganisation of the units of production and therefore of the form of settlement through the organisation of communal villages.

3. The continued reorganisation of party and state structures in the rural areas by setting up party cells and popular assemblies in the production units and the communal villages to ensure participation from the base in the running of the state farm and co-operative sectors.
4. Improving the general living conditions of the population by organising health and educational facilities, improved housing, water supply, and ultimately electrification, etc. Such social policies are facilitated by the move to communal villages and will in turn have an effect on productivity levels.

Practical Results

The export of agricultural products — cashew, tea, cotton, copra, sugar — is vital for the Mozambican economy and contributes about 60 per cent of all export earnings, but the value of agricultural exports in 1979 was only about 50 per cent of what it had been in 1973. Over this period Mozambique has had to import increasing quantities of maize, rice and wheat. These products alone represent more than 10 per cent of the value of all imports (Source: Trade figures for 1979 presented to FACIM 1980).

Although there was a considerable response to FRELIMO's political mobilisation to form agricultural co-operatives after Independence, most financial and organisational support has gone to the development of the state-farm sector, which is now producing only about 15 per cent of the gross value of all marketed agricultural produce. This output is far below that of the capitalist sector during the colonial period, and this at a huge foreign exchange cost since all machinery, fertilisers, pesticides etc., must be imported.

The Eighth People's Assembly gave the figure of one million peasants now living in communal villages out of a rural population of 11 million, but only 70,000 are working in co-operatives. Due to the difficulty of organising effective support for the co-operative sector — which was particularly badly hit by the collapse of trading networks — FRELIMO's policies have tended to be implemented as a simple villagisation programme rather than the transformation of agricultural production. There are several reasons for this state of affairs:

1. The involvement of experienced political cadres in the war against Rhodesia — and now against the South African backed armed terrorist group, plus the overall shortage of skilled middle level political cadres leaves the party relatively weak in the rural areas. There is only partial functioning of its structures, a lack of a correct orientation for the development of co-operatives and a rather marginal involvement of the labour force in the organisation of the state farms.

2. Improper functioning of the state enterprises involved in the distribution of agricultural inputs and commodities, in the backup services needed for production, and in agricultural marketing.

3. The tendency to favour and employ — at least in some production units — technology which cannot give the expected and required rapid improvement of production and productivity due to the shortage of the necessary skilled labour, technicians, and back-up services.

The Offensive and the Relationship between Party and State

Richard Williams' earlier article emphasised the importance given in the Offensive to strengthened party control over the state. The first criticism of
stage agricultural policy came from the Party in 1978 with the dismissal of
the Minister of Agriculture for 'putting machinery before people'. The
relationship between party and state was illuminated by a statement from
the Party in 1980:

In practice we allowed the ministerial council and the state organs to be those that determined
many of the options of the country, the party remaining only with the role of verification,
ratification and correction (Voz da Revolupao, August 1980).

In August 1981 a meeting presided over by Marcelino dos Santos, by then
working full time for the Party, discussed the problems of production in the
Complexo Agro-Industrial do Limpopo (CAIL). This state farm cultivates
nearly 17,000 hectares, mainly of rice, and is at the moment the largest in
Mozambique. The main topics debated touched on problems of
mobilisation of the workforce, methods of work and management, the poor
back-up services and co-ordination between different state enterprises,
planning methods, and productivity. (For more details see reports in
Noticias during the months of August and early September 1981). Further
quotes illustrate the kind of criticism the Party has been making of state
agricultural policy since 1978, and increasingly in 1980 and 1981:

The direction, the support and the conjugation of efforts in relation to the movement of
communal villages and agricultural production co-operatives have not been secured by either
the central or local organs (Ministerial Council, April 1981).

Some people think that it is not possible to organise co-operatives because most people are
illiterate and have a low technical level. Our response is simple: 'The organisation of peasants
into co-operatives is the quickest way to resolve these problems' (Mario Machungo, Minister of

The crux of the argument seems to be: you can't leave the peasants on their
family plots in crisis until Mozambique develops so that it can gradually
provide wage labour for them all. You must transform the relations of
production actually existing in peasant agriculture through co-operatives.
That is the quickest way to transform agricultural production. So, the
decision in the Organisational and Political Offensive to differentiate the
party from the state and to build up control over the state apparatuses
through strengthening the party is grounded in concrete problems. The
Offensive marks an attempt to make the state more accountable to the party
in agriculture and elsewhere.

The Relationship of the Party to the Masses
A second focus of the Offensive has been the relationship between the party
and the masses. Again there has been strong criticism of the style of work of
party cadres. The following are self-critical comments from the July
meeting of the Ideological Committee of the party, of which Jorge Rebello
is now full-time secretary:

The sector for party ideological work has now closed in on itself. It is not directed towards the
masses. It is isolated from the people. It is a sector that functions essentially for itself and by
itself and not for the masses. It is a sector where, at present, the central practice is not so much
political mobilisation and ideological education of the people, but the holding of meetings and
seminars.

There are few meetings with the masses, especially in the rural areas. Moreover, the few
meetings that they hold are often meetings in which the party member arrives, talks and goes
away. They are not meetings to hear from the people about their problems. They are meetings
in which the people only participate as listeners and observers.
Also the Eighth Session of the People’s Assembly, discussing the first 10-year plan in October 1981, pointed to paternalism and demagogy as being the principal reasons for the stagnation in the development of co-operatives. The result, as the party Ideological Committee put it, ‘is that the people do not participate effectively in making decisions, and do not carry through on decisions made’.

**Conclusion**
The need for an Offensive is rooted in problems such as those in the socialist transformation of agriculture, and the need to form an economic foundation for the continuation and development of the worker-peasant alliance. To realise this and to carry the Offensive through there is an urgent attempt being made to strengthen the party.

The Fourth Party Congress is scheduled for April 1983 and agriculture is certain to be a main subject of debate. In this article we have tried to show the main issues in the ongoing discussion and that FRELIMO’s ability to confront its internal and external problems remains strong.

**Bibliographic Note**
Material on the Offensive in Portuguese includes the speeches of Samora Machel in the daily newspaper *Noticia*; the weekly *Tempo*, and the FRELIMO journal *Voz de Revolucao*. The most important of these will be published together in English by the Mozambique, Angola and Guine Information Centre (MAGIC), London, during 1982.


“89.4% agreed that South Africa should attack so-called terrorist bases in neighbouring states”*

“Today, the 10th of December 1982, Human Rights Day, we visited the mortuary in Maseru where the victims of a massacre by the South African Defence Force of the night before were housed. The room, usually adequate for the needs of this small city of Maseru was overfilled. The mortuary space is for 33 people but as we went in to view the bodies of my murdered countrymen we observed that the bodies needed to be piled on the floor and some of the shelves had two or three bodies piled on top of each other. Those bodies were those of 9 Basotho and 34 of my countrymen – women and children. I recalled the film I had seen recently, Missing, showing the American involvement in the Chilean Coup. Unlike the film which depicted endless dead on several floors, the cooling system of the Maseru mortuary was totally inadequate and the stink was awful. As we attempted to identify our people, others called to remove their dead for funerals on the next day wearing masks over their mouths and noses.”

That day of destruction is over but the crisis continues. The relatives of the victims need to bury their loved ones. Clothing needs to be replaced, houses restored and lives reconstructed. An estimated amount of 179,000 Maloti will be required to assist in the process of reconstruction and funeral expenses. Please send clothing to PO Box 1585, Maseru. Donations can be made to the Lesotho Bank Account No.SBD 64306 “Bury Maseru Dead”.

On 10 March 1982 at a traditional homestead near the Oshikuku Roman Catholic Mission, 10 innocent Namibian men, women and children were cold-bloodedly massacred by soldiers belonging to the so-called Ovambo home-guard which forms part of the South African Army of repression and colonial occupation in Namibia. The soldiers came to the homestead, brandishing automatic weapons with fixed bayonets. They then ordered all 12 members of the extended family to line-up. Minutes thereafter, they started spraying their victims with bullets. Only 2 survived — by feigning death. They have unmistakably identified the soldiers. They recognised a certain Nakale whom they described as an infamous and brutal commander of a task force of the South African army known as “Koevoet”. (Sam Nujoma — in a speech to European Parliament in Brussels — 28 September 1982.)
CURRENT AFRICANA No.24 (continued)

379 Hannig, S
380 de Wet, C J
381 Yudelman, D
382 Bozzoli, B
383 Goldberg, M
384 Adelman, K et al.
385 Deutsch, R
386 Bitha, T
387 Various
388 Fine, B; De Clerc, F & Innes, D
389 Kaplan, D
390 Wolpe, H
391 Mendelsohn, M S et al.
392 Lever, H
393 Frankel, P
394 Mehlman, M J et al.
395 Spicer, M
396 Mayer, P
397 Imobighe, T A
398 Dodd, N L
399 Lefort, R
400 Gordimer, N
401 Lundahl, M & Ndela, D
402 Stasiulis, D K
403 Petryszak, N
404 Dahaner, K
405 Rich, P B
406 Walker, C
407 Mukandala, R S
408 Albright, D E

Interview (on trade unions), *Southern Afr.*, 13,8 (1980) 6-7, 26
L’Afrique du Sux aux prises avec le changement, *Def. nat.*, July 1980, 35-43
S Africa: nuclear project and the liberation struggle, *J. Bus. & Social Stud.*, 1,2 (1979) 49-59
Lever, H
Rogerson, C
Ridd, R
Gurney, C
Carim, S F
Bailey, M
Sedat, A
ILO
PAC Mission
Smith, D
Mare, G
Walshe, P
Cooper, C
NUSAS
Hendrie, D
Pinnock, D
Potgieter, J F
Migration
Moss, G
Bozzoli, B
Simson, H
Rees, M & Day, C
Leonard, R W
Hellman, E & Lever, H
Rosberg, R I & Barratt, J
Kiewiet, K & Meichel, K
Matthews, Z K
Schmidt, E
Business Internat.
Natrass, J
Berridge, G

Recent trends in the policies of transnational corporations. UN Centre Against Apartheid, Notes & Documents series 7/79, 1980, 21pp
*Oil sanctions: S Africa's weak link*. Idem 15/80, 1980, 26pp
Health situation in S Africa today. Idem 17/80, 1980, 30pp
African women and apartheid in labour matters. Idem 20/80, 1980, 13pp
Radically undesirable: an examination of political censorship in S Africa. Cape Town: NUSAS, 1980, 80pp
*S Africa at war*. Westport: Lawrence Hill, 1980, 256pp
Conflict and compromise in S Africa. Farnborough: Gower, 1980, 212pp
Economic power in Anglo-S African diplomacy. London:
CURRENT AFRICANA 125

441 Brandel, Syrier, M February, V Lambley, P Thomas, W H Dreyer, P Jessup, E Shimoni, G


The psychology of apartheid. London: Secker & Warburg, 1980, 291pp


446 Jessup, E Ernest Oppenheimer: a study in power. London: Collings, 1979, 357pp


6b. NAMIBIA

448 Moorsom, R Namibia in the front line: the political economy of decolonisation in S Africa's colony, ROAPE 17 (1980) 71-82


450 Zehender, W Aussenwirtschaftspolitische Perspektiven fur ein unabhangigen Namibia, Afr. Spektrum, 1980/2, 135-45

451 Saxena, S C Namibia: back to square one, For. Affs. Reports, 28,9 (1979) 149-64


454 Action on Namibia Foreign companies in Namibia. London: AoN, 1980, 8pp


6c. BOTSWANA, LESOTHO, SWAZILAND


6d. ZIMBABWE

472  Bratton, M  
The public service in Zimbabwe, Pol. Sci. Quart., 95,3 (1980) 441-64

473  Gregory, M  

474  Brayton, A A  

475  Tongogara, J M  
Interview, Sthn. Afr., 13,2 (1980) 7-9

476  Cheater, A  
Women in commercial agricultural production: medium-scale freehold in Zimbabwe, Devt. & Change, 12,3 (1981) 349-79

477  Burgess, M E  

478  Learmont, J  
Reflections on Rhodesia, RUSI Journal, 125,4 (1980) 47-55

479  Lobban, R  

480  Moyana, H V  

481  Matthews, R O  

482  Nyoka, D  
Three months with the guerrillas, Third World 1 (1979) 97-99

483  Wasserman, U  

484  Lodge, T  
Lessons from the Rhodesian conflict, Reality, 12,2 (1980) 9-12

485  Soames, Lord  
From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe, Int. Affs., 56,3 (1980) 405-19

486  Johnson, H C  

487  Rimanelli, M  

488  BAEC  

489  Mort, D  

490  Berg, E  

491  Lewis, S R  
Mineral development, mining policies and MNCs: some thoughts for Zimbabwe. Williams College, Centre for Devt. Econ., Res. memo 75, 1980, 27pp

492  Stoneman, C (ed)  

493  Hudson, M  
Triumph or tragedy. London: Hamilton, 1981, 224pp

494  Martin, D & Johnson, P  

495  Hills, D  
The last days of white Rhodesia. London: Chatto & Windus, 1981, 288pp

496  Made, S M  
7. NORTH AFRICA

497 Marshall, S E

498 Singh, K R
North Africa, The politics of Islamic reassertion, ed. M Ayoob
(London: Croom Helm, 1981) 55-78

499 Long, D E & Reich, B

500 Souriau, C (ed)

501 Bennoune, M

502 Nellis, J R

503 Harbi, M & Dufrancatel, C
Les femmes dans la revolution algérienne, Revoltes logiques 11 (1979-80) 77-102

504 Palloix, C (ed)
Algerie 1980, Tiers Monde 83 (1980) 469-682

505 Junqua, D
L’Algerie au milieu de gue, Le Monde, 3-5, 1.79

506 Leclas, J P
Le FLN algérien a l’heure de la releve, Pouvoirs 13 (1980) 179-88

507 Yanat, A
Les finances de l’entreprise socialiste algérienne, Integrations 10 (1978) 9-66; 11 (1979) 9-72

508 Joffe, G
Algeria’s Berber problem, Index, 9,5 (1980) 37-42

509 Vatin, J C

510 Bennamane, A
The Algerian development strategy and employment policy. Swansea: Centre for Devt. Studs., Monog. 9, 1980, 116pp

511 Talbott, J

512 Ageron, C R

513 Perennes, J S

514 Heday, P

515 Heggo, A A & Crout, R
Historical dictionary of Algeria. Metuchen: Scarecrow, 1981, 237pp

516 Bousoumah, M
L’entreprise industrielle socialiste en Algerie. Lyon: Ed. d l’AGEL, 1980, 806pp

517 Benissad, M E

518 Leggewie, C
Siedlung, Staat und Wanderung: das franzosiche Kolonialsystem in Algerien. Frankfurt: Campus, 1979, 270pp

519 Benhaim, R
Etat, paysanneries et colonisation au Maroc, Peuples medit. 7 (1979) 141-55

520 Wolf, J
Maroc: retrouvailles marocaines et operation Ouhound, Remarques 525 (1980) 28-31

521 Spencer, W
Historical dictionary of Morocco. Metuchen: Scarecrow, 1980, 152pp

522 Abu-Lughod, J
Rabat: urban apartheid in Morocco. Princeton UP, 1980, 374pp

523 Seddon, D

524 Driss, R

525 Tlili, B
Des rapports entre le Parti Liberal et Constituionaliste Tunisiens et la CGTT, Ibid., 115-64

526 Tlili, B
Trade unions as an organisational form of political opposition in Tunisia, Orient, 20,4 (1979) 95-91

527 Vandewalle, D
Bourguiba, charismatic leadership and the Tunisian one-party system, Middle East J., 34,2 (1980) 149-60

528 Dennis, A

529 Heim, P
Tunisie: l’emancipation de la femme, Ibid., 528 (1980) 34-6

530 Charter, S

531 Tosh, J
The economy of the Southern Sudan 1898-1955, J. Imp.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Title / Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>534</td>
<td>Anon</td>
<td>North South border problem, <em>Southern Sudan</em>, 4,6 (1980) 1-11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**B. THESES**

Unless otherwise states, all theses are doctoral or equivalent. The numbers below the authors’ names are those assigned the theses by one of three institutions: University Microfilms (mainly American; seven-figure numbers; copies may be purchased from U.M., or borrowed from the British Lending Library); the National Library, Ottawa (Canadian; five-figure numbers; may be borrowed from the National Library); or the British Lending Library (UK; prefix D; may be borrowed from BLL). DAI = Dissertation Abstracts International.

### 1. GENERAL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Title / Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>540</td>
<td>Colley, L A</td>
<td>Theories of development and under-development. Liverpool, 1980, 380pp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>543</td>
<td>Van der Laar, A</td>
<td><em>The World Bank and the poor</em>. Free Univ, Amsterdam, 1979</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2. AFRICA GENERAL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Title / Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>550</td>
<td>Abdulai, U N</td>
<td>The UN and the later stages of decolonisation in Africa 1965-75. <em>Keele</em>, 1979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>553</td>
<td>Dobson, A</td>
<td>A study of inflation in South and East Africa. <em>M. Sc.</em>, <em>Bath</em>, 1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>555</td>
<td>Nouaille</td>
<td>La politique française de co-operation avec les etats africains et malgaches au sud du Sahara 1958-78. <em>Bordeaux 1</em>, 1980, 2 vols</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>556</td>
<td>Degorge, B</td>
<td>La co-operation militaire entre la France et les etats africains et malgache d’expression francaise. <em>Paris 1</em>, 1979, 278pp</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>