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IN THIS ISSUE

1984 began with international attention focused on Nigeria in the aftermath of its New Year's military coup. This issue of *Africa Report* takes a look at recent political and economic trends and events in West Africa — a region that has undergone some fundamental changes over the past two years.

Governmental corruption and economic decline were the seeds that sowed the 1979 and 1981 coups led by Flight Lieutenant Jerry Rawlings of Ghana, the August 1982 coup in Upper Volta, and the return of the military in Nigeria. *Africa Report* editor Margaret A. Novicki talks to Flight Lieutenant Rawlings about the situation in Ghana and the region just after the second anniversary of his 1981 takeover. Larry Diamond analyzes the causes behind the Nigerian coup and offers an assessment of the tasks ahead for Maj. Gen. Buhari. Howard Schissel examines Capt. Thomas Sankara's coup in Upper Volta, and George McFarlane and Justin Mendy look at the tough economic times in Ivory Coast and Guinea, respectively.

From East Africa, Rick Wells reports on the latest efforts of Ugandan President Obote to win international confidence in the face of deteriorating security. Namibia is the topic of two analyses: Barry Streek explains why prospects for a settlement appear slim when South African perceptions of its stakes in the conflict are considered, and John Seiler, recently returned from Namibia, provides an assessment of the situation inside the country and what the American response should be.

In our In Washington and At the United Nations columns, John de St. Jorre explains the role African issues are playing in the American presidential campaigns, and Monique Rubens provides a wrap-up of African issues and the U.S. role during last fall's United Nations General Assembly session. And Carol Lancaster analyzes why strategies for Africa's economic growth have failed and concludes with some recommendations for U.S. policy.

Photo Credit
The cover photo of Flight Lieutenant Jerry Rawlings of Ghana was taken by Genevieve Chauvel/Sygma.

Flt. Lt. Jerry Rawlings,
Chairman of the Provisional National Defense Council, Ghana

INTERVIEWED BY MARGARET A. NOVICKI

Photo: Ghana Daily Graphic

Flt. Lt. Rawlings exhorting workers at Takoradi: "In the last analysis, Ghana's economic recovery depends much more on the productivity of our people"

AFRICA REPORT: Could you provide an assessment of your government's two-year record, highlighting both those areas where you feel it has registered its most concrete achievements and where its shortcomings have been?

RAWLINGS: At the end of 1981, Ghana was like a runaway train, rushing downhill towards a broken bridge. The economy and the moral fiber of the people appeared to have reached a point of no return. We have however been able to apply the brakes and gradually bring the train to a halt, and we have started repairing the bridge. It is only when this is done that the train can cross the bridge and begin climbing the hill on the other side.

Now for the ordinary people, this means that they have seen very little in the way of material improvements in their daily lives. Indeed, they face increased hardships caused by the drought, which has severely affected the 1983 harvests despite all the efforts they put into it; the effects of the bushfires, which did considerable damage too; the low level of the Volta Lake, which has brought about the need for power cuts; and the effects of absorbing over one million Ghanaian returnees from Nigeria.

And yet they have faced these hardships with hope and some cheerfulness. And I think this is our most important achievement—the restoration of hope and confidence even in the face of material hardships.

Our shortcomings have been in the same area of attitudes, rather than in material things. Some sections of the community have been unnecessarily alienated by the actions of people unused to the responsible use of power, but we have learned from these mistakes over the past two years. A general positive feeling is being generated.

AFRICA REPORT: You inherited an economy on the brink of bankruptcy, and over the last year you have introduced an austerity budget, a three-year recovery plan, and a promised French ambassador has been replaced and Paris has granted some financial assistance. And although Upper Volta is not a major preoccupation of American policy in Africa, the Reagan administration can only frown on the radical regime that has emerged, and United Nations Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick was reportedly annoyed by anti-U.S. votes by Upper Volta in the Security Council.

Perhaps the most immediate limits to the Voltaic revolution will be economic. Already the government is at loggerheads with the private trading sector that is fearful of possible nationalization measures. Consequently, it has practically halted new investments and kept imports to a minimum. The slowdown in economic activity has exacerbated the chronic unemployment situation in the country. Since the government derives most of its revenues from customs receipts, the go-slow import policy deprives it of valuable income. The struggle for control of the cereals market has also been bubbling just beneath the surface. To make things worse, the renewed Sahel drought will make 1984 a dark year for Voltaic agriculture.

Economic aggregates are all in the red and the financial hole is getting deeper. From CFA 52.2 billion in 1981, the trade deficit climbed to CFA 61 billion last year. The balance of payments deficit rose to over CFA 40 billion in 1983, against CFA 37.5 billion the previous year. The foreign debt crunch is beginning to hurt: from a CFA 5.6 billion debt repayment in 1983, Upper Volta will have to shell out around CFA 12 billion in 1985. (In 1981, $1 = CFA 271.73.) The burden is certainly too heavy for the fragile Voltaic economy. As Ghana did in 1983, Upper Volta will probably have to sit down with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) later this year to hammer out an economic stabilization program followed by financial credits. the Paris Club will then meet to discuss the restructuring of Upper Volta's foreign debt.

Senior Voltaic officials reckon that the physical defense of the revolution is still the top priority. They point out that opposition forces abroad as well as in the country have not been idle since last August and that they can count on powerful backers. The fear of mercenary intervention is also strong in ruling circles, leading to a curfew and tight security control on the roads and in the airport. The Entente Council zone, where important leaders reside, is ringed off from traffic and armed guards nervously patrol the area.

The opposition forces, yet to organize a political party or propose a platform, are composed of military and civilian leaders of the CMRPN and the CSP. Their principal base of action is the Ivory Coast, where over a million Voltaic migrant workers are employed, giving them the opportunity to recruit anti-Sankara forces. The opposition is closely scrutinizing the revolutionary process in search of signs of cracks developing in the disparate coalition of left-wing forces that make up the government, and they are awaiting the possible erosion of the CNR's mass political base.

President Sankara has shown that he is not blinded by revolutionary rhetoric and is capable of adapting his program and approach to concrete Voltaic realities. His personal charisma is intact and the group of young officers around him still are popular. Ultimately, it will be the tight unity of these military leaders that will guarantee the regime's stability. Nevertheless, President Sankara is fully cognizant of the fact that large segments of the Voltaic population — especially youth, workers, and junior civil servants — are expecting the revolution to improve their living conditions. The same holds true in the countryside, but direct pressure from the rural areas on the government is less important. For the Sankara regime, 1984 will mark the end of its grace period. It will have to demonstrate to the population that it can not only dismantle old political and economic structures, but also effectively mobilize the country for the future. □

devaluation of the cedi, in response to which you have won a substantial International Monetary Fund [IMF] loan and pledges of Western finance. Could you describe your government's economic program, pointing out the priority sectors, and comment on whether you think these measures will be sufficient to pull Ghana out of its economic morass? Will these programs not further your dependence on Western finance?

RAWLINGS: In the last analysis, Ghana's economic recovery depends much more upon the productivity of our people. Without hard work and a substantial effort to produce more, no amount of economic plans, fiscal measures, or external financing can do more than provide temporary relief.

Now there is something we ought to get straight. The real devaluation had been taking place over the years and the measures we have taken are simply a question of facing up to the reality. What we are trying to do is to restore and revive those sectors of the economy that will enable us to stand on our own feet. The transport system is being rehabilitated. Mining, timber, agriculture, and industry—all those sectors with which we can either provide our own needs or increase our foreign exchange earnings are our areas of priority. The aid and loans that we have received are simply tools that we need to work with in order to break free from dependency. We do not intend them to addict Ghana to further aid, but to enable us to attain true independence. Our ability to do this very much depends, as I have said, upon efficient mobilization of the people for increased productivity. This is no easy task, most especially after so many years of apathy and cynicism, but we believe it can be done, and a lot will be done, especially this year.

We regard food aid as a purely emergency measure, and we are being careful not to put it into the system at prices that will undercut local prices and so discourage our farmers. The aim of our economic recovery program is sustainable development and not dependence arising from short-term solutions.

AFRICA REPORT: The World Bank said that no Ghanaian government has attempted as comprehensive economic reforms as yours. Do you think you will be able to carry through these stringent economic policies without alienating those sectors of the populace—the workers and urban poor—who have been your strongest supporters? Are these policies in contradiction with your populist goals?

RAWLINGS: Now listen. A government, and especially a government such as ours that is trying to rebuild a shattered economy, cannot design its policies simply to please people. If we have to take the long-term national interest at heart, then we must approach our problems realistically, building for the future, and not courting cheap popularity.

The people have faced and continue to face hardship. Naturally, people will grumble. But the fact that Ghanaians have been able to put up with shortages, transport difficulties, low salaries, and other problems without any major protest, is an indication of their confidence in our integrity, the integrity and good intentions of the PNDC government. Visitors from other countries have commented that in their countries there would be riots if conditions were similar to those here. But the people know that they are not suffering to make a corrupt government rich at all. We are all suffering in order to concentrate all our resources on the building of a just and prosperous society.

AFRICA REPORT: You have been critical of the "IMF solution" to Third World economic problems. What caused you to change your course and go to the IMF? Do you think the IMF agreement and the results of the Paris donor conference indicate a change in perceptions on the part of the West toward your government? If so, what caused them to alter their attitudes?

RAWLINGS: In order to turn our economy around, an injection of capital was essential. I have been critical, as have many other people in the Third World, of inappropriate aid, of restrictive conditions imposed on countries needing aid, and of aid that addicts the recipient countries to more and more aid. I have not changed these opinions.

Ghana did not accept an aid package on terms dictated by the World Bank or the IMF. We worked out our own proposals, presented them, and argued out our case. The fact that they accepted our argument is an indication that we had shown responsible management and the courage and determination to go through with such a realistic program of economic reconstruction. This has no doubt created a climate of confidence, irrespective of differences in political orientation.

AFRICA REPORT: Your government's relations with the United States have been rocky, in part due to perceptions that Ghana was aligning itself with Libya, Cuba, and the Eastern bloc. There were allegations of a CIA-inspired coup plot at one point. How would you characterize your relations with the U.S. at this time? Are there any major areas of disagreement? What is your assessment of both your need for, and the current level of, U.S. aid, trade, and investment in Ghana?

RAWLINGS: We have the warmest feelings for the people of the United States, many of whom originate from West Africa. However, we are sometimes made uneasy by the at-

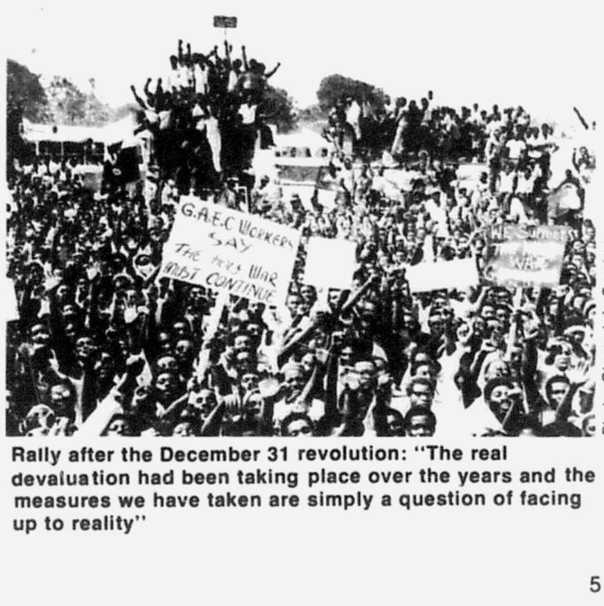


Photo: Ghana Info Services

Rally after the December 31 revolution: "The real devaluation had been taking place over the years and the measures we have taken are simply a question of facing up to reality"

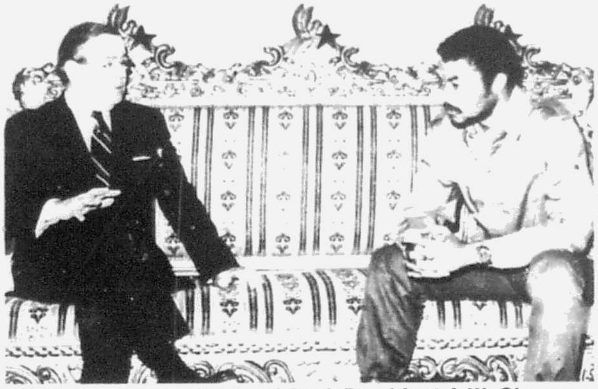


Photo Ghana Info Services

Flt. Lt. Rawlings with World Bank President A.W. Clausen: "The aid and loans we have received are simply tools to work with to break free from dependency"

titude of the Reagan administration towards the Third World. There is a strong tendency to jump to political conclusions, to regard as threats matters that are the internal affairs of developing countries, and to overreact, sometimes in a rather heavy-handed manner, to issues and even assumptions that hardly merit such attention. At the same time, the U.S. administration seems upset when we of the Third World decide to react to American reactions!

However, our relations with the United States have improved over the past year. There have been periods when the U.S. has withheld aid, apparently in reaction to allegations on our part of the involvement of U.S. security agencies in our internal affairs. At the moment, however, I don't think there are any major disagreements.

With regard to the level of U.S. aid, trade, and investment in Ghana, we would welcome any growth in economic relationships that do not seek to influence our internal policies, or to dominate our affairs.

AFRICA REPORT: Could you outline Ghana's foreign policy objectives, and comment on your relations with Libya, Cuba, and the Eastern bloc, as well as with your neighbors in the region?

RAWLINGS: Ghana is a member of the nonaligned movement. We believe that the only way in which the less powerful countries can maintain real independence and avoid domination by either East or West is to come together for mutual aid and support. From this position, we can enjoy friendly relations with both East and West.

Too much has been said and many conclusions have been drawn about our relations with Libya and Cuba. I must make it quite clear that Ghana's revolution is its own. We are engaged in restructuring our own society, on our own terms, to suit our own conditions. We can learn from other revolutions—the American and the French, as well as the Libyan and the Cuban—but this does not mean a wholesale acceptance of their values and methods.

Let's not forget that Libya came promptly to our aid in a time of crisis when other countries were still sitting on the fence. We are grateful, but this does not make us puppets. Cuba has many physical and social similarities with Ghana and it is a particularly fruitful field for cooperation. Cuba's outstanding successes in making health care, education, and other basic needs available to the formerly disadvantaged sections of society can provide us with valuable lessons. But again, it does not mean that Ghana intends to become an African puppet for any country.

Regarding our neighbors, we are very anxious for cordial relations. So many of our problems, development aims, and even peoples are interrelated, and there should therefore be no barrier in the way of good relationships even where our political and economic philosophies differ. I have recently visited Benin, Upper Volta, Mali, and Ivory Coast, and more recently, Guinea, and in each case have met a cordial welcome and an eagerness to increase neighborly cooperation. It is something we are all working towards.

AFRICA REPORT: What are your plans for the democratization of Ghana's political system? How effective are the People's Defense Committees (PDCs) and the Workers' Defense Committees (WDCs) as vehicles for increasing popular participation in the decision-making process? Do you envision a time when you would schedule elections or conduct a referendum?

RAWLINGS: The People's Defense Committees and Workers' Defense Committees were set up two years ago. When the power and responsibility for carrying out certain basic functions in communities and workplaces is suddenly thrust into the hands of the people, there is bound to be some confusion. We have been through a period of learning, a period during which those who tried to use PDCs to further their own ends have been weeded out, a period during which responsible grass-roots initiative has grown stronger and has gained confidence.

These PDCs remain, in fact they are the basic foundation of democratization in Ghana. They have involved themselves in neighborhood sanitation, road building and maintenance, the building of clinics, primary schools, dams, and fishponds. They have planted trees, cultivated community farms, organized antismuggling patrols in border areas, and supervised the distribution of basic commodities through the Community Shops. The PDC executives are elected by the members of the smaller units. Presently, at the district level and above, they are appointed, but these levels will also be democratized.

We are working towards democracy from the bottom up, instead of from the top down. The kind of elections held under former regimes gives no real opportunity for participation. The ballot box was used to usurp the people's power, allowing them only a meaningless choice, making spectators out of us, after which people could only look on helplessly as the politicians lined their own pockets and thereby systematically destroyed the social and economic fabric of the nation. We have seen this happen here, and we have seen it happen in Nigeria, as in several other places, with the inevitable result of a reaction to create a more real form of democracy.

The process in which we are engaged is a slow one. We are learning as we go, sometimes making mistakes, but we believe that the end result will be a more genuine democracy than we have seen before.

AFRICA REPORT: Over the past year, there have been several coup attempts against your government, defections from the PNDC, demonstrations by students and workers. Do these activities indicate a dwindling of support among those who were initially firmly behind your revolution? To what do you attribute these activities?

RAWLINGS: In order to provide the disadvantaged with a fair share of the nation's resources, it follows that those who formerly had an unfair share must have less. There is no way around this fact. Anyone who thinks that it is possible to improve the lot of the underprivileged while leaving the privileges of an elite minority untouched is not being realistic. Nor is it realistic to expect the privileged to give up without protest some of the advantages that they have taken for granted. I am not only speaking of material advantages, but of the assumption, for example, that a certain class of people can evade their tax obligations and other social responsibilities with impunity, or that they have some inherent right to make decisions on behalf of their less fortunate compatriots.

In such a situation, some will merely grumble and then adjust themselves to the new system. Others will openly protest. But others will go further and attempt to return to the old system by overthrowing the new. And to do this, they will use other people. They may play upon the grievances or problems of workers or students. They may even form uneasy alliances with radicals who feel that the pace of change is too slow. They will make use of foreign business and political connections. We have experienced all of these combinations here, often orchestrated by self-exiled Ghanaians who prefer to do their politics at a very safe distance, from your countries.

AFRICA REPORT: Critics charge your government with having waged a class war against the middle and professional classes, of having sanctioned attacks or crackdowns on suspected political opponents, and of having abrogated the independent judiciary via the establishment of public tribunals. How do you respond to these charges?

RAWLINGS: As I said earlier, to help the underprivileged, to attempt to narrow the huge gap between the lifestyle of a privileged few and the disadvantaged majority, must necessarily mean that those with an unfair share may have to lose some. If 10 percent of the people eat half the national cake, and if it is agreed that it is unfair that the other half must feed the remaining 90 percent, we can only give more to the 90 percent by reducing the slice of the 10 percent.

Some people would say, "Then make the cake bigger so that everyone gets more." This is not completely acceptable. First, it will take time and hard work to increase the size of the cake, and the starving poor cannot be asked to wait. Second, the unjust disproportion still remains. The gap is unchanged. To try and rectify this imbalance is not war. It is social justice.

With regard to the judiciary and the public tribunals, the

Photo: Ghana Daily Graphic

PNDC Chairman Jerry Rawlings at opening of Ho rural electrification project: "Our most important achievement—the restoration of hope and confidence even in the face of material hardship"

two are functioning simultaneously. Visitors who have watched the tribunals in operation have been impressed by their fairness. The two main points about which misgivings have been expressed are the absence of the right to appeal against a verdict of the tribunal, and the absence of legal counsel. The first point has been resolved, and there is now an appeal procedure. The second point was never valid, since legal representation has always been allowed. It was the Ghana Bar Association that decided to boycott the tribunals, thereby leaving many accused persons without counsel, but there have always been some lawyers appearing before the tribunals and their numbers have been increasing as the confidence of the public in the tribunals has become more evident.

There have been a number of cases before the ordinary courts where the accused have asked for their cases to be transferred to the tribunals, on the grounds that their proceedings are more prompt, fair, and understandable to the layman.

When you speak of crackdowns on political opponents, it is necessary to choose our words carefully. If by "opponent" you mean someone holding a different political opinion, I do not think that the PNDC can be accused of attacking anyone on those grounds. If, however, "opponent" means someone engaged in subversion, working for the overthrow of our government, then we would not be very wise to look on unconcerned! The picture is further confused by cases where someone has committed an offense, and also happens to disagree with our policies. The penalty for the offense has sometimes been represented as a penalty for disagreement!

AFRICA REPORT: Is there anything that we have not covered that you would like to convey to American readers of *Africa Report*?

RAWLINGS: Yes, I would like to caution your readers not to be deceived by the oversimplified and sometimes distorted picture of Ghana often presented by the transnational media. It serves the purpose of some interests to represent this government as a group of wild-eyed radicals heedlessly demolishing the time-honored structures of society, but those who have taken the time to find out what we are really doing have come to different conclusions. And radicals we may be, if this means people determined to get to the roots of our problems, but we are responsible radicals, building to replace what we gradually dismantle in order to create a sustainable, just, and dignified society. □

Photo: Ghana Info Services

Flt. Lt. Rawlings with Malian President Moussa Traore: "There should be no barrier in the way of good relationships with our neighbors"

The Coup and the Future

BY LARRY DIAMOND

What happens to a dream deferred?
Does it dry up
like a raisin in the sun?
Or fester like a sore –
and then run?
Does it stink like rotten meat?
Or crust and sugar over –
like a syrupy sweet?
Maybe it just sags
like a heavy load.
Or does it explode?
— Langston Hughes

Nigerians are dreamers, in the best sense of the word. They are an ambitious and highly expectant people. Despite the divergent forms their aspirations take, and the intense and complex conflicts that follow from their collective pursuit, two broad goals are widely shared in Nigeria: development and democracy. Since independence in 1960 — even well before the onset of the oil boom — Nigerians have dreamed about a huge and rapid leap forward in economic development, resulting in improved standards of living.

Larry Diamond is assistant professor of sociology at Vanderbilt University and was Fulbright Visiting Lecturer at Bayero University, Kano, Nigeria, during the 1982-83 academic year. His research on the Second Republic has been supported by the Institute for the Study of World Politics and the Vanderbilt University Research Council.

Photo: W. Campbell/Sygma

Maj. Gen. Muhammed Buhari combines the reformist zeal of Murtala Muhammed and the efficient pragmatism of Olusegun Obasanjo

And they have sought to construct a system of government that would not only ensure a reasonable balance in power and resources between ethnic groups, but also provide for meaningful popular participation and responsive and accountable government.

The dream of development, sagging for many years under the weight of corruption and waste, has collapsed in the midst of a global oil glut that has slashed the country's export earnings by more than half since 1980. In the past few years, the hope for democracy had also been sinking in the spiralling rot of venal, arrogant, and grossly ineffective government, which appeared to have no purpose other than the enrichment of the politicians and their circles of cronies and patrons in business.

The coup that upended the Second Republic at the close of last year was the logical conclusion of spent legitimacy and dashed hopes. In retrospect, it seems to have been inevitable.

The causes of the failure of the Second Republic have been understood in the West no better than was its steady deterioration. Those who had seen the Second Republic as essentially stable and had grossly misinterpreted last year's elections as essentially democratic can only resort to explanations outside the political system itself: the politicians were the victims of the global recession that ravaged Nigeria's economy, and/or the ambitions of the soldiers to have their own turn at looting public resources.

Fundamentally, the coup was not caused by the world recession, by authoritarian tendencies, or by hunger for power on the part of military officers. The overthrow of the Second Republic was caused by its politicians. By their corruption and mismanagement, their hubris and abuse of power, and their violent and fraudulent pursuit of power, they brought about their own demise. This demise was broadly welcomed — even joyously celebrated — in Nigeria, and in this sense, the action of the military has been in a popular and redemptive, rather than authoritarian, spirit.

The factors responsible for the failure of this second attempt at democratic government since Nigeria's independence are apparent in the statements of the country's new military leaders.

While these may not fully explain why this particular coup, staged by these officers, occurred when it did, they do explain why a coup was virtually inevitable. It was necessary to redeem the country from "the grave economic predicament and uncertainty that an inept and corrupt leadership has imposed on our beloved nation for the past four years," in the words of Brigadier Sani Abacha, announcing the coup over national radio early on December 31. "Our economy has been hopelessly mismanaged. We have become a debtor and begger nation. . . . Our leaders revel in squander-mania. Corruption and indiscipline continue to proliferate in complete disregard of our sad economic realities." To this indictment, Nigeria's new leader, Major General Muhammed Buhari, soon added the rigging of the 1983 elections. Nigeria, he said, "had been enslaved by a handful of people who had been sharing the wealth among themselves and who were determined to stay in office at all costs."

By any reckoning, the deterioration of the Nigerian economy in the past three years has been staggering. At the center of this has been the decline in Nigerian oil revenues from a peak of $24 billion in 1980 to roughly $10 billion last year. During the four and a quarter years of civilian rule, foreign currency reserves shrank from roughly $8 billion to less then $1 billion. External debt more than tripled to an estimated $12-15 billion, including roughly $5 billion in short-term trade debts. Internal debt rose from 4.6 billion naira in 1977 to 15 billion in 1982 and 22 billion (now the equivalent of about $30 billion) last year. In 1982, national output declined by 2% and certainly it declined further last year. At the same time, prices of basic commodities were rising, and last year some more than doubled.

For a nation that depends on oil for more than 90% of its foreign exchange earnings and for 80% of its government revenue, the sharp drop in world demand for oil could not have been anything but disastrous. For any nation, a sudden decline in export earnings by half or more is devastating. Certainly, it was the special misfortune of the Second Republic to coincide in time with

Nigeria's deepest and longest economic recession since independence. But what made the economic crisis a catastrophe was not just bad luck. It was a chronic incapacity to make the adjustments and enforce the discipline that could have seen the economy through this critical downturn. Not only were the federal and state governments under the civilians unable to reduce spending and imports to the levels that were demanded, but they were unable to extract the sacrifices from privileged and powerful interests that could have spread the costs of adjustment more fairly across social classes and economic sectors.

The deepening popular anger and alienation that swallowed the Second Republic was a product more of the grotesque injustice and indiscipline of government during the recession than of the recession itself. Underlying this was the fatal arrogance that led the politicians to squander the broad grant of popular legitimacy and faith with which the Second Republic began in 1979, following a four-year transition to civilian government that had stimulated vigorous participation and hope. From the moment the politicians took power, they behaved as if they were invulnerable and accountable to no one. For weeks and months following its inception, the National Assembly preoccupied itself with its own salaries, benefits, and accommodations. Rumors spread of tens of thousands of naira in cash trading hands in legislative lobbying. At the same time, ministers, governors, and other officials wasted no time in reaping huge gains from the awarding of contracts, import licenses, and other government largesse. As senators and representatives junketed around the world and public officials with no other known source of income grew fabulously rich, there developed an image of politics — and government by politicians — as nothing but the organized expression of human greed.

What disgusted people was not that there was continuing corruption — Nigerians hardly expected a sudden halt to the long-standing networks and reciprocal ties of patronage — but that this seemed to lose all sense of proportion and social obligation. Public treasuries were plundered and the booty shamelessly flaunted. Politicians were reduced in the public mind to the caricatures in the cartoons of editorial pages: fat men in silk suits and breathtaking, flowing gowns, flashing gold, and lumbering in and out of limousines.

In fact, gold Rolex watches and Mercedes Benzes became commonplace. The real big men purchased private jets and magnificent homes in London and New York. These ostentatious displays — and rumors of fantastic wealth exported abroad — were juxtaposed against the stark effects of corruption upon people and communities: the shells of unfinished hospitals and schools, the treacherous craters in ungraded roads, the equipment for boreholes that was delivered and then left to rust — the shadows of development that was never executed because the contracts were simply devices for the theft of state resources. The countryside was littered with these shells of a failed promise, and with signs of the callous waste that accompanied it — bulldozers abandoned alongside highways never paved, thousands of bags of fertilizer dumped to rot in some mixed-up scam. Because the price of this plunder was, ever more apparently, little improvement in the lives of ordinary people, the disillusionment it bred was remarkably diffuse. Farmers who could not get their produce to market, villagers who still had no access to electricity or clean drinking water or schools for their children, school leavers who could not find jobs, and college students who were stranded abroad without their scholarship checks, blamed the politicians for their suffering and dashed hopes.

Incredibly, political corruption grew more massive and brazen even as national revenue plunged and the economy spun into recession. Anger became more intense and explosive, especially among younger and more educated Nigerians, as the rumors and exposés became ever more fantastic: Twenty million naira missing from the accounts of the Federal Capital Development Authority in Abuja. A governor trying to smuggle millions of naira cash into Britain; another shuffling millions more in beer cartons to a secret stash in his home village. A federal minister dumping 2 million British pounds onto the black market for currency in Kano. A very different kind of minister, himself disgusted, claiming last year that Nigeria was losing 50 million naira a month — the equivalent at official rates of almost a billion dollars a year — to ghost workers and related forms of payroll fraud. None of this was ever proven or punished in court, but this fact only intensified people's anger.

By the time that the [illegible] headquarters of the Nigerian [illegible] Telecommunications in Lagos became engulfed in flames one year ago, the Second Republic was already in serious danger. But this spectacular incident of suspected arson — the third to a major government building in a year — magnified popular disillusionment to a whole new level. For many Nigerians, and especially the disaffected intelligentsia, it epitomized the utter rapaciousness of the ruling elite and demonstrated that corruption was completely out of control. The decay now seemed irreversible. Students quickly took to the streets in Lagos and several state capitals, chanting and carrying signs calling for the return of the military. They were shouting what a great many Nigerians were feeling, and certainly the soldiers were listening.

The corruption and the resistance of legislators, ministers, and governors to any notion of accountability (including the declaration of assets required by the constitution) were attended by gross mismanagement. Inept and venal administration of the economy undermined the stated purposes of President Shehu Shagari's austerity measures. And as the recession deepened, they magnified and may even have largely accounted for the visible and acute declines in the standard of living of large segments of the population.

President Shagari on the campaign trail in 1983: Inept and venal administration of the economy undermined the aims of his austerity measures

As oil income plunged, foreign exchange became scarce and credit with foreign suppliers was exhausted, drastically reducing the nation's import capacity. This had devastating effects on both industrial production — heavily dependent on foreign inputs — and consumer prices. Unable to import essential raw materials and spare parts, factories were forced to retrench to fractions of their capacity. Tens of thousands of workers were laid off. Recent data suggest that urban unemployment doubled in 1983 while half of total manufacturing capacity was idled. Naturally, goods produced by these factories — such as soap and tires — soared in price and became extremely difficult to obtain. Even more seriously, prices of basic foodstuffs also jumped precipitously. This was true not only for imported grains, and especially that precious political commodity, rice, but also for domestic staples, as traders and intermediaries ruthlessly hoarded commodities to bid up their prices. Last year a World Bank study in Plateau State documented price increases of 125% for sorghum, 91% for corn, and 36% for millet, "much of this due to speculative hoarding."

People suffered, especially in the cities, where families are dependent on the food in the markets, which they could no longer afford — or even find — and on the incomes of wage laborers who were being laid off. Because these people did not express their mounting pain and anger through riots, most Western observers failed to appreciate the depth of it — and hence the growing fragility of the Second Republic.

In such a situation, the urgent need was to allocate scarce foreign exchange to the importation of raw material and basic consumer goods on a priority basis, and to stop political manipulation of their distribution. This the Shagari government promised but failed to do. Politicians and the well-connected continued to claim hundreds of millions of dollars in hard currency for luxury trade. Smuggling proceeded unabated. Import licenses continued to be sold to the highest bidders for fantastic sums. Many businesses that needed them desperately either could not obtain them or could only do so for an exorbitant price. Rice continued to be hoarded and frenetically traded and speculated in by politicians. Those assigned to break up the bottlenecks often were the worst offenders. Such was especially believed to be true of the Presidential Task Force on Rice, and its chairman, Alhaji Umaru Dikko, President Shagari's campaign manager and most powerful minister, at whose home the military reportedly discovered huge quantities of Task Force rice.

Under such merciless assault by the very people entrusted with responsibility for managing it, the economy had no hope of adjustment, much less recovery. By the end of the last year, the price of detergent had quadrupled and the price of palm oil had quintupled. In the few months between President Shagari's reelection and the coup, the retail price of rice doubled again — to roughly five times its price fresh off the boat — and a Western embassy estimated that the average basket of food for urban consumers increased by about 50%. In the wake of the ruling National Party of Nigeria's reported landslide victories, things were getting worse, not better.

In the states, mismanagement was even more devastating. After going many months without pay, school teachers walked out in one state after another. Some areas went more than a year without schooling. In some states, civil servants also went on strike. Hospitals were without drugs and cities suffered longer and more frequent breakdowns of water and electricity. A wave of new strikes loomed on the horizon, including one by nurses in January. In both the public and the private sector, the economy was breaking down. Meanwhile, greater and greater proportions of dwindling state revenues were being consumed by administration, as states doubled and tripled the number of Local Government Areas to lengthen the political gravy train, and demands for new states proliferated for much the same reason. With local government elections due by the end of January and the new Shagari government enslaved to a campaign promise to create new states (of which National Assembly committees had recommended as many as 20 or 30), the prospect, as General Buhari indicated, was for not only economic collapse but political chaos.

Given these levels of corruption and mismanagement, and the pervasive political thuggery and violence of party politics, which even by 1981 had left hundreds of dead and injured around the country, and given as well the chronic fragility of public order under civilian rule, which had been gravely interrupted on several occasions by religious riots in the north and was further eroding against the onslaught of violent and organized urban crime, the shrewder question may be not why the coup occurred, but why it didn't happen sooner.

Some observers have reported or speculated that there were in fact a number of plots from the middle ranks of the officer corps that were either exposed in advance or quietly (but not always bloodlessly) foiled. The president

Voters in the 1983 elections: The massive rigging of the elections was the decisive element in the failure of the Second Republic

himself confided as much to an opposition party leader, and to a governor who questioned him about the rumors. Logically, one would expect that the acute disillusionment of young Nigerian intellectuals and professionals with the Second Republic and the socioeconomic stagnation and decay would also be intensely felt among the junior officer corps. In fact, the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) reported a widespread belief that the senior officers struck when they did to preempt a bloody coup planned by junior officers for some time in January.

Preemption may have been a consideration in the timing of the coup, but the legitimacy of such a drastic step was at least as important a factor. In a recent interview with Agence France-Presse, Major General Ibrahim Babangida, the new army chief of staff, revealed that the armed forces had begun to be disturbed at the deterioration in the country by the middle of 1981, and had considered staging a coup in July of last year, but had decided to give the civilians a chance, through the electoral process, to demonstrate that the democratic system could work. In other words, the military did not want to be responsible for the country's failure to conduct free and fair elections on schedule.

The massive rigging and disastrous administration of the 1983 elections, documented here (see *Africa Report*, November-December 1983) was the final, decisive element in the failure of the Second Republic. Even before the elections, a large proportion of the population, and certainly the bulk of the disaffected students, businessmen, and professionals, were hoping that the military would intervene to save the situation. But they too waited to see whether change was possible by constitutional means. The pervasive and staggering malpractices during the five rounds of voting indicated it was not. As former Army Chief of Staff General T.Y. Danjuma (a key figure in the last military government) recently observed, "Democracy had been in jeopardy for the past four years. It died with the elections. The army only buried it."

One of the most widely respected members of the deposed new Shagari cabinet, Chief Raph Uwechue, has argued that the coup was "provoked by the blatant excesses in the pursuit of naked power by some insensitive politicians." We will never know whether, as Uwechue maintains, the coup would not have taken place if the elections had been seen as free and fair, or whether Shagari would really have been reelected if they had been, or whether, as Uwechue also maintains, the new government (composed of a manifestly higher caliber of personnel), sensitive to the urgent challenge, would have come to grips with corruption. In the rigging of the elections and, according to Uwechue, "the erosion of public confidence in the political system, as it had been operated in the previous four years," Nigerian history was robbed of the opportunity to unveil the answers to these questions.

For Nigeria, the immediate future is too fraught with peril to dwell upon the imponderables of the recent past. The new government of General Muhammed Buhari faces an economic and social crisis pregnant with threats to its own authority. Its composition and its initial statements and actions suggest that it is acutely alert to the scope of what is at stake in the coming months.

Despite its striking youth (Defense Minister D.Y. Bali, at 43, appears to be the oldest officer on the Supreme Military Council), this is a sober and experienced government. In his maiden press conference, General Buhari emphasized, "We are an offshoot of the last military government" of Generals Murtala Muhammed and Olusegun Obasanjo. Theirs was the most aggressively reformist and probably the most effective government Nigeria has had. Before he was assassinated in a failed coup attempt in early 1976, less than seven months after taking power, Murtala Muhammed shook Nigeria's corrupt and sluggish administration to its roots, dismissing or retiring over 10,000 public servants, including all the state governors and a number of military officers. At the same time, he launched the country into the imaginatively staged transition to civilian rule that his successor, General Obasanjo, faithfully executed. Murtala Muhammed has, like the late President Kennedy in this country, been immortalized in national legend as the expression of the country's finest qualities and hopes, the bearer of a national vision that was cruelly interrupted. It is not surprising that General Buhari and his colleagues on the new Supreme Military Council (two-thirds of whom served in the Muhammed/Obasanjo government) should identify themselves with this legacy.

General Buhari, 41, appears to combine the reformist zeal of Murtala Muhammed and the efficient pragmatism of Obasanjo. Upon assuming office as military governor of the then Northeastern State after the August 1975 coup, Buhari led investigations into allegations of corruption against a number of public and private companies, as well as the previous military governor. After the abortive 1976 coup, he became federal commissioner for petroleum and energy and chairman of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation. He has been credited with shrewd and pragmatic administration of Nigeria's petroleum policy, perceptively reading market forces and responding to them flexibly and effectively. Experts especially praised his carefully crafted and extremely successful incentives to boost sagging exploration and to develop new reserves.

Buhari has been characterized as moderately conservative, but in fact he appears nonideological, even openly distrustful of ideologies and rigid dogmas. His primary concern appears to be the fundamental practical question of national development: How can Nigeria realize its enormous promise? In this sense, he is progressive, and so is his government. If it can be said to reflect or represent any constituency or segment of Nigerian society, it could be termed the "progressive establishment."

The leading officers are men in their late 30s or early 40s, commissioned about the time of the first coup in 1966, or shortly after. Though Buhari himself comes from the largest ethnic group, the Hausa-Fulani (from which also have come the two civilian leaders and Murtala Muhammed), the new government "reflects the federal character" of the country in its ethnic composition, and most of the new military governors are indigenes. The new chief

Photo: Yosef Hadar/World Bank

Anger over the injustice of gross inequalities—the arrogance of extravagant wealth and the simple, terrible pain of poverty

of staff, Supreme Headquarters (second in command to Buhari), is Brigadier Babatunde Idiagbon, a Yoruba, who was given high marks for his performance as the final military administrator of Borno State (part of the old Northeastern State where Buhari served) before the return to civilian rule. Several key figures are from northern minority groups in the "Middle Belt" region, which produced Nigeria's longest-ruling head of state, General Yakubu Gowon. The new minister of defense, and one of Nigeria's most distinguished soldiers, Major General Domkat Y. Bali, is (like Gowon) from Plateau State. Major General Babangida is from Niger State, and a graduate of the Provincial Secondary School in Bida, from which have also come the new minister of internal affairs, Brigadier Mohammed Magoro; the new minister of the Federal Capital Territory, Major General Mamman Jiya Vatsa; and the new governor of Sokoto State, Brigadier Garba Duba. Brigadier Magoro, from a non-Muslim area of Sokoto State, was commissioner of transport in the Obasanjo administration. General Vatsa, born in Plateau and raised in Abuja, has published a dozen volumes of poetry, including one about Abuja, and has stated that creative sensitivity is a necessary component of leadership. Babangida, as army chief of staff, figures to be a strong voice in the new government, as do Magoro and Vatsa, whose influence is suggested by their dual membership in the cabinet and the Supreme Military Council, a privilege shared by only two others (Bali and Attorney General Chike Offodile, an Igbo).

It is significant that only seven of the 18 members of the Buhari cabinet are military officers, and that most of the 11 civilians have extensive experience in government and public life. Six of the 11 have Ph.D.s or medical degrees. Prominent among this group are the new minister of commerce and industries, Dr. Mahmud Tukur, and the new minister of petroleum and energy, Prof. Tam David-West. Dr. Tukur, the first vice-chancellor of Bayero University, Kano, is a highly respected academician, a progressive Muslim intellectual, and a leading figure in a far-flung network of northern intellectuals, professionals, and civil servants that had become increasingly disenchanted with the corruption and incompetence of the Shagari government. He is the epitome of the progressive establishment. Prof. David-West, a virologist of international reputation and a commissioner in the last military government in Rivers State, was an outspoken critic of corruption in the governments of President Shagari and of Rivers Governor Melford Okilo. Other appointments reflect both experience and social status. The new minister of external affairs, Dr. Ibrahim Gambari, is both an expert on foreign affairs and the son of an emir.

Because this government appears to represent the best of the Nigerian establishment, both military and civilian, it is burdened with a special challenge. Its failure is likely to be read by younger Nigerians in the universities, the trade unions, and other organized groups as the failure of the establishment, the futility of incremental change, and the bankruptcy of moderation (and perhaps even "reason"). If it fails to make significant and visible progress in reducing corruption and waste and regenerating the economy, political momentum will shift to more radical and extreme perspectives, both secular and religious, which assert the need for a sweeping transformation of society, and which see violence as the only means for purging the system of the rot that has overtaken it.

Its initial performance suggests that the Buhari government is alive to the challenge and committed to bringing about real change. In swearing in his new cabinet on January 18, General Buhari warned, "The SMC will keep a keen and watchful eye on your performance, your lifestyle, and your general conduct in office." He declared that his government "will not tolerate fraud, indiscipline, corruption, misuse, and abuse of office." President Shagari had made similar declarations, but Buhari also told his ministers to declare their assets within six weeks, and gave them three months to undertake a critical review of all projects and programs in their ministries. Symbols of the arrogance and extravagance of the Second Republic have been dispensed with. Official Mercedes Benz limousines (including that of the head of state) have been replaced with locally assembled Peugeots, and the new governors have been pointedly instructed to regard their postings as temporary service and not to allow themselves to be addressed as "Your Excellency."

Already, a number of steps have been taken to combat corruption and waste. Seventeen of 35 permanent secretaries in the federal civil service and 34 senior police officers have been forced into retirement. Two hundred forty customs officials were dismissed for corruption at the end of January. These appear only to be the first installments of larger shake-ups. In the aftermath of the coup, more than 650 politicians and public servants in the Second Republic were detained, and 453 are reportedly still in custody. The list of the 71 who are being held at the Kirikiri maximum-security prison is a "who's who" of former cabinet ministers, governors, and legislative leaders. Several of the former ruling party's biggest barons who were abroad during the coup or escaped in its wake — including Umaru Dikko, former NPN Chairman Adisa Akinloye, former Attorney General Richard Akinjide, businessman Isiyaku Ibrahim, and former Senate President Joseph Wayas — have been declared wanted persons. The bank accounts of all detained and wanted former officials have been frozen and banks have also been ordered to restrict withdrawals of "unusually large amounts." State and federal legislators have been ordered to pay back their car and housing loans, and in some cases their salaries, with immediate effect. Huge sums of cash have been seized from the homes of leading politicians, including over 1 million naira from the home of Imo Governor Sam Mbakwe and 3.4 million naira from the home of former senator and recently elected Kano Governor Sabo Bakin Zuwo. Chief of Staff Idiagbon informed the nation that close to 90 million naira a year would be saved simply from the statutory emoluments of National Assembly members. In fact, the total savings, including aides, perquisites, administrative expenses, lobbying, and all of the costs of 19 state legislatures with more than 1,300 members collectively, is clearly in the hundreds of millions.

Economically, the clear priorities are to enforce real discipline in public spending and to bring down consumer prices. Initially, the latter was done in some markets by angry soldiers at the point of a gun, but the new military governments in the states now appear to be moving more rationally and systematically to sell off the hoards of basic commodities that have been discovered and to fix new prices for essential foodstuffs in particular. Contracts are also being reviewed at the federal and state level, and those that appear to have been fraudulently inflated are likely to be revoked. Governors have been instructed to see that all salary arrears are paid to teachers and civil servants within three months. The Basic Travel Allowance — the amount of foreign exchange travelers are allowed to take out — has been slashed from 500 to 100 naira and the expectation is that General Buhari will present an austerity budget even sparer than the one recently proposed by President Shagari, which cut public spending by 40%. Known sites of illicit foreign currency exchange have been raided, and black-market operations have sharply receded, at least for the moment.

Unavoidably, the critical condition of Nigeria's external finances has been an early top priority of the new regime. The former secretary to the Obasanjo government, Alhaji Liman Ciroma, was quickly dispatched to Washington and London to confer with Nigeria's major creditors, and General Buhari has held private discussions with ambassadors and special representatives of the Western nations to which Nigeria owes most of its short-term trade debts. Another top official was dispatched on a tour of other OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries) capitals, and negotiations were resumed with the International Monetary Fund for a three-year credit of more than $3 billion.

There is little mystery as to what Nigeria needs and is seeking in these negotiations. It needs time to sort out the wreckage left by the civilian government and to implement reforms. It needs understanding from the international banking community that structural reforms (such as devaluation and removal of subsidies for fuel and food), if implemented too deeply and precipitously, may generate unacceptable hardship among the long-suffering lower classes, especially in the volatile cities. With a projected oil income of $10-11 billion this year, a debt service of $3.5 billion, and a severe drought in the north (reducing the grain harvest by a third) that is expected to require a 25% increase in food imports to $2.4 billion, Nigeria also urgently needs more foreign exchange. This means substantial new international credit and also more oil income, which is unlikely unless Nigeria's current OPEC production quota of 1.3 million barrels per day is raised to something much closer to the 2.3 million b/d capacity.

Nigeria is in the grip of a serious long-term crisis. It cannot be resolved without deep reforms in the structure of the economy and the conduct of government. Nigeria's new leaders appear to have the talent and the will to make or at least to begin these reforms. But, unfortunately, not all of the conditions for progress are within Nigeria's control. Much will be determined by the international banking community and the governments of major Western and OPEC nations. Their stake in Nigeria's future generates a practical (if not moral) interest in sharing the sacrifices that are needed now. Banks that lent eagerly to a massively corrupt government have an interest in restructuring the debt of a government that is committed to the reforms that will make possible its repayment. Western governments and banks have a long-term interest in repatriating to Nigeria those funds of private Nigerians that the Buhari government can demonstrate were stolen from the country, as well as all the assets acquired with those funds. Western governments have an interest in seeing that the guilty are brought to justice, and so in cooperating, through treaty arrangements and due process, in the extradition of any wanted persons whose return Nigeria requests. Wealthy OPEC nations that depend on Nigeria's continued membership and cooperation in the maintenance of stable prices have an interest in raising Nigeria's production quota, even at the expense of some decline in their own.

Beneath a surface that is once again calm, there persists a dangerous level of anger and discontent over the injustice of gross inequalities, the arrogance of extravagant wealth, and the simple, terrible pain of poverty and declining standards of life. It is in the interest of every responsible party to this drama to cooperate in addressing and relieving the roots of this anger. For if there is not real relief and tangible progress in the coming years, sooner or later this anger will explode. □

Six Months into Sankara's Revolution

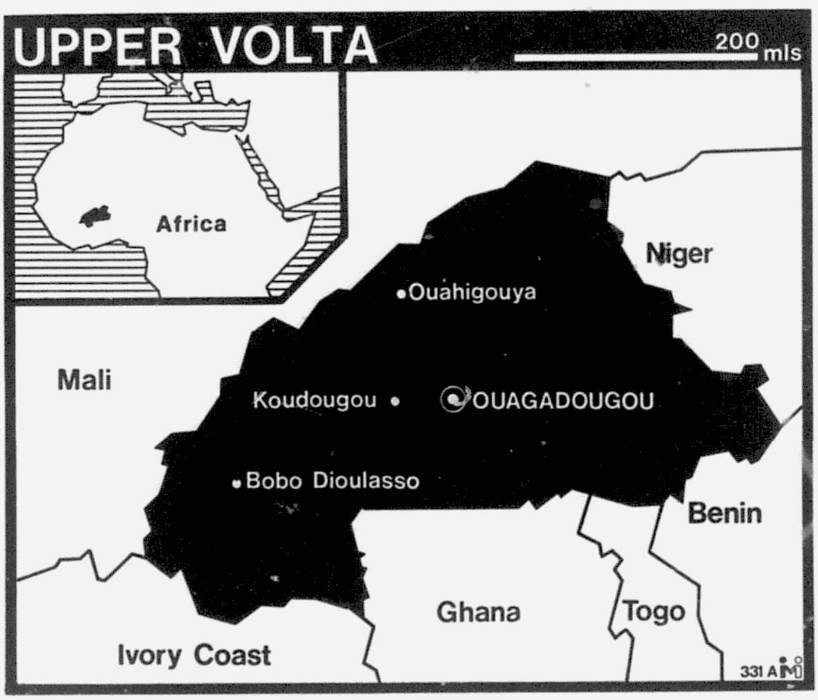
BY HOWARD SCHISSEL

In Ouagadougou, a handwritten sign taped on the flank of an aging American convertible boldly states: "Down With Government Luxury." The car, previously used for official functions, is now driven round the city by a group of gendarmes on mission. As in Flight Lieutenant Jerry Rawlings' Ghana and more recently in Nigeria, the group of officers who seized power in Upper Volta last August 4 were motivated by the desire to clean up government affairs and establish a modicum of honesty and responsibility in the state administration. But the rise to power of 33-year-old Captain Thomas Sankara also marks a watershed in Upper Volta's turbulent postcolonial history. Surely coups d'état are nothing new in Upper Volta, but as one Western diplomat in the Voltaic capital candidly admits: "Sankara's coup was not just another coup, for it opens up a whole new chapter in Voltaic politics."

In this respect, the Upper Volta coup has much more in common with the events in Ghana than those in Nigeria. As in Accra, a group of radical young officers, backed by the trade unions and left-wing political forces, swept aside the old political establishment and steered the country on a populist and antiimperialist revolutionary course. How did Upper Volta, reputed for its freewheeling political debate, press freedom, and activist trade unions, arrive at such a situation?

When a bevy of officers behind Col. Saye Zerbo toppled President Sangoulé Lamizana's short-lived third republic in November 1980, civilian politicians had been once again thoroughly discredited. The label of democracy, as in Nigeria, was the fig leaf that covered over widespread corruption. Politicians often spent more time looking after their own private interests than defending those of their constituencies. The democratic process had proven to be ineffective in a country that is ranked among the poorest in Africa and with the highest infant mortality rate in the world.

The Saye Zerbo putsch ushered in a new and contradictory period for Upper Volta. It brought to power younger, better educated officers intent on introducing basic change. This was a new phenomenon, different from the 1966 and 1974 coups that preserved the



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exisiting state structure, only shifting political personnel. But the Military Committee of Redressment for National Progress (CMRPN) was far from being a homogenous body. The cleavages that affected civilian politics had moved to the army, shattering the myth of armed forces unity.

During the two-year period that the CMRPN was in power, it was incapable of providing Upper Volta with clear political or economic guidelines. For example, it was unable to propose programs to stimulate the country's agriculture, win financial backing for the Tambao manganese mine, or properly manage the financial system. Corruption flourished as never before, and the CMRPN was paralyzed by the contending forces within it. The boisterous trade union movement led the struggle against the CMRPN. After months of latent crisis, and on the eve of President Zerbo's planned trip to Paris, the government was toppled by a coalition of "young turks."

The People's Salvation Council (CSP), which emerged from the November 1982 coup, was a motley group of officers without a precise political line. The radical nationalist wing was led by Thomas Sankara, who was appointed prime minister. Moderates found a leader in Maj. Jean-Baptiste Ouedraogo, a little-known compromise candidate named to the presidency. Older conservative officers were represented by Col. Yorian Gabriel Somé, commander-in-chief of the armed forces. It was obvious that the CSP could not last for an extended period. The question was which faction would best be able to mobilize for a takeover and with how much foreign backing.

President Ouedraogo soon proved highly ineffectual, and Prime Minister Sankara rose to the political forefront. The differences between Sankara's populist discourse and his growing friendliness toward Ghana and Libya, and President Ouedraogo's call for reinforcing ties with traditional allies like France and Ivory Coast soon became blatant. Sankara even took the initiative to invite Col. Muammar Qaddafy to Ouagadougou without consulting the nominal head of state. By early spring 1983, it was evident that tension had reached the boiling point.


Photo: Penny Darko

Capt. Thomas Sankara with Flt. Lt. Jerry Rawlings: As in Ghana, the Voltaic coup was motivated by a desire to clean up government affairs

In mid-May, a series of strange and still partially unexplained events took place in Ouagadougou. The day after Guy Penne, President François Mitterrand's adviser on African affairs, arrived in the Voltaic capital, a mini-coup took place, leading to the arrest and detention of Prime Minister Sankara. Pro-Sankara forces claim that the coup was masterminded in the French embassy by Penne, in collaboration with Col. Somé. French officials deny such accusations, maintaining that Penne's presence in Ouagadougou was just "coincidental." In any case, moderates within the CSP and in neighboring countries, especially Ivory Coast, breathed easier after Sankara's removal.

In carrying out the coup, however, anti-Sankara forces behind Col. Somé slipped up. They arrested all the prime minister's close political and military associates with the exception of Capt. Blaise Compaoré. Compaoré was therefore able to rally the parachute commando center at Pô, a town about 10 miles north of the Ghanaian frontier, and force the authorities to release Sankara and other detainees. The May confrontation ended in a stalemate. In the following weeks, Libyan arms reportedly reached Pô in great quantity through Ghana, while Col. Somé's forces were reinforced with French military equipment. Meanwhile, President Ouedraogo began losing authority, and a power vacuum developed in Ouagadougou.

At the beginning of August, pro-Sankara forces struck first and seized the reins of power after a brief skirmish in Ouagadougou. The CSP was replaced by the new National Revolutionary Council (CNR) with Thomas Sankara as president and minister of the interior. Most of his close military associates also received key posts in the government: Capt. Compaoré, minister delegate to the President's Office; Battalion Chief Jean-Baptiste Lingani, minister of defense; Capt. Henri Zongo, minister of state enterprises; and Commander Abdou Salem Kabore, minister of public health.

The radical political factions that backed Sankara were well-represented in the new cabinet. The Patriotic League for Development (LIPAD), an offshoot of the pro-Soviet African Independence Party (PAI), held the dominant position. LIPAD ideologue Adama Touré — who was Sankara's and Compaoré's teacher — was named to the Ministry of Information. Arba Diallo, who studied in the United States, was appointed as foreign minister, while half a dozen other LIPAD activists received portfolios. The pro-Chinese Union for Communist

Struggle (ULC) was also included in the cabinet. The pro-Albanian Voltaic Revolutionary Communist Party (PCRV) refused to join the government, protesting that the military coup was not a popular revolution.

To consolidate its hold on power, the CNR rapidly started to restructure the state administration. The country was re-divided into 25 administrative districts headed by a newly appointed high commissioner. In the senior ranks of the civil service and the judiciary, functionaries too closely associated with the *ancien régime* were dismissed. House cleaning also went vigorously forward in military ranks. The Republican Guard was dissolved, and unreliable officers were retired. The command structure was reorganized and units whose loyalty was judged doubtful were reshuffled.

A significant act was the formation of Committees for the Defense of the Revolution (CDR) on the local level. Modeled on Ghana's People's Defense Committees, the CDRs have been given an educational, economic, and military role. Each CDR has five elected representatives. This has led to intensive infighting between different factions that are trying to wrest control of certain CDRs. For example, in the Yatenga area, backers of former National Assembly head Gerard Kango Ouedraogo are active in the CDRs. The PCRV has made a special effort to infiltrate CDRs in the Ouagadougou area. Many CDR elections have been voided and new ones held.

The ultimate goal of the CDRs is still undefined, as is their relationship with the country's other institutions. The trade union movement, which played a central role in the struggle against past governments, is apprehensive because it perceives that the CDRs are restricting its activities. In theory, the CDRs are meant to be the revolution's representatives in the workplace, but in practice they have been moving into the unions' traditional sphere of action. Does the Sankara regime view the unions as potential trouble-makers, and is it therefore seeking to circumscribe their influence? In any case, the union movement is far from homogenous in its composition. The LIPAD-controlled Voltaic Trade Union Confederation (CSV) has not joined other moderate trade unions in their call for discussions with the government on the question of union-CDR relations. Nonetheless, CSV Secretary General Soumane Touré has vented his displeasure at CDR encroachment.

Members of the PCRV and ULC support the CDRs as a means of reining in LIPAD influence in the labor movement. Some observers even suspect that the CDRs could prove to be the embryo of a future political party controlled by the armed forces. By playing such a role, they would help provide the army with the structured political organization it needs to counter the existing political parties.

Another Sahel drought: The most immediate limits to the Voltaic revolution will be economic

If Sankara remains unquestionably popular in the country — he was the hero of the 1974 border war with Mali — the CNR might require its own independent political organization to carry forward the radical revolution it preaches. Intense efforts are being made to mobilize the youth, in both the towns and the countryside, in the fight against Upper Volta's feudalistic social order. Sankara has startled some of his countrymen by raising themes long absent from political debate in the country. One such issue hammered home by Sankara is the place of Voltaic women in the revolution. Speaking to a gathering of women in Ouagadougou, he began by saying that he would not keep them for long "since their reactionary husbands were at home waiting for supper." Voltaics were not used to language such as, "To make a woman believe that she is inferior to man is just another method of exploitation and domination. The women are considered as baby-making machines . . . women are a source of profit to exploitative men . . . a source of pleasure."

After consolidating his position on the home front, President Sankara has set out to break Upper Volta's isolation in regional politics. Many of the moderate Francophone states were fearful of what they perceived as a Marxist-backed admirer of Libya as leader of Upper Volta. President Sankara showed his diplomatic acumen by quickly patching up relations with Mali, ending Upper Volta's veto against the latter's entry into the West African Monetary Union (UMOA). President Seyni Kountché of neighboring Niger was assured that the Voltaic revolution was not for export. Efforts were made to play down the Libyan connection, and the Soviet presence is very discreet in Ouagadougou.

Despite Voltaic attempts to paper over the cracks in bilateral relations with the Ivory Coast, a modus vivendi has not been worked out. President Houphouët-Boigny is fearful that the coming to power of Sankara could have destabilizing effects throughout the subregion and particularly in his own country. Moreover, he resents the growing rapprochement between Upper Volta and Ghana. The two revolutions have much in common, and at the end of last year joint military maneuvers were held as part of a broader military and political alliance.

Pragmatically, President Sankara has tried to smooth out the rough spots in Franco-Voltaic relations. He attended the last Franco-African summit conference, but stayed away from the official dinner following a French diplomatic faux pas: Sankara was met at the airport by Guy Penne, who had been accused of coordinating the May coup against him. Since then, the compromised French ambassador has been replaced and Paris has granted some financial assistance. And although Upper Volta is not a major preoccupation of American policy in Africa, the Reagan administration can only frown on the radical regime that has emerged, and United Nations Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick was reportedly annoyed by anti-U.S. votes by Upper Volta in the Security Council.

Perhaps the most immediate limits to the Voltaic revolution will be economic. Already the government is at loggerheads with the private trading sector that is fearful of possible nationalization measures. Consequently, it has practically halted new investments and kept imports to a minimum. The slowdown in economic activity has exacerbated the chronic unemployment situation in the country. Since the government derives most of its revenues from customs receipts, the go-slow import policy deprives it of valuable income. The struggle for control of the cereals market has also been bubbling just beneath the surface. To make things worse, the renewed Sahel drought will make 1984 a dark year for Voltaic agriculture.

Economic aggregates are all in the red and the financial hole is getting deeper. From CFA 52.2 billion in 1981, the trade deficit climbed to CFA 61 billion last year. The balance of payments deficit rose to over CFA 40 billion in 1983, against CFA 37.5 billion the previous year. The foreign debt crunch is beginning to hurt: from a CFA 5.6 billion debt repayment in 1983, Upper Volta will have to shell out around CFA 12 billion in 1985. (In 1981, $1 = CFA 271.73.) The burden is certainly too heavy for the fragile Voltaic economy. As Ghana did in 1983, Upper Volta will probably have to sit down with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) later this year to hammer out an economic stabilization program followed by financial credits. The condition imposed as a prerequisite for such assistance — cuts in subsidies on basic foodstuffs and government services plus severe financial constraints — will certainly be a bitter pill to swallow for the Voltaic regime, but alternatives are limited. If an agreement is worked out with the IMF, the Paris Club will then meet to discuss the restructuring of Upper Volta's foreign debt.

Senior Voltaic officials reckon that the physical defense of the revolution is still the top priority. They point out that opposition forces abroad as well as in the country have not been idle since last August and that they can count on powerful backers. The fear of mercenary intervention is also strong in ruling circles, leading to a curfew and tight security control on the roads and in the airport. The Entente Council zone, where important leaders reside, is ringed off from traffic and armed guards nervously patrol the area.

The opposition forces, yet to organize a political party or propose a platform, are composed of military and civilian leaders of the CMRPN and the CSP. Their principal base of action is the Ivory Coast, where over a million Voltaic migrant workers are employed, giving them the opportunity to recruit anti-Sankara forces. The opposition is closely scrutinizing the revolutionary process in search of signs of cracks developing in the disparate coalition of left-wing forces that make up the government, and they are awaiting the possible erosion of the CNR's mass political base.

President Sankara has shown that he is not blinded by revolutionary rhetoric and is capable of adapting his program and approach to concrete Voltaic realities. His personal charisma is intact and the group of young officers around him still are popular. Ultimately, it will be the tight unity of these military leaders that will guarantee the regime's stability. Nevertheless, President Sankara is fully cognizant of the fact that large segments of the Voltaic population — especially youth, workers, and junior civil servants — are expecting the revolution to improve their living conditions. The same holds true in the countryside, but direct pressure from the rural areas on the government is less important. For the Sankara regime, 1984 will mark the end of its grace period. It will have to demonstrate to the population that it can not only dismantle old political and economic structures, but also effectively mobilize the country for the future. □

Photo: Penny Darko

Rawlings and Sankara reviewing troops in Pô, Upper Volta, during late 1983 joint military maneuvers

Hard Times for an African Success Story

BY GEORGE McFARLANE

Ivory Coast's President, Félix Houphouët-Boigny, told his countrymen last December that although the year 1983 had been difficult for most Ivorians, 1984 would be even worse. And as the year began, economic recession, government cash-flow problems, drought, and the question of political succession had helped to make his prediction an accurate one.

"LA CONJONCTURE"

As with most African nations, the Ivory Coast's current economic problems are due primarily to the severe drop in prices for raw materials, one of the effects of the world recession. In two years, revenues from the country's major exports — cocoa and coffee — dropped to 25 percent of their 1981 levels. And although prices were beginning to rise in early 1984, they were not keeping pace with the country's 14 percent rate of inflation.

The drop in revenues aggravated the country's debt burden. In December, the Ivorian government announced it was seeking to reschedule more than $1 billion in foreign debt falling due in 1984. Economists said an additional $1.2 billion of the country's estimated $7 billion external debt would fall due in 1985, necessitating another request for rescheduling.

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The debt problem was exacerbated by the continued rise of the U.S. dollar against the French franc, to which the Ivory Coast's CFA franc is pegged. According to private bankers in Abidjan, 40 percent of the government's external debt must be repaid in dollars. The dollar more than doubled in value against the CFA franc over the past three years.

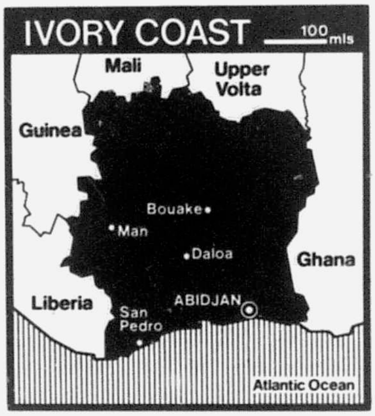
Economic hardships have led the government to engage in some serious belt-tightening. In 1983, the government announced an austerity budget that allowed increases only in the field of education and reduced the number of ministries from 35 to 28. It also began trying to collect overdue real estate and income taxes. In addition, the use of most official vehicles was restricted to business hours and official travel was reduced. Large numbers of civil servants were forced to retire. And the government launched investigations into charges of corruption in a number of agencies. It is common knowledge in Abidjan that several dozen officials in state-owned housing agencies are in prison on charges of diverting millions of dollars from public housing projects. Some of these detained are influential members of the political elite, but the president has vowed that no official will benefit from his protection and has given a free hand to the investigating commission composed primarily of young party cadres.

Such measures are likely to please the International Monetary Fund and other international financial institutions that are negotiating new measures to stabilize the Ivorian economy. However, analysts note that the economy has yet to weather the worst of the storm.

WAITING FOR RAIN

Drought in parts of north and central Ivory Coast is expected to cause a drop in cocoa production for 1984. Despite the predictions by speculators on the European trading exchanges, Ivorian cocoa production this season is not expected to surpass 350,000 tons. If true, demand for cocoa on the world market would exceed supply for the first time in several years.

The drought is also causing severe power shortages in the country. The rivers powering the country's three hydroelectric dams have been reduced to mere streams by drought in the north. As a result, only one dam is currently operating, and that at only 30 percent of



capacity. The situation is not expected to improve markedly until the rains come, it is hoped, in June.

A thermal unit at Vridi in Abidjan, operating at full capacity, is supplying 25 percent of the country's needs, but that is not enough to prevent a serious shortfall. The result has been a program of rotating power cuts that, aside from inconveniencing local residents, has forced a reduction in industrial production. Most factories have been ordered to reduce electrical consumption by at least one-third or face mandatory cuts. And a shortage of diesel fuel, due to a breakdown at the Vridi refinery, has made it difficult for companies to power their auxiliary generators. As a result, some factories in the Abidjan area are operating three days a week. Others have closed down temporarily, causing a rise in unemployment.

The drop in spending by government and private industry has caused a significant fall in business activity. Wholesalers and retailers alike are reporting losses. Most foreign businesses have reduced their inventories and staffs. And although most say they would like to remain in Ivory Coast, high rents and operating costs are causing some to consider closing regional offices and warehouses in the country if the situation does not improve in the next year.

In addition, offshore oil exploration has virtually ceased. The drop in petroleum prices has sent exploration crews and their suppliers south to the Congo, Angola, and Gabon, where drilling has been more lucrative. Two offshore fields continue to produce an estimated 35,000 to 50,000 barrels per day, but the rise in consumption due to the power shortages has once again made Ivory Coast a net importer of oil.

Nevertheless, the Ivorian government has addressed its problems with more responsibility than many African nations and the austerity measures are said to have produced an increase in efficiency. As President Houphouët-Boigny remarked during his New Year's address, "la conjoncture," as the crisis is called, is a good thing, "because it will make Ivorians economize" on their resources. Indeed, conspicuous consumption is far less fashionable in Abidjan than in previous years. The luxury cars are somewhat less in evidence and champagne celebrations at Abidjan's posh restaurants are less frequent.

The economic problems, however, have weakened confidence among foreign investors, and underscored the uncertainty of political succession in the country.

APRÈS "LE VIEUX"

Unlike Cameroon and Senegal, which have undergone their political transitions and are now led by young, highly respected technocrats, Ivorian politics are still dominated by the country's founding father, "Le Vieux," as he is affectionately known, who, as he approaches his eightieth birthday, has no designated successor. The uncertainty has caused Ivory Coast to fall in foreign investors' political risk ratings.

The current economic problems, moreover, make it all the more difficult for President Houphouët-Boigny to retire. However, during a visit to London in mid-1983, the president hinted at the way he intends to designate his political heir.

The position of vice-president has been that of designated successor since its creation at the 1980 congress of Ivory Coast's sole legal party, the Democratic Party. However, the position has never been filled. During the trip to London, in remarks that were widely reported at home in the government-owned media, Houphouët-Boigny said the country would have a vice-president by 1985, who would be chosen by the party. The remark was widely interpreted to mean that the party would choose the vice-president at its next congress. Many politically savvy Ivorians believe the remark also meant that the president intends to stand for reelection in 1985 if he continues to enjoy his remarkably robust health. Whether the president would complete the five-year term or retire à la Senghor in mid-term remains a popular topic of

Photo: Beryl Goldberg

Cocoa harvesting: Drought will cause a drop in cocoa production in 1984 discussion at cocktail parties and political rump sessions throughout the country.

The situation has not helped to calm the queasy stomachs of foreign investors and diplomatic observers who worry about a political vacuum in the next few years. Indeed, the battle for the succession is being heatedly waged behind the staid façade of the party, and virtually every political issue these days leads to a dispute between the potential candidates for the vice-presidency.

Among the possible successors often mentioned are such veteran politicians as Mathieu Ekra and August Denise, who often stand in as acting president when "Le Vieux" is unavailable. However, they also are considered elderly and lack the president's charisma and political ability. Several others occasionally mentioned are young technocrats who were politically "educated" by the president, such as Balla Keita, Denis Bra-Kanon, and Dona Fologo, ministers of education, agriculture, and maritime affairs, respectively. However, these officials owe most of their power to their appointed positions and are considered by many at this time to lack the broad political support needed to obtain the position.

At present, one of the most likely possibilities is Henri Konan-Bédié, president of the National Assembly, who has served in a number of capacities in the cabinet and is an influential member of the party's political bureau. Konan-Bédié has strong support in the Assembly and has demonstrated an ability to turn local issues into national ones. One of his major opponents is Emmanuel Dioulo, mayor of Abidjan, who is considered to be dynamic and charismatic and is said to have ties with the president's inner circle. Dioulo has a significant number of supporters within the Assembly, but he is not a member of the political bureau. Consequently, others are often able to take credit for his ideas.

Despite all the jockeying for position and the posturing by certain visible frontrunners, most knowledgeable Ivorians believe that the choice of successor has not been made yet. When it is made, they say, it will be the president who makes it, as long as his health and political stamina remain strong. Meanwhile, the media, which remains tightly controlled by the government, continues to remind Ivorians that they can expect to have a vice-president next year, but that otherwise they should not be concerned by the "invisible" question.


Photo: Beryl Goldberg

In 1983, coffee revenues dropped to 25% of their 1981 levels

FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS

Political stability, aside from its economic advantages, has meant stable foreign relations for the Ivory Coast. The country continues to maintain good relations with most nations of the industrialized world. It also plays an important role in West African affairs, if a more subdued one in pan-African fora.

Relations with France, the former colonial power, are excellent, based on longstanding political and economic ties and enhanced in recent years by the personal friendship between Houphouët-Boigny and President François Mitterrand. Several thousand French "coopérants" work in Ivorian ministries, public service facilities, and schools. France remains Ivory Coast's primary trading partner. And the private French presence in the country is still the largest in Africa, though somewhat diminished from the peak of 50,000 French citizens three years ago.

Despite differences over cocoa pricing policies and the role of speculators in general in the world commodity markets, relations with the United States continue to be good. And although the two governments may differ, at least publicly, on such matters as Namibia's independence and South Africa's apartheid policies, they agree on the role of free enterprise in economic development, the perceived dangers of communism, and what they consider to be Libya's destabilizing influence on the continent. An estimated 1,000 Americans live in Ivory Coast and more than 60 private enterprises are licensed to operate in the country, primarily in the areas of petroleum, manufacturing, banking, and business supply.

West Germany and Britain are considered good friends, although they occupy less important trading positions. However, the Ivorian government is trying to improve trade with these nations. Numerous trading delegations have visited Ivory Coast in the past two years and Houphouët-Boigny has paid highly publicized visits to both nations in the past year.

Japan remains primarily an economic partner and has taken a large share of the Ivorian market for automobiles and electronic products. The Ivorian government has also announced that in 1985, a Japanese firm is to build a plant that will manufacture stereos, television sets, and other electronic products for marketing throughout West Africa.

Relations with the nations of West Africa for the most part are positive. Ivory Coast plays a leadership role in the affairs of the Francophone African community, and enjoys excellent relations with Togo, Guinea, Senegal, Cameroon, Chad, Mali, and Niger. Relations with the Provisional National Defense Council government in neighboring Ghana, and with Liberia, remain cool, but are warming. The one-day visit to Yamoussoukro last December by Ghana's head of state, Flight Lieutenant Jerry J. Rawlings, received a great deal of attention in the Ivorian media, which sought to underscore the two nations' similarity of views on agricultural pricing policies and economic self-sufficiency, rather than highlighting political and ideological differences.

Relations with Upper Volta, however, remain strained and both Houphouët-Boigny and Capt. Thomas Sankara have publicly snubbed each other in recent months. Ivorian officials fear the repercussions of the Voltaic revolution at home and are apprehensive over the close relationship between the Voltaic and Ghanaian governments, whose armed forces conducted joint military exercises in November in Pô in the presence of Ivorian military observers, and Sankara's initially warm relations with Libya. The government of Upper Volta, for its part, fears antigovernment elements might be allowed to infiltrate Upper Volta from Ivory Coast, and that the more than one million Voltaic citizens working in Ivory Coast could be the victims in the event of a confrontation. In addition, Upper Volta is linked to the sea primarily by Ivory Coast's highly developed infrastructure. Although Ouagadougou's friendly relations with Ghana could provide alternative outlets, Ghana's desperate economic situation renders it less able to help than Upper Volta's traditional Ivorian partner.


Photo: Ghana Info Services

Flt. Lt. Jerry Rawlings of Ghana with President Houphouët-Boigny during December visit to Yamoussoukro: Relations are warming

Ivory Coast's economic problems are causing concern in many West African capitals because of the large number of foreign workers there. In fact, one out of every four persons living in Ivory Coast is a foreigner, most of whom are West African. Members of these communities have expressed great fear that as the Ivorian economy stagnates, the government may begin pressuring foreigners to leave in order to provide more jobs for its own citizens.

Indeed, the government has been placing greater emphasis on its "Ivorianization" campaign. Firms are finding it increasingly difficult to obtain authorization from the government to issue the standard two-year contracts for non-Ivorian workers in white-collar positions.

However, Ivorians acknowledge that non-Ivorian labor, particularly in the areas of construction and agriculture, has helped to make the country what it is today. And President Houphouët-Boigny underscored the feeling in his national day speech in December by saying Ivory Coast would remain a "land of welcome" to foreigners.

Nevertheless, Ivory Coast is going through its most difficult times since independence, and its economy, according to experts, has yet to "bottom out." The Ivorian government appears willing to continue to cooperate with its neighbors and seek outside assistance to address its problems, however. And that attitude, combined with the growing technical and managerial expertise of its leadership, should leave it well placed to learn from past mistakes and recover before most of its neighbors do. At that point, it is hoped, the same maturity would assist Ivorian leaders in their next important task — choosing the individual to carry on the imposing role of the founding father and lead the nation into its second quarter century. □

Uganda's Security Nightmare

BY RICK WELLS

Despite the continued international goodwill President Milton Obote enjoys as a result of his efforts to rebuild an economy shattered by years of chaotic and bloody misrule under Idi Amin, doubts persist in Uganda over his ability to weather the persistent challenges and setbacks that threaten the country's stability and long-term development, and could undo all progress made at any time.

Recent events illustrate the point all too well. In the same week that Uganda's aid donors met in Paris (January 26) to approve further loans of \$435 million in 1984 and \$440 million in 1985, four Europeans were murdered by uniformed gunmen just outside Kampala and two aid workers were released following 17 days of captivity in the bush at the hands of antigovernment guerrillas.

The killing of the three Swiss and one Briton along the road from Kampala to the Masi Sailing Club on the northern shore of Lake Victoria appeared to be without motive. Although armed robberies of Ugandans and expatriates alike are common, it was the worst incidence of violence directed against the white community since the days of Amin.

The timing of both events, however, seemed more than just coincidental. The government was quick to blame "dissidents" for both the abductions and the killings, saying they were carried out "to embarrass the government delegation in Paris . . . and to discourage expatriate experts from coming to Uganda."

While neither officially confirming nor denying the abductions, representatives of the rebel National Resistance Army (NRA), which has been fighting to topple the Obote regime from the bush for the last three years, denied responsibility for the killings and blamed them on "murderous" soldiers of Obote's army.

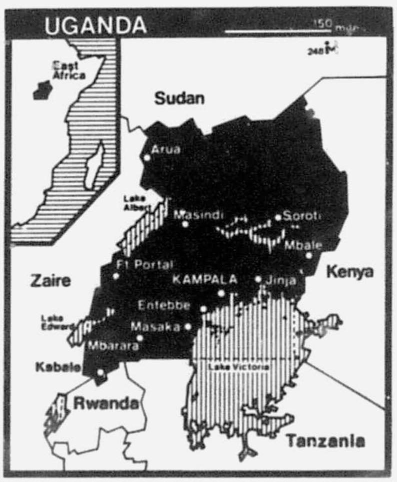
In spite of the donors' vote of confidence in Obote, a communiqué issued by the Consultative Group on Uganda after the Paris meeting admitted that "despite improvements in the internal security situation since the previous Consultative Group meeting, incidents which threaten law and order continue to occur."

At the time of this writing, the massacre of some 30 villagers, mostly women and children, hacked to pieces with knives and machetes by unidentified thugs in uniform, was reported to have occurred at Muduuma, about 20 miles southwest of Kampala. Many such incidents go unreported and it is usually impossible to determine the culprits.

The government has managed to greatly improve security in the capital, Kampala, over the last year, but taken as a whole, the endemic violence of the country's past keeps returning to plague the present. At the end of December, a Kenyan tribe went on the rampage in the northeast of the country, leaving some 13 dead and 10,000 homeless. A few days previously, Ugandan Karamajong rustled cattle from a large farm and by the time order was restored, 250 government soldiers were dead. In the same month, 6,000 Ugandans of Rwandan origin fled from their homes in the west of the country as a result of harassment by local officials. A year earlier, in October 1982, 35,000 people sought refuge in Rwanda and a further 50,000 moved within Uganda itself.

But the worst trouble spot to come to light during the last year was in the three districts of Luwero, Mpigi, and Mubende, in a half circle around Kampala. In the wake of a major army offensive against antigovernment rebels launched at the end of last year, more than 100,000 people (largely Bagandas) who fled their homes were herded into makeshift camps.

During two separate visits into Luwero district at the end of last year, the true extent of the devastation was revealed. The occupants of the camps were mainly women, children, and old men, mostly in pitiful condition. I was told that, rather than be taken for "bandits" or rebel sympathizers by the army, masses had fled into the bush, while others — up to 30,000 according



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to one aid source — had gone to Kampala to lie low until it seemed safe to return.

But as the whole region of Luwero, Mpigi, and Mubende voted for the opposition Democratic Party in the December 1980 election and served as the home base for the rebels since they began their operations, it is probable that many innocent people who did not join the rebels would have been regarded as such by the army and dealt with accordingly. The former defense minister, Yoweri Museveni, and his supporters formed the National Resistance Army and started a guerrilla war against the Uganda People's Congress government from the bush, protesting that the elections that brought Obote back to power were rigged.

Not far from Kampala, traveling north along the Gulu road to the town of Ouwero, there were signs that people had begun to return to the area — to rebuild their homes and start clearing the land to plant new crops. The overall impression, though, is that the abundantly rich and fertile countryside has been thorougly depopulated. What were once some of the best coffee plantations in the country have reverted to bush; whole villages have been destroyed and homes looted; and in the camps themselves, people starve and children die of commonplace illnesses.

It is hard for aid workers to keep track of those in the camps — new ones spring up overnight as the sphere of military operations shifts — and what help can be provided is mostly too little and too late. A headcount of beneficiaries done by the Red Cross at the start of January revealed that 77,572 people are receiving assistance in 21 camps. This figure excludes a number of camps that are known to exist but that lie in restricted zones beyond their reach.

It was in April last year that the discovery of one camp by an aid official provoked an international outcry and embarrassed the government into opening up the area. Even so, it was not until November that the International Red Cross, despite repeated requests, was allowed to return to Uganda (having been told earlier to leave the country).

President Obote's appeal for international assistance for the displaced people in September was seen as a face-saving exercise. He must have known the bloody consequences of sending what is often characterized as an ill-disciplined and trigger-happy Ugandan army into the area.

In November, the prime minister, Otema Alimadi, whose office is in charge of the government relief operations, said on television that some 750,000 people had been displaced by army-guerrilla clashes. He added that nearly 90,000 houses and farms had been damaged, destroyed, or looted and that the conditions of those who had fled was deplorable.

The situation at present remains very unclear. Aid workers who have flooded in since the area was opened up struggle against the odds to provide people with basic supplies of daily food and medicine. The government says that the dissidents have been all but routed and that the area is now safe for people to return to their homes. But the continued arrival of displaced people at camps and reports of frequent ambushes along the main roads suggest otherwise.

Diplomats in Kampala agree that the rebels have taken a thorough beating by the army (with North Korean help) over the last year, and that a resort to terror tactics, such as the murder of the four Europeans, may be a last desperate effort to destabilize the government.

As far as the aid agencies are concerned, the need for emergency relief will continue for at least six months. Even if people do leave the camps and return home, they need roofs to shelter under, tools to clear their land, and food until they can subsist on their own. As a result, agencies have strongly opposed government attempts to disband camps without warning as a means of solving the problem.

A large part of the problem as the agencies see it lies with the continuing presence of army detachments in the camps and at roadblocks. Bored, unpaid, and ill-fed, the soldiers have to live off the land just as the local people do. Camp residents complain of frequent rapings by the soldiers who also requisition aid supplies when possible. The sooner they can be returned to barracks and replaced by ordinary police, if necessary, the better.

It has to be said that many of President Obote's problems are not of his own making. Uganda's economic, political, and social order was decimated by the dictatorship of Amin, who seized power in 1971 from Obote, Uganda's first president after independence from Britain in 1962. The three interim governments that were installed after the invasion of Uganda by the Tanzanian army to oust Amin singularly failed to stop the rot.

On returning to power, therefore, after the December 1980 elections, Obote faced a daunting task and had much to prove. His starting point was the economy. Six months after taking office and acting as his own finance minister, Obote introduced a very radi-

Photo: T.R. Lansner

President Obote *(right)*, Vice-President Muwanga *(center)*, and the late Gen. Ojok at independence celebrations in 1981: Ojok's death was a major blow to Obote

cal package of monetary and fiscal reforms, made all the more remarkable considering his previous socialist stance on such matters. These included a massive effective devaluation of the shilling (90 percent overnight); large increases in prices paid to producers of coffee (which accounts for 90 percent of export earnings), tea, and tobacco; the dismantling of price controls; and International Monetary Fund (IMF)-enforced ceilings on government spending. In the same month, agreement was reached with the IMF on a 13-month program worth 112.5 million in special drawing rights (SDRs). Two further standby facilities and the assumption of a further $64.6 million in 1984 tally with Uganda's reputation as the "good child" of the IMF.

Indeed the World Bank and IMF have been well pleased with Obote's efforts. Adhering to these tough measures has had positive effects, such as a substantial reduction in the rate of inflation (now down to around 30 percent from over 100 percent three years ago) and a marked increase in agricultural production.

The revised recovery program (1983-85) for the economy launched by the government in November of last year — with its heavy emphasis on agriculture, curbs on nonessential imports, and promotion of investment schemes — was seen as a more realistic version of the "emergency" plan drawn up in April 1982. Also designed to convince the country's aid donors that the period of short-term emergency rehabilitation was over and that the emphasis would now be on longer term development, it would appear to have succeeded. A communiqué issued by the Consultative Group on Uganda at the end of the successful Paris meeting described the revised recovery program as "a sound document."

There are some hitches, however. Concern is expressed by officials in Kampala over the continuing viability of the two-tier exchange rate system (known locally as Window I and Window II) introduced with IMF approval in August 1982. This was the second major attempt, following the initial floating of the shilling, toward bringing the hugely overvalued currency under control. At the time of the country's liberation in April 1979, the shilling was being traded at 30 to 40 times the official rate.

The bulk of the country's scarce foreign exchange earnings is used for a list of essential items (including loan repayment and oil) and is granted from Window I at the official rate, determined each week by the central and commercial banks. The second source of dollars for those seeking goods and services not on the list is via Window II — a weekly auction of $3 million held by the central bank — where the price is determined by the level of bids made over the previous week.

While hoping to soak up some of the huge surplus of shillings in the country issued under Amin's time, the main aim of Window II (at least in the eyes of the World Bank and IMF) was to provide dollars for local industry to set up and re-equip with spare parts and so forth. The system was always meant to be temporary and by now it was hoped the two rates would have unified, having settled at a reasonable level according to market forces. However, it has taken longer than expected for the rates to unify (now predicted to happen in July 1984), and lack of control over who bids for dollars at the weekly auction has pushed up the Window II price.

The thirst for dollars in neighboring Kenya has produced a sizable cross-border trade in currencies. While Ugandans are happy to exchange Kenyan for Ugandan shillings to buy Kenyan goods that are scarce in Uganda, Kenyans are able to procure a local agent to bid for precious dollars on their behalf with Ugandan shillings.

Also, without adequate incentives for local industrialists, the dollars have largely been spent on a huge array of nonessential imported luxury goods, ranging from biscuits and spaghetti to electrical kitchen gadgets, to supply among others the growing army of aid workers in Kampala.

Strolling around the potholed streets of the capital (a taxi ride is a bone-shattering experience), an atmosphere of change and bustle has emerged, residents say, over the last year. More cars, newly painted shopfronts, and the return of some Asians (all of whom were expelled under Amin) provide the evidence for this gradual upsurge in general economic activity. The self-imposed curfew after nightfall has eased and people stay out at friends' houses or downtown bars until the early hours of the morning.

For the majority of Ugandans, life remains a struggle. Salaries have lagged way behind the rise in living costs, with the basic monthly wage providing perhaps a week's supply of food for a family. All these contradictions that are Uganda today are reflected in the internal politics of the country which, for the outsider unused to the air of intrigue and rumor that exists among Kampala's close-knit community, are at best confusing.

Conspiracy theories abound and diplomats in Kampala admit to the probability of a power struggle going on in the higher echelons of the ruling UPC party. In this respect, the loss of his all-powerful ally at the head of the armed forces and the coffee board, Major General Ojok, in a fatal helicopter crash last December, must be seen as a major blow to the president.

The fact that opposition parties and newspapers highly critical of the UPC government are allowed to exist at all is a plus point and at least gives a semblance of democracy. In the last week of January, the leader of the opposition Democratic Party said in a public statement that an estimated 100,000 people have been killed in Uganda since the 1980 elections — some by common criminals, some by antigovernment guerrillas, and some by "our state officers."

While much of the blame for the opposition's lack of popular support can be placed on an absence of sound alternative policies and internal strife, the boycotting of by-elections at the end of last year by the Democratic Party and complaints by the tiny Conservative Party of harassment and electoral malpractices, suggest a continuing lack of confidence in the democratic process.

But until the government at least shows greater intentions of resolving the security situation outside Kampala and of allowing a greater sense of democratic freedom to develop, the daily tragedy of many Ugandans' lives will continue and the patience of an ever-supportive international community is in danger of being eroded. □

AFRICAN UPDATE

Monitoring economic and political developments around the Continent

March-April 1984

Angola and Mozambique pressed into talks with South Africa

Trying to appear more flexible, South Africa is moderating, at least for the time being, its belligerent stance toward Mozambique and Angola. American diplomacy has reportedly played a role in Pretoria's negotiations with both countries by pressuring the South Africans into trying a "disengagement" of their troops from Angola and by persuading Mozambique to negotiate security terms with Pretoria.

The South African overtures have been supported by many countries, including the frontline states. The Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC), which met in early February in Lusaka, issued a communiqué which welcomed "signs of a less aggressive stance" from Pretoria and called for "continued international pressure" on South Africa to effect peaceful change in the region.

Neither the ANC nor Swapo, which usually attend SADCC meetings as observers, was invited to the last session.

Concessions from Mozambique

South Africa and Mozambique have been discussing economic links, the Cabora-Bassa hydroelectric complex, and tourism. The most important issue, however, is mutual security. South African Foreign Minister Roelof Botha made no secret of the fact that the other three issues amount to little more than a carrot to demonstrate what could be gained by Mozambique's acceptance of Pretoria's conditions for security.

Mozambique is pleading with South Africa to withdraw support from the Mozambique National Resistance (MNR), a group of rebels seeking to overthrow the government of President Samora Machel. The MNR's guerrilla activities have escalated during the recent drought, which is the worst in Mozambique's history, and the rebel offensive has strained the country's resources past the breaking point.

South Africa, on the other hand, is asking Mozambique to halt activities by the African National Congress. The South Africans maintain that Maputo is helping ANC guerrillas filter across the border, while Mozambique says it merely provides political and diplomatic support for the ANC.

Officially, Pretoria denies aiding the MNR, but in a tacit acknowledgement of its influence, the South African government helped negotiate the release in late January of 12 Soviet mining technicians captured and held by the MNR.

In an apparent capitulation to South Africa's terms, Mozambique in early February expelled Joe Slovo, the white South African who is second-in-command of the ANC's military wing.

Some Maputo officials reportedly said that the Reagan administration's "constructive engagement" policy was a factor in persuading Pretoria to re-examine its attitude toward Mozambique.

Pretoria's ability and willingness to control the MNR must be questioned, however. In late January, just a week after the negotiations began, the MNR ambushed a civilian bus and killed at least 27 people. And in early February, the rebels claimed to have destroyed military bases near the capital and to have killed more than 150 government troops in five provinces.

Withdrawal from Angola

In mid-January, South Africa began withdrawing its forces from Angola. The withdrawal was to be carried out in two stages. The troops

Continued on next page

U.S. seeks emergency food aid to Africa

The Reagan administration has requested an additional $90 million appropriation from Congress for famine relief in Africa. Some legislators, however, feel that the request is inadequate, and they have sponsored bills asking for increases up to $300 million.

In the Senate, Rudy Boschwitz (R-Minn.) is sponsoring a similar bill which asks for $150 million. Rep. Ted Weiss (D-N.Y.) has introduced a bill in the House asking for a total of $300 million in food aid and $50 million in non-food assistance for Africa.

The Reagan administration's request for $90 million is thought to be the absolute minimum that the U.S. should supply based on UN Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) requests. Legislative aides have commented that the $90 million does not take into account any future contingencies and that it is not enough to allow the U.S. to play its "traditional leadership role" in assistance to the Third World.

The $90 million would cover a portion of the 3.3 million metric tons of food aid that, according to the FAO, is needed by 24 African countries this year. Of that amount, 1.7 million tons have already been pledged.

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) opposes the higher figures, claiming that it would be difficult to efficiently distribute so much aid.

To avert widespread famine, 75 percent of the food deficit must be delivered to Africa by June. Therefore, although the bills have wide support, a compromise bill must pass through Congress and be signed by the President by April. □

Talks *continued*

which had participated in "Operation Askari," the six-week incursion that brought South African troops over 150 miles into Angolan territory, were the first to be pulled back. The South African government then announced that it was beginning to withdraw the forces which had been occupying southern Angola since 1981. There was no independent confirmation of that move.

South African Prime Minister Pieter Botha said the military withdrawal was "a preparatory step to having a ceasefire" in Namibia. Western diplomats were quietly optimistic about the chances of achieving a true ceasefire. Angolan President José Eduardo dos Santos said that he welcomed the move, so long as South Africa was prepared to implement the UN plan for Namibian independence. Swapo's president, Sam Nujoma, after calling the move "a piece of political nonsense," later said he was willing to discuss a ceasefire.

American diplomats hope that the disengagement, which amounts to a de facto ceasefire, will lead to a resumption of the negotiations on Namibia's independence.

Frank Wisner, a senior aide to Chester Crocker, the assistant secretary of state for African affairs, met in mid-January with Angolan officials in Cape Verde to persuade them to accept South Africa's offer of a ceasefire. In his announcement of the disengagement on January 31, Botha said he had received unspecified "assurances" from the U.S.

The stumbling block in the Namibia negotiations continues to be South Africa's insistence, supported by the U.S., that Angola send home an estimated 25,000 Cuban troops—an issue that is not part of the UN plan already approved by all sides. □

WESTERN AFRICA

Secessionist agitation grows in Casamance region of Senegal

In late 1983, more than forty leaders of the Movement of the Democratic Forces of Casamance (MFDC) were tried on charges that they had organized massive demonstrations in 1982 calling for the independence of the Casamance region, which is pinched between the Gambia river and the Guinea-Bissau border. The leader of the secessionists, a Catholic priest, Abbé Augustin Diamacoune Senghor, was sentenced to five years in prison "for offenses against territorial integrity." Shortly thereafter, three policemen were killed near Ziguinchor, the capital of the Casamance region, when they tried to disperse protests against the trial of the MFDC leaders. Ten days later, MFDC militants armed with machetes and firearms ambushed government security forces in Ziguinchor. In two hours of fighting, 24 people were killed—including at least four policemen—and more than 80 injured, according to a government statement; but civilian deaths may have been considerably higher than the official figure.

Voices of separatism

The MFDC is a new organization, but Casamance has long insisted on its own regional identity. Casamance is cut off from the rest of Senegal by the Gambia river, which has only a single ferry crossing. Colonized originally by the Portuguese, it became part of French Senegal only in 1866. The region is extremely fertile and grows a disproportionate share of Senegal's food, but many Casamancians claim that most government funds for development have been distributed elsewhere. Unlike the rest of Senegal, in which Islam is the predominant religion, much of Casamance still follows traditional African faiths. Furthermore, most Casamancians have a closer ethnic and linguistic affinity to the peoples of neighboring Guinea-Bissau than to the Wolof ethnic group which is predominant elsewhere in Senegal.

Casamancian separatism can be traced back to 1943, when Aliin Sitowe Diatta, a Casamancian woman working as a housekeeper in Dakar, "heard voices" calling upon her to return home. She went back to Casamance and preached in the villages, exhorting the people to refuse to pay taxes to the French, or to grow groundnuts for them, or to serve the French army in foreign wars. The colonial administration seized her and deported her to Mali. She was only 23 at the time, but her fate remains a mystery, and she has become a symbol of the Casaman-

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Continuing drought in Mauritania raises hopes that slavery will be abolished

For Mauritania, 1983 was a year of devastating drought coming on the heels of 12 years of sustained severe drought. The country received an average total of 50mm of rain, half the usual marginal rainfall. Ninety percent of its food must now be imported, and 70 percent of those imports come in the form of gifts. The price of livestock, the basis of the nomadic economy, fell 80 percent between October and December last year as herders sought to get rid of their cattle before the last of the pasture land vanished and the waterholes dried up.

The result has been a rapid erosion of traditional nomadic life. Thirty years ago, 80 percent of the population of Mauritania were nomads, but most of the herders have now moved to Nouakchott or other towns in the southeast where, unable to find employment, they await handouts of relief food.

Despite its disastrous consequences, the drought may now succeed in doing what eighty years of pleas and legislation have failed to accomplish: By destroying the traditional economy, it may have finally forced the eradication of slavery. The slave owners can no longer meet their own needs, let alone those of their slaves. As the nomads find refuge in the towns, they are releasing their slaves to fend for themselves.

This is the view of Peter Davies of England's Anti-Slavery Society, who recently returned from a UN-sponsored trip to Mauritania. "Though I wouldn't wish this drought on anybody," Davies commented, "it really does give them the chance to restructure their society from the bottom upwards."

Slavery has been officially banned three times in Mauritania. The French made what has been described as "a half-hearted attempt" to do it in 1947. It was "abolished" again in 1960 by newly-independent Mauritania's constitution which proclaimed the rights of all citizens. In 1980, the government of President Mohamed Khouna Ould Haidalla announced the abolition of slavery and, according to most reports, has been reasonably vigilant in its efforts to stamp out the practice. But as Haidalla observed at the time of the most recent banning, "We are aware that a thousand-year-old social practice cannot be removed at the stroke of a pen." "What we truly need is a social revolution."

Slavery has long been part of Mauritania's complicated caste system. The dominant elite in Mauritanian society are the slave-owning White Moors of nomadic origin. Below them are a series of castes comprised of other nomadic groups which have been defeated by the Moors. They are followed by castes of artisans, musicians, and hunters. Thirty percent of the population are former slaves, also known as Haratines or Black Moors. Many of these people find themselves discriminated against, unable to find work, and often dependent on their former masters for favors and hand-outs. At the bottom of the caste system is the slave community, estimated in 1980 to number around 100,000 or 10 percent of the population.

Attempts to implement the final abolition have been hindered over the issue of compensation to former masters. A government decision to buy the slaves from the masters was vigorously protested by a Haratine group known as *El Hor* (free man), and compensation was recently ruled out of the question by the *ulema*, a group of Muslim jurists who interpret Koranic law. According to the Koran, only infidels may be taken as slaves,and that may be done only in a *jihad* or holy war. It is then a Muslim's duty to convert that slave to Islam. When a slave accepts Islam he must be released, compensated with food and clothes, and be treated as a brother. Since no Mauritanian can claim to have taken his slaves in a *jihad*, and since all of the slaves in Mauritania are Muslims, the *ulema* ruled that Mauritania has been violating the laws of Islam for centuries.

The clarification of the compensation issue has helped speed the abolitionist cause, and it is now expected that the UN mission which visited Mauritania in January will announce that slavery is being eliminated. The mission's report will be released to the working group on slavery in Geneva next August.

Davies, whose Anti-Slavery Society has been promoting the abolitionist cause since 1830, is optimistic despite the remaining obstacles to total abolition. "There is still going to be a problem since the slave masters are not used to doing manual work, and slaves are not used to coping on their own . . . . But this revolution forced upon them by external circumstances gives them a very good opportunity to eliminate slavery once and for all, and to unify the different castes, classes, and races. They're really all now on a sinking ship. They've got to get together in order to survive." □

Senegal *continued*

cian separatist movement.

In 1958, Casamance resisted Senegal's proposed inclusion in the French Community. Senegal's first opposition party drew most of its popular support from Casamance.

Senegambian Confederation

The attempted coup in 1981 against Gambian President Dawda K. Jawara found considerable sympathy in Casamance, for the coup leaders would have sought to integrate Casamance into the Gambia, ending the region's geographical isolation. The Senegalese armed forces swept into the Gambia and crushed the coup, partially out of concern that the Gambian rebels would attempt to annex Casamance. In exchange for their salvation of Jawara's government, the Senegalese extracted from him a commitment to the formation of the Senegambian Confederation, a union of the two countries which had long been discussed.

Many Casamancians are in favor of the federation, which would eliminate the awkward borders that isolate Casamance. The federation is being implemented very slowly, however, and the delays have revived the secessionist movement in Casamance with new force.

Although Senegalese President Abdou Diouf has increased the number of Casamancians in his cabinet and other government posts, the secessionist movement is likely to grow stronger and more violent unless the Senegambian Confederation can be realized.

Besides language and cultural differences between the anglophone Gambia and French-speaking Senegal, the main obstacle to the federation is economic. The Gambia has very low import duties, and huge quantities of goods are imported, with the excess being smuggled across the borders into Senegal. (A statistician estimated that in one year alone, the number of radios imported into the Gambia was seven times greater than the population.) A federation between the two countries would establish a unified customs rate, and merchants in both countries are adamantly opposed to the union, which would raise prices by eliminating contraband trade.

The unrest in Casamance has also been heightened by the drought in northern Senegal, which has driven herdsmen southward in search of grazing land for their livestock. Tension has developed between the migrant northerners and the Casamancian herdsmen, and the situation may have been aggravated by members of the Manodje ethnic group in Casamance, who have been accused of stealing livestock and smuggling them into Guinea-Bissau.

The drought and the secessionist violence come at a time when Senegal's economic difficulties are deepening. In late 1983, Diouf reduced subsidies on staple foods and cut back public-sector employment, which consumes more than half of the national budget. The "Paris Club" recently rescheduled payments on debts coming due in 1984, after having agreed to a similar rescheduling of debts which came due in 1982-83. Further repayments on a $90 million debt have been spread over the next seven years.

The drought and the ailing economy make Casamance more important than ever. While agricultural production elsewhere in Senegal has been withered by drought, Casamance remains fertile. The government in Dakar is worried that the Casamance violence may grow worse, and rallies have been held in support of national unity. Assane Seck, vice president of the National Assembly, a close ally of Diouf, and the most prominent Casamancian in the national government, has urged the people of his home region to reject the MFDC. Western observers, however, are concerned that the heavy civilian casualties in December may have permanently escalated the tensions in Casamance. □

GHANA: Drought threatens recovery

• Despite the substantial Western financial backing won by the Ghanaian government for its economic recovery program late last year, the coming months hold little hope for a rapid improvement in the state of the Ghanaian economy, primarily because of continuing unfavorable climatic conditions which have hurt agricultural production and affected industrial output.

On the second anniversary of Ghana's December 31st revolution, Flt.-Lt. Jerry Rawlings, chairman of the Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC), warned in a broadcast to the nation that "the first eight months of 1984 . . . are going to be difficult for us . . . the result of the poor harvests of 1983 which have left us without stocks sufficient to carry us over the lean season."

The drought which is afflicting 36 African countries has severely affected Ghana's 1983 harvests, as have bushfires which ravaged the northern part of the country. Food shortages are likely in 1984, despite a PNDC campaign to encourage agricultural production which resulted in a 13 percent increase in acreage under cultivation in 1983.

In January, Dr. Kwesi Botchwey, the PNDC secretary for finance and economic planning, said that in order to avoid an impending food crisis, "supplementary assistance from the international community will be required." Ghana is one of six African nations that will benefit from the U.S. Agency for International Development's January approval of $32.7 million in food aid to combat malnutrition and starvation resulting from the drought, yet further assistance is required to avert what may be a 450,000 metric ton deficit in cereals alone.

Ghana's industrial production has also been severely affected by the drought. Low rainfall, causing an estimated 66 percent drop in the water level of the Volta Lake which feeds the Akosambo dam, has caused hydroelectricity shortages, necessitating power cuts. The Ghanaian government introduced a mandatory electricity rationing scheme last December, providing power on a rotational basis—21 hours off and 27 hours on.

The harsh effects of the drought appear to preclude any major recovery in the Ghanaian economy in 1984. However, the government's three-year economic program, which enabled it to secure pledges of $150 million from Western aid donors and a $337 million IMF credit late last year; its 90 percent devaluation of the cedi; and plans to promulgate an investment code have won it the confidence of previously hostile Western governments. According to Botchwey, "Given the right macro-economic incentives, better rains and with the necessary assistance of the donor community, both East and West, we can in the medium-term, improve the situation."

Western diplomatic sources in Accra recently praised the PNDC's "courageous" efforts to redress the years of economic decline, its discipline in adhering to the conditions laid out by the IMF and World Bank, and the expedience with which economic reforms have been carried out. Western governments have also been pleased by what they perceive as the PNDC's toning down of its earlier revolutionary and anti-imperialist rhetoric, and its emphasis on the need for increased productivity and economic self-reliance.

• Over the past several months, Rawlings has sought to bolster **relations with neighboring states**, some of which were initially hostile to the Ghanaian revolution, by visiting Mali, Upper Volta, Benin, Guinea, and Ivory Coast. Rawlings' meeting with Ivorian President Félix Houphouët-Boigny in December was an effort to ease regional tensions, and it is hoped that Ghana's borders with Ivory Coast will soon be reopened. Ghana closed its borders with its neighbors—Ivory Coast, Upper Volta, and Togo—in 1982 to combat cocoa smuggling. Only Upper Volta has thus far responded to the Ghanaian government's request that borders be reopened.

An improvement in Ghana's relations with Ivory Coast and Togo has been complicated by the presence in the two countries of Ghanaian exiles who are believed to be engaged in subversion. According to the PNDC secretary for foreign affairs, Obed Asamoah, Ivory Coast has assured Ghana that dissidents will not be allowed to use Ivorian territory to launch attacks against the Ghanaian government. This pledge has helped to ease the strain in relations between the two nations.

Relations with Togo, however, remain cool. Although Ghana has reopened four of its border posts along the common frontier, the Togolese government had not reciprocated as of late February. The validity of Ghanaian claims that Togo is harboring Ghanaian dissidents was supported when Radio Nigeria reported in early January that a ship carrying arms and ammunition to the exiles based in Lomé was intercepted and turned away by Togolese authorities.

While the Lomé government reportedly has threatened to arrest any group of Ghanaian exiles holding meetings on Togolese territory but has also stated that it cannot refuse political asylum to exiles, reports from the border areas indicated that ordinary Ghanaian citizens who were arriving in Lomé for commercial pursuits were being harassed and forced to return to Ghana. Citing the fact that last June's coup attempt against the Rawlings government was launched from Togo, Asamoah said, "It is very difficult to escape from the conclusion that if they are not aiding, then at least they are overlooking what these people are doing."

IVORY COAST: The fading miracle

• Although Ivory Coast is often referred to as "Africa's economic miracle," it is becoming increasingly evident that Ivory Coast's development has been achieved by mortgaging the national economy and accumulating public debt at a phenomenal pace.

During the "cocoa boom," which collapsed in 1982, President Félix Houphouët-Boigny's government borrowed from foreign sources on a massive scale. Ivorian debt doubled between 1980 and 1983, and one-third of all World Bank loans to West Africa in 1981-1982 were disbursed to Ivory Coast. By 1981, according to the World Bank, debt service was already consuming 11 percent of the gross national product, the highest ratio in Africa. Public external debt is now believed to exceed $7 billion, or 90 percent of the GNP and approximately $800 per capita. (The per capita GNP is $1200.)

At the end of 1983, Ivory Coast began discussions with the "London Club" of commercial banks and the "Paris Club" of creditor nations on rescheduling $1.25 billion of debt. The rescheduling was the first ever sought by Ivory Coast. For several years, Houphouët refused to reschedule the country's debt, fearing that the move would harm Ivory Coast's reputation for prosperity and stability. But almost 20 percent of the debt was scheduled to fall due in 1984, leaving Ivory Coast faced with what the *Financial Times* called "a dramatic bunching of loan maturities." Houphouët therefore had little choice but to reschedule. He did, however, impose a blackout on domestic reporting of the debt negotiations, and the rescheduling took on the nature of a state secret.

NIGERIA: Over a barrel

• Although their drive against corruption has gotten the most publicity, Nigeria's new military rulers are struggling with even larger economic issues: how to maximize Nigeria's oil revenues, and how to cope with billions of dollars of debt.

Nigeria's oil production is limited by OPEC quotas to 1.3 million barrels per day, a million barrels under its full production capacity. The glut of oil on the world market has caused Nigeria's oil revenues to fall drastically from their peak of more than $20 billion in 1980. Meanwhile, Nigeria's domestic oil consumption is increasing by approximately 10 percent annually, further reducing the country's foreign exchange earnings.

The government of Gen. Muhammed Buhari has asked OPEC to increase Nigeria's production quota to approximately two million barrels per day, a move which would substantially increase Nigeria's income. The increase in Nigeria's quota, if approved by OPEC, will compel other members of the cartel to cut back their production by an equivalent amount. During a mid-February visit to Nigeria, Sheikh Ahmed Zaki Yamani supported the request, saying that Nigeria should be given "preferential treatment by OPEC."

Unlike many other African countries, the government of Nigeria did not overborrow from foreign sources in recent years. But the fall in oil revenue has led to a shortage of foreign exchange and caused a trade debt crisis. The Nigerian national and state governments, as well as parastatals and private businesses, have been unable to pay their overseas suppliers. Nigerian governments and businesses pay their bills into the Central Bank in naira, but there is insufficient foreign exchange to remit the payments abroad. The backlog in payments on foreign contracts has burgeoned in the last two years, reaching an estimated $5-7 billion.

The civilian Nigerian government was able to obtain two refinancing agreements, one last July and one in September, to cover approximately $2 billion of the total. In January, Buhari's military government began new negotiations on refinancing $3 billion of the remaining trade arrears. The debt talks dragged on for several weeks, but by early February it appeared that an agreement

Press notes

• After Nigeria's New Year's coup, editorials in the Western press unanimously lamented "the death of democracy." The *New York Times* commented: "Africa's biggest democracy became Africa's biggest dictatorship last weekend." The *Financial Times* said that Nigeria had "represented the most important and vigorous example of a multi-party system on the continent," and the *Christian Science Monitor* said: "Of all black African nations, Nigeria seemed the most likely to grow into the first successful democracy."

In the following weeks, however, the new regime began to document the massive corruption which had thrived under the civilian government. The first press reports of the coup had been written from London and Abidjan, but as Western reporters were allowed to file from Lagos, they enthusiastically catalogued examples of corruption and the joyful public reaction to the coup.

In late January, the London *Times* noted that "a cultural gap has become apparent in the reactions to the military coup in Nigeria, in the West and in Nigeria itself." The moral indignation expressed by the Western press was based on the presumption that they knew what was best for Nigeria. They discovered in the weeks following the coup that they may have been wrong.

• An article in the February 13 issue of *The New Republic* by James North (a pseudonym) accuses the South African government of committing atrocities in Namibia. "The South African Army may have abandoned the hope of ever crushing SWAPO on the battlefield. It may have decided instead to deliberately kill or drive away masses of black civilians who provide SWAPO with its base of support." North cites the South African Army's own statistics on the number of people killed and the curious lack of prisoners from Namibia as "prima facie evidence that it has committed crimes of war."

would be reached. Nigeria was likely to agree to pay an interest rate one percent above the London Interbank Offered Rate (Libor).

The agreement on trade debt was a prelude to talks, scheduled to begin in Washington in mid-February, in which Nigeria will seek to obtain a $3 billion loan from the IMF. The devaluation of the naira, a precondition likely to be set by the IMF, was expected to be the main issue at the talks in Washington.

SIERRA LEONE: Varsity demonstrations

• A demonstration by students from Fourah Bay College turned into riots, looting, and burning in Freetown in mid-January. Three deaths and 60 injuries were reported as the protest, which began on the campus, swept down into the city. The students issued a series of demands as a gathering of the All People's Congress, the country's only political party, began.

Among the students' demands was that President Siaka Stevens retire. For the past three or four years Stevens has been hinting that he might step down, but in a magazine interview last December Stevens declared that he would remain in office until the "the economy is out of the woods . . . and conditions in the country are satisfactory." The Congress subsequently appointed Stevens President for Life.

A part of the students' statement read: "We now hear disturbing rumors that the purpose of this convention is to 'elect' a life leader for Sierra Leone. To call a convention for such a reason, under our present economic hardship, would be regarded by the students' union as an insult to the people of Sierra Leone. We demand a retirement. There are more pressing issues than the life leadership of individuals."

UPPER VOLTA: A new kind of trial

• In January, the "revolutionary popular tribunals" (TPRs), which were established in October, began hearing cases in Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso. More than 100 former officials of the Saye Zerbo and Sangoulé Lamizana governments were brought to trial. The trials were held in public and were broadcast over the radio in all major Voltaic languages.

Gen. Lamizana, who had been under house arrest for more than three years, was acquitted in a three-day trial of charges that he had bilked the treasury of more than $1 million.

The acquittal of Lamizana, one of the most notable figures ever brought to trial in Upper Volta, dispelled fears that the new tribunals constituted a "kangaroo court" which would violate the civil rights of the accused.

Although defendants appear before the TPR without right of counsel, they may produce evidence and call witnesses to testify on their behalf, and the TPR sits without an official prosecutor or permanent staff. The TPRs are not empowered to impose sentences of forced labor or the death penalty; banishment is considered the most severe sentence. The TPRs cannot entertain appeals, but petitions for reprieve may be submitted directly to President Thomas Sankara.

EASTERN AFRICA

Renewed relations create prospects and problems in E. Africa

As a preliminary step in reviving parts of the defunct East African Community (EAC), the three former members, Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania, must clear up about $180 million of the EAC's debts. The Community's major creditors are Britain, the U.S., and the World Bank.

Since most of the EAC's assets were appropriated by Kenya and Tanzania, those countries have agreed to divide the responsibility for the debts. The details are being arranged with the assistance of Victor Umbricht, the World Bank-appointed mediator who has been working patiently to untangle the Community's confusing financial affairs since 1977.

The first benefits to accrue from the new détente came from the opening of the Kenya-Tanzania border. The two countries have reached a series of agreements on the promotion of tourism and conservation of wildlife. Foreign tourists may now cross the borders freely, but they will be required to cash foreign exchange as no agreement has been reached on the convertibility of the East African currencies. This move is expected to increase revenues for both countries.

The opening of the border to Kenyans and Tanzanians has led to other problems, however. Before the breakup of the Community, the three countries shared a common currency, but since 1977, the Kenyan shilling has become substantially more valuable than the other two currencies. Though the Kenyan shilling currently trades at 13.7 to the dollar, and the official rate for the Tanzanian shilling is 12.6 to the dollar, one Kenyan shilling can bring ten Tanzanian shillings in open trading.

The closed border never stopped smuggling from taking place, but the opening of the border has led to increased flows of goods, and shortages of some products in Tanzania. Lured by Kenyan shillings, Tanzanian traders have sent soap, cooking oil, toothpaste, food, cattle, and medicine across the border. Tanzanian officials have said that the illicit trade has also forced the price of meat up by 30 to 100 percent in some areas.

• Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda have also agreed not to harbor dissidents who wish to carry out subversive activities across their borders. This has created some sticky problems for all three countries, which regularly granted refugee status to each other's dissidents.

Kenya's *Weekly Review* reported that agents of the Ugandan government have been forcibly repatriating Ugandans who have been living as refugees in Kenya. The refugees say that they suspect that the Kenyan government may have turned a blind eye to the abductions or may even be cooperating with the Ugandan agents.

One exile reported that he and three other refugees were stopped on a Nairobi street by men identifying themselves as Kenyan special branch police. The "police" claimed that they wanted to question the men in connection with a bank robbery, but the exile reported that he recognized one of the men as a member of the Ugandan secret police. The exile was then able to escape, and he claims that he has not heard from his friends since.

The *Weekly Review* editorialized: "A distinction must, however, be made between political dissidents and bona fide refugees . . . It is obvious that someone in Kenya is engaged in the business of abducting Ugandans and ferrying them across the border, and it is a practice that the Kenyan authorities should put an end to immediately."

• Kenya is expected to ignore a request by the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and begin procedures against Hezekiah Ochuka and Pancras Okumu, two enlisted men who fled to Tanzania in a hijacked plane after the 1982 failed coup attempt. The men were handed back to Kenya by Tanzanian authorities in an **exchange of political refugees** after the two countries normalized relations late last year. UNHCR called the exchange a "flagrant violation of international obligations." Kenya and Tanzania are signatories to UN and OAU conventions which prohibit the repatriation of political refugees.

Both governments claim that the exchange was carried out without high-level approval, and they have promised that it won't happen again. □

COMOROS: Under the ylang-ylang tree

• An international donors' conference, to be held in the Comoran capital of Moroni this March, is expected to outline terms of foreign aid for the Comoros' 1983-86 development plan. President Ahmed Abdallah is seeking to obtain substantial economic assistance for the first time in the history of the archipelago.

The Comoran economy is dependent upon a single esoteric product for 20 percent of its export earnings. Ylang-ylang is an aromatic oil used to make perfume; it comes from the drooping flowers of the cananga tree, which is found in the Comoros as well as in the Philippines and Java.

But French demand for ylang-ylang has declined steadily for a decade, while the population of the Comoros has increased rapidly. Drought, cyclones, volcanic eruptions, and the expulsion of Comorans from the nearby French island "territory" of Mayotte, have strained the limited land area to the maximum. Food production has never recovered from the damage caused by former President Ali Soilih's radical collectivization in 1977. Along with tourism, agriculture is the main priority of the new five-year plan.

In January, Abdallah announced a technical reshuffle of his cabinet. The ministerial changes came only nine months after the last reshuffle, which in turn came just over a year after an earlier cabinet change. As usual, every member of the government was retained, but all the ministers were appointed to different posts.

Observers note that the reshuffle can have little effect on Comoran politics, since Abdallah is believed to be dominated even still by the French mercenaries, led by Bob Denard, who installed him in 1978.

ETHIOPIA: EPLF advances

• In mid-January, Eritrean rebels mounted a renewed offensive, capturing the town of Tesseni on the border with Sudan. The gains by forces of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) are the first advances by either side after two years of stalemate since the government launched its unsuccessful Operation Red Star in 1982.

In the last two years, the EPLF has emerged as the dominant Eritrean liberation group. The Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF), which battled the EPLF as well as the Ethiopian government, seems to have vanished, and there are reports that some former ELF units are fighting alongside the EPLF. The recent move by the EPLF follows unity talks which were held with the smaller Eritrean Liberation Front-Popular Liberation Front (ELF-PLF).

• Ethiopian and Cuban sources have denied that the **departure of Cuban troops** from Ethiopia signals a rift between the two countries, as some press reports had speculated. The reasons are more basic: Most of the Cubans were stationed in the Ogaden to guard against an invasion from Somalia, an eventuality which now appears to be unlikely. In addition, Ethiopia paid for the Cuban presence with foreign exchange, a luxury that Ethiopia can ill afford to prolong.

Cuban troop strength, which had been 11,500, is expected to be reduced to 3000 by June. The remaining troops will be instructors, engineers, and probably an elite guard to protect Chairman Mengistu Haile Mariam's regime against a possible coup attempt.

• Both Ethiopia and the U.S. have remained quiet about the **expulsion** of four American diplomats from Addis Ababa and the subsequent expulsion of two Ethiopians from Washington in early February. Neither side gave specific reasons for the actions, but speculation has centered around an event a few days earlier in which 18 Ethiopians were arrested in Addis Ababa for distributing leaflets. Observers feel that the two countries will play down the incident in order not to upset U.S.-Ethiopian relations, which have been improving lately.

KENYA: The harder they fall

• A prominently displayed article in Kenya's *Sunday Nation* contains the familiar face of the former minister for constitutional affairs. The headline, white letters accentuated within a strip of black, reads, "The ego of Mr. Charles Njonjo." Superimposed over the photograph is a magnifying glass which is focused on one of Njonjo's famous pinstripe suits. The lens reveals that what appear from a distance to be stripes are actually small letters, C's and N's. "What could the significance of that be?" the caption taunts. "Civilization's Nomad perhaps? Or Chief Negotiator? No, you've got it—Charles Njonjo."

Njonjo was also prominent in the newspapers a few years ago. Then, he was shown opening roads or dedicating schools. His every utterance became a headline, and for a while it seemed that his face was on page 1 every morning.

Njonjo's plunge from deification to humiliation was fast and hard. Last May, President Daniel arap Moi suddenly announced that there was a "traitor" in the government. There was no doubt in anyone's mind that he was referring to the overly ambitious Njonjo. Njonjo resigned, and in January an inquiry was convened to investigate charges that he had conspired with "foreign powers"—Britain and Israel are usually mentioned—to overthrow the government of Kenya. But after a month, the tribunal has turned up little that is related to treason and much that simply reinforces the public's view of Njonjo as an elitist who preferred the company of his wealthy foreign friends to Kenyans, and who took full, but not by Kenyan standards unusual, advantage of his privileged position.

Witnesses in the inquiry have alleged that Njonjo intervened on behalf of some of his friends to allow them to illegally import small arms and ammunition. Among those friends is Saudi Arabian billionaire Adnan Khashoggi, who is noted for getting involved in shady business deals. Khashoggi, who was also friendly with the late Jomo Kenyatta, owns a 100,000-acre ranch and private game park in Kenya which he regularly visits by landing his 727 on his private airstrip. Njonjo is on the ranch's board of directors.

The Khashoggi connection is being used link Njonjo to the abortive Seychelles coup attempt of November 1981. Khashoggi is a close friend of former Seychelles President James Mancham, and all his holdings on the islands were nationalized by the socialist regime of Albert René, who overthrew Mancham in 1977. A witness to the investigation into the abortive coup testified that Khashoggi had procured some of the arms which were used. Attempts to implicate Njonjo in the Seychelles coup are based on a secret trip he made to Malawi at that time. Njonjo has also been charged with entering South Africa through Malawi in 1980.

The inquiry has also "revealed" that Njonjo travelled to London on an average of four times per year. He allegedly carried as many as 12 pieces of luggage and never paid excess baggage charges. According to witnesses, Njonjo would be driven directly onto the runway without passing through customs or buying a ticket. He always flew first class.

Thus far the inquiry has been a public declaration of what people have been saying privately about Njonjo for many years. Whether it will produce hard evidence of treason remains to be seen.

Not far from everyone's thoughts is the 1981 trial of Alfred Muthemba. Muthemba, a relative of Njonjo, was charged with treason for attempting to buy weapons from the Kenya army. It was implied, but never openly stated, that Muthemba was buying the weapons for a force of Njonjo loyalists who planned to overthrow the government. A witness testified that Muthemba had at one point declared, "The big man (President Daniel arap Moi) must go . . . Njonjo is the man." Muthemba was acquitted on the grounds of insufficient evidence after he claimed that his attempt to buy arms was actually a private investigation into arms smuggling which he planned to report to authorities as soon as he had concrete proof. When the question was raised as to why a successful businessman would use his own money to conduct an investigation on behalf of the state, the court was told that Muthemba was mentally ill and suffered from "obsessions."

At the close of the 1981 trial the judge said: "There is not a shred of acceptable evidence in this whole case adverse to the well-deserved reputation of Mr. Njonjo." But things are different in 1984, and Njonjo's "well-deserved reputation" promises to be his undoing.

• A former Kenyan Air Force major-general, Peter Kariuki, has been **sentenced to four years in prison** in connection with the 1982 abortive coup for "failing to suppress a mutiny." An air force lieutenant testified that, on the night before the attempted coup, he tried to inform Kariuki that the action was about to take place. Kariuki is said to have replied that he was aware of what was happening and that he didn't want to discuss it.

SOMALIA: Air attacks

• Somali sources reported in late January that six Ethiopian MiGs attacked in the northwest, killing 40 people and injuring some 80 others. The radio report said that many of the victims were schoolchildren in the town of Borama, 80 miles from the regional capital of Hargeisa. These reports were later confirmed by U.S. diplomatic sources.

The air raid may have been in retaliation against attacks on the Ethiopia-Djibouti railway for which the Somali-backed Western Somalia Liberation Front has claimed responsibility. Those attacks reportedly killed 29 people, including Ethiopian soldiers.

Ethiopian-backed rebels of the Somali National Movement who are trying to topple the regime of President Siad Barre in Somalia have claimed that over 1500 Somali government soldiers staged a mass defection in late January. The rebel radio broadcast said that the soldiers complained of food shortages, poor conditions, and low morale. There was no independent confirmation of this report.

TANZANIA: Zanzibar unrest

• The President of Zanzibar, Aboud Jumbe, resigned in late January amid rising secessionist sentiment on the island. Jumbe, a close friend of Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere, was seen by Zanzibaris as an agent of the central government, which is trying to usurp Zanzibar's limited autonomy. By resigning, Jumbe has also forfeited the posts of vice president of Tanzania and vice chairman of the ruling party.

Following his resignation, there were reports of a series of arrests on Zanzibar. Among those detained was Wolfango Dourado, a lawyer who has been active in the Zanzibar independence movement. Last December, Dourado was quoted as saying, "We will not make a unilateral declaration of independence. But we will refuse to cooperate with Tanganyika, and the whole country will be in chaos."

Though Zanzibar, the island of

Pemba, and Tanzania have been officially federated since 1964, the central government in Dar es Salaam has been attempting to further consolidate the union by entrenching the supremacy of the ruling Chama cha Mapinduzi party. Zanzibaris have called instead for a federal constitution to ensure some autonomy for the island.

Ali Hassan Mwinyi, a Zanzibari, has been appointed as interim president, and elections for a new president will be held on March 10.

The central government's position is that neither the supremacy of the party nor the status of the union is open to debate. Party statements have called for harsh action against pro-independence groups, and in a speech, Nyerere commended Jumbe while blaming "foreign elements" for misleading the people of Zanzibar.

• Tanzania has been engaged in arduous negotiations with the IMF over a badly needed **$250 million three-year standby facility**. The last agreement reached between Tanzania and the IMF for a $180 million loan in 1980 collapsed when Tanzania failed to institute the austerity measures called for by the Fund. In 1982, however, Tanzania embarked on its own structural adjustment program, which included many of the Fund's recommendations. The success of that program is now believed to be heavily dependent on the injection of new funds from the IMF. However, informed sources are pessimistic about the chances of the two parties coming to an agreement. The Fund reportedly feels that Tanzania is proposing measures which do not directly address the severe economic situation in which the country now finds itself.

UGANDA: Out of control

• In early January, rebels kidnapped eleven Red Cross workers in Mpigi district, 40 miles southwest of Kampala. Nine of the hostages were released two days later, but a French doctor and a Ugandan were held for an additional two weeks before being freed.

Informed sources indicated that, since "the government has very little or no control over its armed forces," negotiators from the relief agencies were forced to deal directly with the rebels. The two-week delay evidently occurred because "there doesn't seem to be much of an organized authority in the opposition forces." Red Cross workers have apparently returned to the area after the release of the last of the hostages in January, and the Red Cross delegation has actually "been reinforced" since late last year. The presence of international Red Cross workers "has added a certain amount of security for the local Red Cross relief people."

The Red Cross had earlier suspended its activities in the rebel-held areas of the north as a reaction to the killing of a driver and a nurse last November, but then resumed its operations after receiving safety assurances from the government. (See story on Uganda, page 24.)

CENTRAL AFRICA

C.A.R.'s Kolingba reshuffles again to outmaneuver opponents

• In January, the Head of State, General André Kolingba, announced his third cabinet reshuffle in 11 months. Lt.-Col. Jean-Louis Gervil Yambala, an extremely influential figure considered friendly with Libya, became the minister of state for economy and finance. Lt.-Col. Alphonse Gombadi, another member of Kolingba's inner circle, took over the ministry of state for rural development.

Col. François Diallo, who was brought into the government last year, retained his post of secretary of state for national defense. But two ministers who were considered close to Kolingba—Lt.-Gen. Sylvestre Bangui, who last served as minister of state for economy and finance, and Lt.-Col. Thomas Mapouka, who was minister of state for energy—were dropped from the government.

The retention of Gombadi and Yambala was no surprise. But Bangui and Mapouka were also charter members of the original junta, led by Kolingba, which overthrew President David Dacko in late 1981. Bangui and Mapouka both figured prominently in all of Kolingba's five previous cabinets, and their demotion—particularly that of Bangui—is noteworthy.

Lt.-Gen. Bangui is the second-in-command of the CAR army after Kolingba. He is also one of the most experienced politicians in the CAR, having served as ambassador to France under former "Emperor" Jean-Bédel Bokassa as well as foreign minister and deputy prime minister under Dacko. He is also reputed to have extensive business interests in the CAR, France, and the U.S. Bangui launched the first internal opposition party after the fall of Bokassa in 1979.

Bangui served in Dacko's government, but he resigned when Dacko gave the premiership to someone else in a cabinet reshuffle. Nevertheless, Bangui was later alleged to have been the "pivot man" in a counter-coup to be mounted by Dacko against Kolingba. One Western observer speculated that Bangui's apparent egotism and ambition may finally have led to his demotion from Kolingba's cabinet.

Along with the cabinet reshuffle, Kolingba announced changes in the panel of eight civilians which he has gradually assembled over the last two years. The civilian "high commissioners," he announced, are "autonomous" and responsible for reporting to the council of ministers "whenever the need arises."

At least four of the civilians have governmental experience. François Gueret, named high commissioner of state enterprises and joint ventures, is a magistrate and a former justice minister under Dacko. Widely respected for his insistence on investigating the affairs of Bokassa's former associates, he is also a vocal advocate of a return to a multi-party system.

Jean-Claude Kazagui, named high commissioner for scientific and technical research, served as secretary-general of Dacko's party, the UDC. Although he was considered to be one of Dacko's "hardliners," Kazagui's 1981 visit to the U.S. State Department in Washington, only weeks before Kolingba overthrew Dacko, may have been connected with the coup.

Guy Darlan, the high commissioner for planning, economic, and financial cooperation, is a leading economist and a former adviser to Bokassa. Emmanuel Abdoul, new high commissioner for national service and youth promotion, was minister of state for agriculture and livestock under Bokassa and Dacko, as well as Dacko's special regional envoy.

The role of the civilians in the "new" government is not expected to be significant. Kolingba may hope that Gueret, whom he first named a high commissioner last April, will eventually lend a degree of legitimacy to the government.

Meanwhile, the two leading opposition figures are virtually powerless: Abel Goumba, although freed from prison, remains under strict surveillance; and Ange Patassé is living in exile in Togo. Goumba is one of the few CAR politicians untainted by close contact with Bokassa. Because of his years of exile in France and friendship with French President Mitterrand's advisers, Goumba is the man the French would most like to see in power. Patassé, who might well have defeated Dacko in the March 1981 presidential elections had they been honest, remains a popular figure in the CAR. But neither man has a sufficiently large or powerful following to threaten Kolingba's regime.

Up up and away

Patassé, who went into exile in Libya during Bokassa's reign, is believed to be seeking Libyan aid to overthrow Kolingba. In 1982, Patassé returned to the CAR amid tremendous popular acclaim. Immediately after returning, he attempted a coup, which failed to unseat Kolingba but did provoke massive riots in sympathy with Patassé. Forced into exile in Togo, Patassé remains a hero among the urban unemployed in Bangui, to whom he has continually made extravagant promises throughout his political career—including the proposal to end the landlocked nation's transportation problems by building a fleet of giant balloons to carry exports to the sea.

Patassé is not admired by intellectuals, who point out that he was Bokassa's prime minister for several years and ran the state tobacco and cotton industries in an era when corruption flourished. However, Patassé's popularity among the unemployed and among his fellow northerners is a constant threat to Kolingba, who fears that Patassé may some day procure Libyan assistance to overthrow him. However, by retaining Lt.-Col. Yambala in his cabinet, Kolingba has kept his own "Libyan connection" intact, clearly intending to pre-empt any such move by Patassé.

In short, the return to civilian rule—which Kolingba has frequently declared to be his ultimate goal—seems as remote as ever. □

CAMEROON: Biya re-elected

• Since incumbent President Paul Biya ran unopposed in the January elections, the only question was the percentage of votes he would receive. Biya was elected with 99.98 percent of the vote.

Biya's predecessor, Ahmadou Ahidjo, who resigned in late 1982, was customarily re-elected by similar landslides, but 1.5 million more votes were cast in this poll than in the 1980 re-election of Ahidjo.

Two weeks after Biya's election, the National Assembly endorsed constitutional reforms which eliminated the post of prime minister and changed the official name of the country from the United Republic of Cameroon to the Republic of Cameroon.

These changes have alarmed some members of the anglophone minority. The northwestern part of the country, which is largely English-speaking, has been neglected by the francophone-dominated central government, and there have been several outbreaks of violence between anglophones and government security forces in the last year. The anglophones suspect that the centralization of the government is a deliberate move to increase the dominance of the francophone majority.

CHAD: Foiled again

• The OAU-sponsored peace talks scheduled to be held in Addis Ababa in early January never took place. Goukouni Oueddei led a delegation of 130 members of the GUNT coalition opposed to the government of Hissène Habré, and he was greeted in person by Col. Mengistu Haile Mariam, Ethiopian leader and chairman of the OAU.

Habré claimed that he alone, as the Chadian president recognized by the OAU, was entitled to a presidential welcome. Angered by the warm reception given to Goukouni, Habré refused to attend the talks, and he sent a smaller delegation of 26 members to Addis Ababa. The delegation was led by Tahar Guinassou, Habré's Minister of Interior.

Goukouni then refused to meet with Guinassou, whom he considered too insignificant a figure to lead a delegation. OAU diplomats tried to save the negotiations, but the talks collapsed within five days.

In Habré's absence, the Chadian delegation would normally have been led by Idriss Miskine, the vice president and foreign minister. Only days before the talks were to begin, however, Miskine suffered a severe attack of malaria and died within 48 hours. Miskine was the only official besides Habré whom Goukouni considered important enough to lead the peace delegation.

GUNT's "Radio Bardai" said that Miskine had been the victim of a "disguised political assassination." The radio reminded its listeners that, last August, Habré had accused the French government of asking Miskine to overthrow him. At that time, Habré added that Miskine had refused the French offers of "total support," and he defended Miskine "as a true patriot and a true soldier who knows what he is doing."

Late last year, however, Miskine did meet in Paris with Acheikh Ibn Oumar, the leader of a Libyan-backed faction of GUNT. That discreet meeting indicated that France was using Miskine to find an "reasonable alternative" to Goukouni and Habré, and some observers felt that France and Libya were consid-

Sudan: World center for ivory smuggling

More than 900 metric tons of ivory have been exported by Sudan since 1976, according to Dr. Esmond Bradley Martin, an American authority on the subject. The ivory comes from several East and Central African countries and is funnelled through Khartoum, where it is licensed for export to Hong Kong and East Asia.

The smugglers obtain export licenses for Sudanese ivory and then use the licenses to export ivory brought into Sudan from neighboring African countries. The quality and quantity of ivory being exported indicates that it is being poached by well-equipped groups working in Zaire, the Central African Republic, Tanzania, and Uganda.

Sudanese officials in London denied the existence of a large ivory trade, emphasizing their country's commitment to conservation and recently implemented anti-poaching measures. However, government records show certain inconsistencies: In 1978, the Bank of Sudan said 9 metric tons of ivory were exported, but the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning gave a figure of 17.4 metric tons. In 1979 and 1980, the bank said that no ivory was exported, but the ministry records show figures of 23.5 metric tons for 1979 and 182.8 metric tons for 1980. Furthermore, there is evidence that in 1977, a mystery shipment of 315 metric tons was sent to Saudi Arabia and was never entered into Sudan's export records, which showed only 20 metric tons exported that year.

Last year, according to Martin, a foreign group armed with automatic weapons entered a national park in southern Sudan and set up an extensive poaching operation. The Sudanese government was either unwilling or unable to dislodge the poachers. Experts say that the mastermind of the network uses his influential connections so effectively that he was able to export some 200 tons of ivory in 1983. Although Martin did not name the man, the London *Sunday Times* believes him to be a Sudanese, Mohamed Awadalla el Awad, who has offices in Khartoum and Hong Kong.

Furious with the ineptitude of the UN and other international organizations, Martin wants the government of Hong Kong to ban all imports of ivory while the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) investigates the issue. He has also called on the private traders of Hong Kong and Kowloon to boycott all Sudanese ivory. Acquiescing to growing pressure, CITES has persuaded Sudan to stop all ivory exports as of December 30, 1983. Meanwhile, the elephant population of Africa may have suffered irreversible harm.

ering Miskine himself as a possible "third man" acceptable to both countries. After his death, "Radio Bardai" described Miskine as "a supporter of a peaceful solution to the Chad conflict."

Miskine, who was only 35 years old, had been in good health. Chadian officials said that the suggestion that Miskine had been killed was a "groundless rumor only certain individuals could believe." A week-long period of national mourning was decreed after Miskine's death, and a successor was not immediately named.

In February, French Foreign Minister Claude Cheysson visited Libya, Chad, and Ethiopia in an unsuccessful attempt to revive the deadlocked negotiations. After a French aircraft was shot down days before, France advanced its forces 60 miles north of the "red line," pushing back Goukouni's troops. Fighting also broke out between the two Chadian armies during Cheysson's visit, with each side claiming to have inflicted heavy casualties. Cheysson called for a mutual withdrawal of Libyan and French forces, but Libya continued to deny the presence of its troops there, and it was not anticipated that Libya would withdraw its forces without admitting their existence.

ZAIRE: Middle Eastern guests

• In January, Israeli President Chaim Herzog became the highest-ranking Israeli official ever to visit Zaire. Several agreements were reached: at least three large Israeli corporations will discuss investment possibilities in Zaire; the Israeli military will help expand President Mobutu Sese Seko's Special Presidential Brigade into a full division; and Mobutu accepted an invitation to visit Israel sometime in the future.

Only weeks later, President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt visited Zaire. During the visit, Mubarak and Mobutu discussed various Middle East and African issues. Mubarak's visit was intended to "open new horizons for bilateral relations between Egypt and Zaire." Egypt will expand the training of Zairian military personnel in Egyptian academies.

• Zaire recently **rescheduled** its debt at a meeting of the "Paris Club" of international financiers. More than $1 billion of debt falling due in 1984 and 1985 was rolled over, with an 11-year period of repayment and five years of grace. The rescheduling was granted after remarkably swift negotiations lasting only two days, an indication of the favor earned by Zaire since its currency devaluation and austerity measures introduced last year. An additional credit from the IMF of $350 million, which was pledged on condition that Zaire reached a rescheduling agreement, was freed up after the Paris Club meeting.

ZAMBIA: Partial debt reschedule

• Zambia has reached separate agreements with Great Britain, the U.S., and Belgium, its principal creditors, on rescheduling large amounts of its foreign debt. The agreement with Great Britain covers $42 million of trade arrears and other debts; negotiations on an additional $98 million of similar debts have not yet begun. The American rescheduling agreement covers nearly $34 million in debts and trade arrears, while the agreement with Belgium reschedules more than $5 million of financial credits and commercial contracts.

However, Zambia's commercial bank debt, which is substantial, awaits a comprehensive rescheduling agreement.

Riots in Tunisia and Morocco force government concessions

In January, rioting erupted in Tunisia and Morocco. More than 100 Tunisians and at least 29 Moroccans were killed in violence sparked by increases in the price of grains and other staple foods.

In both countries there were other factors which contributed to the unrest. More than a quarter of the work force in Morocco and Tunisia is unemployed, and because of the recession in France, Tunisians and Moroccans can no longer find work there. Drought in both countries has forced an influx of rural people to the cities, where jobs are already scarce. Foreign exchange earnings from each country's main export commodity—Morocco's phosphates and Tunisia's oil and gas—have fallen significantly in recent years. And finally, religious fundamentalists are marshalling opposition to government policies which they claim are not based on the principles of Islam.

Tunisia: Sudden price increases

Tunisia has been spending 20 percent of its gross domestic product on food subsidies, funds which the government would prefer to channel into its drive toward industrialization. Bread prices had not increased significantly in two decades, and large quantities of bread went to waste, leading the government to conclude that the subsidies were an extravagance. Despite the urgent warnings from economic advisers that "it would be akin to setting off a bomb," the government went ahead with its plans and cancelled the subsidies in January. The price of bread, which had been kept artificially low, suddenly became prohibitive. Rioting then erupted throughout the country.

After a week of violence, President Habib Bourguiba rescinded the price increases, leaving many Tunisians feeling that the deaths could have been avoided.

The government was criticized for its slow response, which allowed the rioting to spread to the major cities of Tunis and Sfax. Bourguiba later dismissed Interior Minister Driss Guiga on the grounds that he had not reacted quickly enough to quell the violence.

Although he knew that Prime Minister Mohamed Mzali was widely considered to be the architect of the price increases, Bourguiba went on television himself to announce that the increases would be rescinded. By doing so, Bourguiba reinforced his image as a supra-governmental authority able to step in and correct his ministers' mistakes. Tunisians continued to hold Mzali responsible for the price hikes and the subsequent bloodshed. Some called for his resignation, demonstrating outside his office with cries of "Mzali is a donkey." Since Mzali is Bourguiba's designated successor to the presidency, it is difficult to understand why Bourguiba insisted on monopolizing the credit for rescinding the price increases. "Mzali is left holding the bag," one observer commented.

Besides undermining Mzali's authority, the riots increased tensions between the government and opposition parties. At the end of last year, Bourguiba legalized two parties, authorizing them to participate in national elections for the first time. The opposition parties were silent during the riots, but Ahmed Mestiri, leader of the Socialist Democratic Movement (MDS), later declared that "the entire responsibility" for the unrest lay with the government.

Fundamentalist members of the illegal "Islamic Movement" played at least an incidental part in the riots. Tunisia has tried for several years to suppress the movement, which expresses admiration for Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini of Iran and advocates turning away from government policies of "modernization and Westernization." The authorities have been unable to eradicate the movement because the fundamentalists' beliefs are only a more extreme version of the official religion of the state. Their role in the riots could enhance the political influence of these religious activists.

Morocco: Quick turnaround

Morocco's need to raise prices was more urgent than Tunisia's. The nation's foreign debt is $11 billion, and the war in the Western Sahara is costing an estimated $1-2 million per day.

Morocco's riots began when university students protested tuition hikes and stricter academic standards. The student unrest inspired the populace to demonstrate against the creeping price rises that were instituted last August as part of an IMF austerity program.

The worst rioting took place in the north, which is suffering from drought. The northerners have also been hurt by a recent government crackdown on their smuggling between Morocco and the Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla. After three days of heavy rioting in northern cities and towns, King Hassan II went on television and cancelled the price increases. At the same time he blamed the riots on "Zionist intelligence . . . the infidel Khomeini . . . and the Marxists, the Leninists, and the communists." The king also warned children taking part in the protests that they would be treated like adults. (As the Tunisian rioters had done, the Moroccans had placed children in the front lines of the protest marches to discourage police retaliation.) Calm soon returned to Morocco after the king's speech, and workers did not respond to calls for a general strike to protest the violence.

In a further effort to placate the general public, Hassan ordered a crackdown on merchants accused of hoarding goods and raising prices. Shops were closed down and violators fined.

Organized resistance

In Morocco, these events recall the riots of June 1981, when the government halved food price hikes and raised salaries to placate rioters in Casablanca. Both Morocco and Tunisia now have organizations with large constituencies and different purposes—student groups, labor unions, opposition parties, and the Islamic fundamentalist movement. Any of these groups could mobilize large sectors of the population to change or resist government policies. The "success" of riots in drawing concessions from the governments poses serious problems for both countries. □

ALGERIA: Chadli romps

• Winning more than 95 percent of the vote, President Chadli Benjedid was re-elected in January to a second five-year term. Chadli then announced extensive changes in his cabinet, appointing Abdelhamid Brahimi, former minister of planning, to replace Mohamed Abdelghani as prime minister.

After Chadli's re-election, he ordered full amnesty for 17 detainees and partial commutation of prison sentences for several dozen more.

The elections and reshuffle came soon after a month-long party congress of the ruling National Liberation Front (FLN). During the congress, several "radicals" were dropped from the FLN's central committee, including former security chief Ahmed Draia and Mohamed Salah Yahyaoui, a close associate of late President Houari Boumedienne.

• In **foreign policy**, Algeria continued its efforts to improve relations with its neighbors to the south. Ahmed Taleb Ibrahimi, Minister of Foreign Affairs, visited Nouakchott and Dakar in late January for talks with high-level Mauritanian, Malian, and Senegalese officials. Ibrahimi's visit coincided with the third meeting of the Algerian-Senegalese joint commission, which discussed cultural, economic, and technological cooperation.

At the same time, the American Secretary of Agriculture, John R. Block, led a delegation visiting Algeria to discuss cooperation in agricultural technology. Under Boumedienne, agriculture was neglected in favor of heavy industry; Chadli's government is seeking to improve Algeria's agricultural production. Block's visit follows American Vice President George Bush's trip to Algeria last September.

EGYPT: Political competition

• An Egyptian high court recently conferred legitimate political status on the New Wafd Party, overruling the government's Political Parties Commission, which had declared the party illegal.

At almost the same time, a candidate from the ruling National Democratic Party of President Hosni Mubarak was defeated by an opponent from the leftist National Unionist Progressive Party in a parliamentary runoff in Alexandria.

Those two events indicate that the elections for the national assembly, to be held at the end of May, will be strongly contested. Many observers feel that the strength of the New Wafd, along with competition from the smaller parties, may ensure the establishment of true multi-party democracy in Egypt for the first time.

• After its suspension from the **Islamic Conference Organization** (ICO) following the signing of a peace treaty with Israel in 1979, Egypt was readmitted to the group at its January meeting in Casablanca. The vote was decisive: 32-0 in favor of readmission, with Syria, Libya, South Yemen, Algeria, Tunisia, Mauritania, and Benin refusing to vote.

The reacceptance of Egypt into the ICO has been widely heralded as a sign of its "return to the Arab fold." Egypt's relations with the Arab world are definitely improving, with delegations being exchanged with Jordan and Iraq, and Yasser Arafat visiting Cairo.

But Egypt's readmission to the more important Arab League at its March meeting in Riyadh is unlikely, because the vote there would have to be unanimous. Syria and Libya, among others, are certain to vote against Egypt.

SUDAN: Rebels attack

• Chevron, a subsidiary of Standard Oil of California, has temporarily suspended its activities in some southern oilfields after rebels attacked a company camp under construction on Rub Kona Island in the Bahr El-Ghazal river. Anya Nya II rebels claimed responsibility for the early February attack, which left three Chevron employees dead and at least seven wounded. Witnesses said that 15 to 20 heavily armed men entered the compound and sprayed the area with automatic gunfire. The camp was only lightly guarded since the removal of government troops from the immediate area only weeks before.

Chevron then withdrew 200 civilian employees from the area. "We shall not be starting up again until security seems established, and the situation is no longer threatening," a company spokesman said. Meanwhile, drilling and exploration are continuing in other areas of southern Sudan.

The rebels, loosely grouped under the leadership of John Garang, a U.S.-trained Ph.D. and former colonel in the Sudanese army, believe that the oil wealth belongs to the people of the south, and they are committed to preventing the northerners from taking it. Sudanese government officials have blamed the attacks on foreign forces, Ethiopia in particular, which it claims are trying to ruin Sudan's economic prospects.

For some time there was an understanding between the rebels and Chevron that the oil operations would not be attacked, but the rebels abandoned that stance after the government stepped up military and political actions against southern insurgents.

Though the recent attack was widely publicized, Chevron remained quiet about earlier rebel activity directed against the oil operations. Last November, rebels belonging to the Southern People's Liberation Army kidnapped and later released employees of Chevron and other firms. There have also been additional confirmed reports of rebel attacks against the oil company. Chevron employees who have been in contact with the rebels have reported that the rebels have promised to sabotage the oil fields and the pipeline if the guerrilla war continues.

The pipeline is being built to carry oil from the wells to a point on the Red Sea south of Port Sudan from where it will be shipped to other countries for refining. The 900-mile-long pipeline will pass through about 550 miles of southern territory where it will be most vulnerable to sabotage. Security options under discussion include burying the pipe several yards underground. There is also a plan to build a 300-

mile road parallel to the pipeline at its most vulnerable points, which would enable the army to respond more quickly to attempts at sabotage.

Only days before the attack, Chevron sold its holdings in the pipeline venture to Royal Dutch Shell. Chevron also sold part of its oilfield holdings, thus reducing by 25 percent its investments in Sudan in an attempt to "spread the risk around."

Chevron, the U.S., and Sudan are working together in their efforts to secure the oil operations. There are reports that a contingent of U.S. marines was stationed at Rub Kona for a while, and in November, a secret U.S. military mission was sent to Sudan to appraise the security situation in the south. Chevron hosted the mission and former U.S. military attaché to the Sudan, Col. James Barren, is now employed by Chevron.

After the February attack, Sudanese First Vice President Omar el-Tayeb promised military protection for the oil company and immediately airlifted 100 paratroopers to the region.

WESTERN SAHARA: Threat to the OAU

• Renewed fighting between Moroccan troops and Polisario guerrillas has dimmed what slight hopes existed for a political settlement of the Western Sahara issue. Morocco began a large-scale offensive one week before the December 31, 1983 deadline set by the OAU for the implementation of a peace plan. The fighting then continued sporadically through January, with both sides claiming to have inflicted heavy casualties. Independent observers, however, have said that the Moroccan offensive, which employed 25,000 troops, heavy air support, and armored units, was effective in temporarily driving back Polisario forces.

Morocco's apparent military success has allowed King Hassan II to gain public support for a more intransigent position on the issue of negotiations. Representatives of the Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) can also be expected to take a harder line, and it is certain that they will not withdraw from this year's OAU summit as they did last year. The SADR removed itself from the 1983 summit with the understanding that Morocco would cooperate with efforts to hold a referendum on the future of the Western Sahara.

There now appears to be little chance of avoiding a repetition of the events of 1982, when Morocco twice forced the cancellation of the OAU summit by leading a walkout by 19 other African countries to protest the seating of the SADR.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

SADCC conference seeks drought relief, criticizes donors

Members of the nine-nation Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) met in Lusaka, Zambia, in early February and urgently requested $450 million in aid to combat the effects of drought and floods. SADCC estimated that the drought has already cost southern African countries more than $920 million in lost crops and relief expenditures. The cost is certain to continuing rising, as it now appears that Zimbabwe's spring maize harvest will be well below normal, and even South Africa, which has been a source of inexpensive grain imports, is facing a second consecutive maize crop failure. Donors, however, pledged only $350 million.

Arthur Blumeris, executive secretary of SADCC, said that "SADCC and Western donor nations will discuss ways to create regional food reserves."

The conference also criticized the U.S. for politicizing its aid. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) pledged $18 million for a vital project to develop millet and sorghum crops in 1983. However, USAID refused to allow any of the funds to be used by the region's "socialist" states of Angola, Mozambique, and Tanzania. SADCC would not accept the condition, and Denis Norman, Zimbabwe's minister of agriculture, was delegated to go to Washington to resolve the issue. The U.S. was also criticized for reducing its contribution to the International Development Association (IDA).

Britain came under fire after it said that no new funds would be given to SADCC "because only a tiny fraction of the money we have pledged has so far been spent." The British were referring to $14 million that they had donated for the rehabilitation of a railway linking Mozambique with Zimbabwe. SADCC officials claim that the delay has been caused by British bureaucracy. "They've given us that same money three times," said Mozambique's minister of transport. The money was first pledged three years ago and then promised again at last year's SADCC meeting in Maseru. When Mozambique's President Samora Machel went to Britain last October, he was again given the money "with great fanfare," according to London's *Guardian* newspaper.

SADCC officials feel that Britain is simply using its previous pledge as an excuse to avoid giving further aid. They point out that even the U.S. has praised the efficiency with which SADCC has utilized aid for transport projects. "We would like to see a more positive attitude from Britain," one SADCC official commented. "Real cooperation means sitting down to break bottlenecks, which Britain did not do."

Other donors have responded more positively to SADCC requests. Canada pledged $85 million, the African Development Bank gave $50 million, and the EEC promised $175 million for rural development projects in the southern African countries. □

ANGOLA: More help from USSR

• During the massive South African invasion of Angola in January, Angolan Foreign Minister Lopo do Nascimento went to Moscow and signed an agreement securing additional military aid from the Soviet Union to strengthen Angola's "defenses, independence, and territorial integrity." Although no details of the agreement were given, the Soviet Union was believed to have pledged a large increase of funds and military equipment, as well as further monetary support for the Cuban troops in Angola.

The agreement came only days after South African sources confirmed earlier reports that the Soviet government had expressly warned that it would not allow South Africa to "overthrow the Angolan government."

• A dozen senior ex-officers of the **Portuguese** army have been training Angolan instructors and forming a special unit to combat the rebel forces of Jonas Savimbi's Unita movement. Portuguese mercenaries continue to be recruited into Angola by Admiral Rosa Coutinho, a retired "leftist" Portuguese officer who once was high commissioner in Luanda.

Coutinho's activities and the accelerated delivery of Russian weapons have supplemented the latest government offensive against Unita. Government troops retook Andulo in early January, ending Unita's brief occupation of the strategic town, which commands one of Angola's most important roads. The Unita retreat was also a psychological victory for the government, for Andulo is the birthplace of Unita leader Jonas Savimbi.

During the South African invasion, Unita did not make any major independent advances against government troops. The relative quiet along Unita's battlefront led some observers to speculate that supplies and other support were not reaching Unita so long as the South African forces were occupied with other concerns farther south.

BOTSWANA: General elections

• The ruling Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) of President Quett Masire announced that general elections would be held later this year, but did not specify the date. The opposition Botswana National Front (BNF) claimed in its New Year message to its supporters that "general discontent" would result if the BDP "continued cheating in the election in order to stay in power."

Minister of Foreign Affairs Archie Mogwe retorted that Botswana "would adhere to her political system of a multi-party democracy as prescribed by the constitution." Mogwe also claimed that "Botswana is the only country in Africa without political detainees or people in exile for political reasons."

LESOTHO: Stirring opposition

• Prime Minister Leabua Jonathan announced at the end of 1983 that elections, the first since 1970, would be held "in the new year." Jonathan then asserted that a coup attempt was being plotted in South Africa, and several people were detained in Lesotho in connection with the alleged plot.

Only hours after Jonathan announced that elections would be held, government security forces raided the home of Charles Molefi, the leader of the opposition United Democratic Party. The UDP offices were also raided and searched.

In late January, Lesotho claimed that South African Foreign Minister Roelof Botha had held secret meetings with a Lesotho private citizen and that "South Africa is presently engaged in the process of handpicking individuals whom it would like to constitute an alternative government in Lesotho."

MALAWI: No millionaires

• In a recent radio broadcast, President-for-Life Hastings Kamuzu Banda responded to allegations by "certain foreign journalists that the country is poverty-stricken." Banda emphasized that "people everywhere in this country have enough food, dress in decent clothes, and live in good houses that do not leak."

Banda said that journalists who called Malawi poor were "malicious liars, ignorant and prejudiced," and that Malawi "was not interested in making millionaires, but in having enough food, decent clothes, and good housing." Banda reminded his listeners that Malawi was one of Africa's few countries to be self-sufficient in food. Malawi also exports surplus food to neighboring countries.

On the other hand, the World Bank classifies Malawi as the eleventh-poorest nation in the world, with a per capita GNP of only $200. The adult literacy rate in Malawi is only 25 percent. Life expectancy at birth is only 44 years—a surprising statistic for a country with an agricultural surplus, and an indication that Malawi's social services are severely inadequate.

• Banda has been silent on the appeal by **Orton and Vera Chirwa** that their death sentences be commuted. Orton Chirwa, a lawyer and a former justice minister under Banda, and his wife Vera, Malawi's first woman lawyer, were sentenced to death for treason last December. The judge who would normally preside over the appellate court, Chief Mbelwa, reportedly refused to be involved in the Chirwas' trial. When Chief Mbelwa later disappeared, the government said that he had returned to his home in the north, but several months later he died in a Lilongwe hospital. The Chirwas' son Fumbani disappeared more than two years ago, and his fate is still unknown.

MOZAMBIQUE: Costs of destabilization

• In early February, Mozambique asked its creditors to reschedule its $1.4 billion foreign debt. The rescheduling, said the government, was made necessary by South Africa's "direct aggression and economic destabilization." In a document circulated to diplomats in Maputo, the government of Mozambique claimed that by restricting the number of Mozambican workers in South Africa, rerouting South African trade away from Mozambican ports, and sponsoring the "armed bandits" of the Mozambique National Resistance, South Africa has cost the economy of Mozambique "almost $4 billion" since 1975.

But the tone of the document was more moderate in discussing the recent negotiations with South Africa, which "open the possibility of economic and stable relations, safety and equality, and mutual benefit on the principle of non-interference in each other's internal affairs. This allows us to look to the future with greater hope and confidence."

SOUTH AFRICA: U.S. military technology

• More than $28 million worth of military-related technology and police gear has been exported by American businesses to South Africa since 1981, according to a report issued by the American Friends Service Committee and the Washington Office on Africa. The report also said that British, French, West German, Italian and Swiss military technology had reached South Africa.

According to the report, these government-approved exports of arms-related technology constitute a "grave violation" of the 1977 UN Security Council mandatory weapons embargo, to which the countries named are signatories.

Outright sales of U.S. arms to South Africa have been stopped, the report said, but instead "exports by U.S. corporations consist to a great extent of the building blocks of modern weaponry—components, unfinished sub-assemblies and other technology that can be easily submerged in large wholesale transactions."

Thomas Conrad, a spokesman for the Quaker group, said, "The U.S. government claims that these exports are for civilian use. But this equipment has military applications, and the State Department has acknowledged that the products are on the 'munitions list.'"

But a State official said that none of the items on the munitions list violated the UN embargo.

"A large number of the sales were of encoding devices for bank teller machines," he said. "Our objective is to ensure that we sell no military-use items to anyone in South Africa, but we will approve sales for civilian use if we are satisfied that the private users are genuine."

PANA: A slow start

PANA, the Pan-African News Agency, which was launched with much fanfare last May, has scarcely been heard from since. PANA's service coordinator, Swaebou Conateh, recently discussed some of the reasons why.

Conateh said that articles received by PANA are often too parochial to interest a wide African audience, and that other articles are purely political tirades.

Technology is another problem. PANA has six offices, including its headquarters in Dakar. However, the regional offices in Lagos, Khartoum, Kinshasa, Tripoli, and Lusaka are not fully equipped to receive telexed articles, and many of the articles arrive garbled.

PANA is also facing financial problems. Many of the member countries have not paid their subscription dues. At present, most of the agency's financing comes from UNESCO, but PANA must wait for African nations to fulfill their obligations before it can operate at full capacity.

UDF opens drive against S.A. Constitution

The United Democratic Front (UDF) launched a campaign in January to collect a million signatures as part of its drive against the South African government's plan to give Indians and Coloureds (mixed-race people) a limited voice in parliament.

UDF's publicity secretary, Patrick Lekota, said the campaign will "illustrate symbolically to the South African government that blacks still fought and opposed the laws of this country."

The UDF also held a rally to protest the continued detention in Ciskei, the homeland made "independent" by Pretoria, of Father Smangaliso Mkhatshwa, the general secretary of the South African Catholic Bishops' Conference. Mkhatshwa is a UDF patron.

SWAZILAND: Violent floods

• In a cruel twist of fate, Swaziland, which has been stricken by drought for almost two years, was devastated by flooding in late January when Cyclone Domoina, coming off the Indian Ocean, lashed across the coast of southern Africa.

Swaziland is mountainous and crisscrossed by a dense network of rivers. The flooding washed out bridges, roads, and railways, making travel within the country nearly impossible. At least two dozen people were killed, and the government declared a state of emergency and issued an urgent international appeal for disaster relief aid.

ZIMBABWE: State of emergency

• The Fifth Brigade has returned to Matabeleland to combat infiltration by anti-government rebels allegedly trained and armed by South Africa, and a state of emergency has been declared. Minister of Home Affairs Simbi Mubako said that "troops will be increased to whatever level is considered necessary to deal with the increased infiltration."

The government claims that the latest rebel activity is "a second phase of terrorism," emphasizing South Africa's backing of the elements of Joshua Nkomo's disbanded Zipra army which have been accused of the attacks.

Speaking in early February, government spokesmen said that 459 rebels had been killed or captured by security forces in the last two years, and that in the last year the rebels had killed 120 people, mutilated 23, and raped 47.

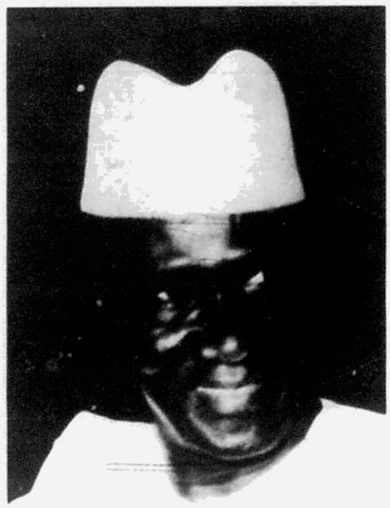
Meanwhile, a commission of inquiry opened to hear allegations that the Fifth Brigade had committed atrocities against civilians between January and May of last year. The commission was swamped by people wishing to testify, and the hearings had to be extended from two weeks to a month.

• In early January, Prime Minister Robert Mugabe made several important changes in his cabinet. The minister of home affairs, Herbert Ushewokunze, was demoted to minister of transport. Ushewokunze had been criticized for his arbitrary use of emergency powers and is noted for his radical rhetoric. Commenting on Ushewokunze's new role, Mugabe said: "Whatever his shortcomings, he has a brilliant brain which he should be able to apply to the problems of the railways and the national airways." The new home affairs minister is Simbi Mubako.

Mugabe also reduced the number of ministries from 28 to 22 in an effort to make the government bureaucracy more efficient.

Sekou Touré's Ouverture

BY JUSTIN MENDY



President Sekou Touré: A determined open-door policy

Closed off from the outside world for more than a decade after gaining independence in 1958, Sekou Touré's Guinea has embarked upon a determined open-door policy. This policy was proclaimed at the eleventh congress of the Guinean Democratic Party — the only party — in 1978, when Touré announced that the party now sought "broad cooperation with capitalist as well as socialist states" in order to "consolidate the freedom of our people and raise the level of their prosperity." The twelfth congress, held last November, further confirmed this option by defining the framework — essentially economic — in which it should operate, and its aim — the rapid development of the country's agricultural and mineral resources.

Considered both the reservoir of West Africa where all the rivers of the subregion have their sources and a geological sensation because of the immense riches underground, Guinea is also paradoxically one of the least-developed countries on the continent, where nearly everything is in short supply, and where the decrepit infrastructure is still for the most part that which was left by the colonialists.

The Conakry authorities explain this phenomenon by maintaining that during the entire postcolonial period they have had to face enemies of the people — internal as well as external — at the same time as fighting against the legacies of colonialism. Perhaps in no other country in Africa have as many abortive conspiracies been uncovered. Conakry officials explain that all of Guinea's misfortunes have arisen out of the fact that the country said no to the 1958 Gaullist referendum offering membership in a community of French overseas territories. Guinea was the only French colony to reject the French proposal.

Touré explains that the country was isolated as soon as it renounced French protection — it found itself without a cent in the bank and no credit with foreign lenders. All aid and technical assistance from France was suspended, and French investment in mining came to a halt. The tendency for orders placed in foreign countries not always to arrive in time created shortages, and Guinean products exported to France remained held in French ports for several months.

It was then that Guinea was required to seek other financial sources in the form of repayable credits. The Eastern bloc countries, led by the Soviet Union, thus established a foothold in the Guinean economy, inundating the market with their products — and along with the products, their political ideology. Western countries stuck by their French allies, participating in a type of economic blockade, which several times nearly brought down the regime.

"Loans contracted from the exterior obliged us," explained Touré, "to take complete charge in order to pay back our debts to those who had shown confidence in us, and it was necessary to

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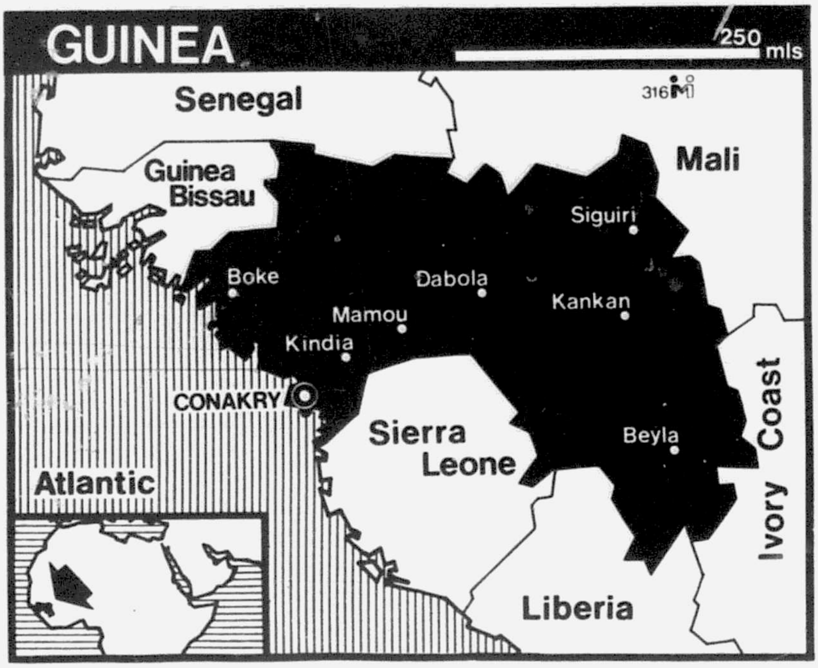

entrust the management of these loans to institutions placed under our control, through nationalization of trade."

When one considers the Guinean penchant for commerce, one can easily comprehend why this measure was not at all popular. It gave rise to a large-scale black market. Refusal to submit to new regulations on state trading led to what was termed in Conakry "the merchants' conspiracy." From 1960 through the early 1970s, Touré announced a succession of plots against his government, alleging involvement at various times by neighboring countries, the U.S., France, the U.S.S.R., West Germany, or Portugal. At home, crackdowns and purges followed Touré's claims that plots were also being hatched by the military, the intellectuals, and the Fulani, among others. As a result of these purges, many people ended up in prison. Some were released, many died there.

According to Touré, "some only wanted to go to a certain step. They got off the train when they understood that we were going to continue on course. The revolution eliminates the tepid and the hesitant as it goes along." And because the revolution was essentially socialist in orientation, it did not intend to maintain the former privileges of local authorities such as chiefs and marabouts, and hence stripped their powers away, transferring them to the party.

These events caused numerous Guineans to flee into exile, notably a group that organized an offensive against the regime on November 20, 1970. Foreign and Guinean elements that had grouped together in Portugal landed in Conakry not only to overthrow Touré but also to destroy the rear guard of Amilcar Cabral's African Party for the Independence of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde, which was fighting Portuguese colonial troops on the border. The attempt failed; and, as after every operation of this type, the revolution was radicalized, leading to a purge of the party. After 1972, the main criteria in choosing people to lead the various state organizations was "faithfulness to the people and their revolution."

The early 1970s were a period of ups and downs, for even if the purges clarified the political situation in the country, some used them to their advantage to make false or speculative denunciations and to eliminate any kind of adversary or rival. In other areas, the Local Revolutionary Powers (PRLs), directed to carry out tasks of applying the socialist program at the village level, saw their power strengthened — all part of efforts to fuse the party and the state.

At the 1978 party congress, Touré officially declared his willingness to cooperate with all countries in the world without any prejudice. He said he was sincerely prepared "to forget all the misunderstandings with France and West Germany" (with which Guinea had broken relations). Guinea normalized relations with Ivory Coast and Senegal, with which it had been in open conflict. Touré's statements translated into an appeal to the West: "The capitalist countries," he said, "have an immense store of scientific and technological resources and significant financial resources," and "Guinea will take into account the guarantees that capitalist investors and interests are seeking to obtain."

But Western investors, who doubted the sincerity of the Guinean leader and mistrusted what they considered — rightly or wrongly — to be his whims, did not come running. Campaigns against the government by externally based opposition forces were also a factor in the reticence of Western businessmen and governments.

As a result, Conakry organized its own campaign to explain its position by visits and direct contacts in the period from 1979 to 1983. Touré made several trips to the United States and Canada and a dozen to Europe, and his colleagues undertook numerous other missions.

Other actions taken to facilitate the implementation of the open-door policy included: the formulation of a five-year economic plan (1981-85); adoption of a new, more liberal investment code; Guinea's entry into the International Finance Society; and organization of a forum at Chase Manhattan Bank in New York in June 1982, a seminar in November the same year at the Economic Council of Canada, and another in September 1983 in Paris — all aimed at North American and French investors.

On the domestic side, in the mid-to-late 1970s, the government reversed its prior policies, which had virtually eliminated private trade, and permitted some private marketing of produce. Private sector cooperatives in the areas of commerce, export crops, and diamond and gold mining were organized. The government also decided to transform the district agro-pastoral farms — previously owned by the state — into autonomous cooperatives, created a ministry of small and medium-sized business, reinstated and regulated private business, and started a chamber of commerce. A new ministry of economic and financial affairs was created.

These structures should facilitate the efforts toward national economic development, the starting signal for which was given at the November 1983 party congress. The slogan "Ready for Production, Demanded by the Revolution," has replaced "Ready for the Revolution." To this end, it has been decided to give foreign exchange quotas to those producing goods for export; to promote the development of agro-industrial units in the interior, either by domestic interests or in conjunction with foreign investors, particularly for the production of fruit, vegetables, industrial crops, and edible oils, or any other crop that generates foreign exchange; and to undertake steps that would enable Guinea to obtain the finance necessary to construct hydroelectric facilities and to undertake rural electrification. The energy policy will be oriented toward the construction of microgenerators, with an emphasis on renewable energy.

The economic development strategy gives first priority to agriculture, and second to the mining sector. It is paradoxical that despite its immense potential in animal husbandry and agricultural production, the country continues to import foodstuffs in considerable quantities. "Since independence," says Touré, "our country, like others, has progressively increased the volume of imports of foodstuffs year by year and buys rice, maize, beans, etc. from the United States, Asia, and Europe that it should be able to produce in quantities greater than its needs."

Guinea is a synthesis of all the ecological zones in West Africa, a situation that has provided the country with the potential of producing the whole range of agricultural products that can be cultivated in the subregion — millet, sorghum, rice, manioc, maize, yams, oil palm, sugarcane, vegetables, and fruits. Even if drought has afflicted the region, there is still water in abundance in Guinea; however, only 10 percent of the land suitable for agriculture is currently under cultivation. Grazing land for cattle is also abundant.

Certainly the scientific, technical, and agricultural expertise and infrastructure, as well as financial resources, are lacking, "but we cannot lack the intelligence to exploit our own natural resources . . . and a country cannot objectively rely upon the will of other countries to live decently and with dignity," says Touré. As a result, the government has decided that beginning in December 1984, foodstuffs will no longer be imported for the urban population.

To achieve this end, the government is counting on technicians. Since 1975, 75 percent of high school graduates have specialized in agronomy and animal husbandry. Several agricultural research centers have been set up and have developed new varieties of cereals, rice and maize in particular, which it is hoped will be cultivated domestically to reduce the need for food imports.

Providing autonomy to the district agro-pastoral farms should enable the workers and peasants to take on increased responsibilities in modernizing agricultural production. "Our choice," says Touré, "is to make the people the essential architects of agricultural development, the state playing only a training and organizing role."

The development of mineral resources should also provide a boost to agricultural development. Minerals represent the one area most likely to earn Guinea the foreign exchange it requires to equip itself with the scientific and technological advances required to modernize agricultural production.

The Guinean president recently outlined the strategy his government is pursuing: "We can assign our second priority to . . . exchanging under the most favorable terms some of our raw materials, such as bauxite and iron ore, for strong currency. This foreign exchange should enable us to import anything hindering us from implementing our development programs in the priority sectors. It is evident that at this time no other export can procure for us as much foreign exchange as mineral products. Let us say that in using our mineral resources in this first phase, our development strategy aims at the progressive reduction of exports of minerals or basic industrial products, in favor of agricultural production.

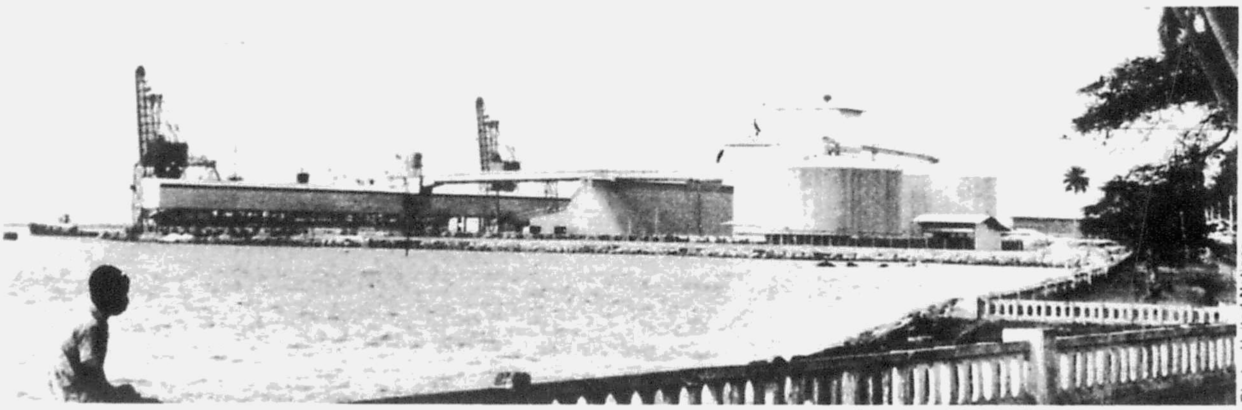

Photo: United Nations

Bauxite loading plant in Conakry: Guinea may possess two-thirds of the world's bauxite reserves

"We can consider ourselves favored by nature because we have at our disposal a varied range of mineral products, which we will be able to process right here before their export. We are limited not by the quantity of our reserves, but solely by external demand, which regulates the long-term purchasing contracts of our partners."

To illustrate the point, Touré cited bauxite, noting that Guinea contains a quantity sufficient to supply all the aluminum factories now operating in the world for more than 300 years. Research indicates that with 18 billion tons of bauxite reserves containing a minimum of 40 percent aluminum, and in some cases, 66 percent, Guinea holds two-thirds of the world's reserves. In addition, there are more than 15 billion tons of iron ore.

A recent mining survey completed after aerial prospecting done in the period 1979-81 showed the existence of 10 uranium deposits; 10 diamond deposits; five gold; three chrome, cobalt, and platinum; one lead and zinc; and one ilmenite and rutile. Three other uranium deposits have been discovered since January 1983. The results of these surveys have led the government to negotiate several exploitation contracts in the uranium, diamond, and gold sectors, on a joint venture basis, although the partners have not yet been revealed.

Bananas packaged for export: Economic development strategy gives first priority to agriculture

These projects will thus be added to the joint companies already in existence — the Guinea Bauxite Company and Friguia, an aluminum production company. While strengthening these companies as well as the national mining company, the Kindia Bauxite Office, the government has also started to move forward with earlier projects — the Guinea Iron Mine Company for the Exploitation of the Nimba Mountains (Mifergui-Nimba), and the Guinea Hydrocarbon Company. Negotiations have begun with the World Bank, the European Economic Community, and other partners to put together the financing for the iron-mining project. Results from prospecting for hydrocarbons are considered very positive.

According to authorities, Guinea is aware that its territorial waters possess great potential in hydrocarbons, and this situation is considered to apply as well on shore, especially in the northwest part of the country. This zone is the site of an exploration project financed by the World Bank at a cost of $17 million over three years. Other new projects are being developed for gold, diamonds, uranium, granite, marble, and ornamental stones.

The first category of projects when they are completed between 1984 and 1990 will represent more than $1 billion a year in exports and more than $300 million of supplementary revenue for the Guinean treasury.

Touré insists, "We have never excluded cooperation with capitalist countries. . . . We have only excluded the type of unjust development that capitalism gives rise to, the exploitation of man by man. In Guinea, we believe that the population today is sufficiently mature politically to avoid and reject this type of development. The socialist option remains more than ever that of the party-state of Guinea." It remains to be seen whether with the arrival of Western capital the presence of the Eastern bloc countries, especially the Soviet Union, will find itself greatly reduced. □

Southern Africa: An Issue in '84?

BY JOHN DE ST. JORRE

As U.S. politicians jockey for advantage this election year, Africa is not one of their major concerns. However, African issues, especially those related to southern Africa, are looming larger and encouraging the Democratic presidential contenders, the Reagan administration, and individual congressmen and senators to check their records and clarify their policy positions.

South Africa is recognized by all these actors as the most important and controversial issue, and several recent developments on the domestic front have helped to focus their attention.

In Washington, an unprecedented number of bills seeking to curb U.S. economic ties with South Africa passed through the House of Representatives late last year. Outside the capital, the antiapartheid campaign seems to have picked up fresh momentum. There has been a spurt of divestment measures at state and city level involving the sale of millions of dollars of stock in U.S. companies doing business in South Africa and, in September 1983, a new nationwide artists' and athletes' boycott of South Africa led by Arthur Ashe and Harry Belafonte was launched.

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Behind these moves is a discernible flexing of black electoral power that has had its most critical impact at the local level, but is also starting to influence decisions on Capitol Hill. The Democratic contenders for the presidency have already shifted to the left on South Africa and Jesse Jackson's decision to join the race has given increased prominence to an issue that is high on most politicized blacks' foreign policy agenda.

Two factors appear to have detonated this burst of activity: first, the situation in South Africa itself where the government's reforms are widely seen as cosmetic rather than fundamental; and second, the Reagan administration's policy of "constructive engagement" that has encouraged closer official links with Pretoria but so far has failed to produce a solution to the intractable Namibian problem.

The House of Representatives has passed bills that ban new U.S. corporate investment in South Africa, make the Sullivan fair employment code mandatory, end commercial bank loans to Pretoria, prohibit the importation of Krugerrand gold coins, reinstate the Carter administration's export controls on goods to the South African military and police, and expand nuclear and nonproliferation export controls to include parts and technology transfers.

Another measure, designed to stop the United States from supporting International Monetary Fund (IMF) loans to South Africa, was watered down in the Senate, but it retained sufficient strength to make U.S. backing for such loans more problematical in the future.

The fate of the House package will be decided by the Senate which, at the time of writing, had not yet dealt with the bills. No one on Capitol Hill was betting on what would happen, but the consensus was that while some of the legislation would be emasculated or thrown out, some would go through, opening the door for further sanctions and sending signals to South Africa diametrically opposed to the ones that have been flashing from Foggy Bottom and the White House during the last three years.

The only other time Congress put a crimp on business with South Africa was when the Evans Amendment was passed in 1978 banning Export-Import Bank loan guarantees to U.S. companies trading with South Africa whose affiliates in the Republic did not abide by the Sullivan Code. Much of the legislation has been around for some time, beached in committee or summarily dispatched on the House floor. But then, in late 1983, it all sailed through, picking up a surprising amount of conservative support.

What does it mean? Is it, as one Republican senator's aide put it, a mere "blip on the screen"? Or is it, in the words of Randall Robinson, executive director of TransAfrica, the African and Caribbean lobby group, "a quantum leap"?

Everyone seemed surprised at the support shown for the legislation — the conservatives, the liberals, the "neither-nor," the administration, even the sponsors of the bills themselves — Congressmen William Gray (D-Pa.), Stephen Solarz (D-N.Y.), Howard Berman (D-Calif.), and Howard Wolpe (D-Mich.). The principal reason, however, is not hard to find. Opposing apartheid in U.S. domestic politics has attained the status of motherhood. Few people in public life want to be seen supporting, even in a tepid way, South Africa's racial system.

This is not just a perception prevalent in Washington, but something that is beginning to seep up from the grass roots. In an election year, congressmen want to set their voting record on South Africa straight. There is little to be gained in most places from being pro-South African, so the choice is made easier. And there is no doubt that the growing strength of the black vote and the activities of anti-apartheid groups at state and city levels have helped to crystallize many politicians' attitudes.

An important dynamic is the sense that the administration is not getting anywhere with its constructive engagement strategy, a policy that has produced a marked "tilt" toward Pretoria.

"Although it condemns apartheid, the administration has become associated with the South African government in many peoples' minds," says Dan Matthews, director of the African Bibliographic Center, which monitors African developments and U.S. policy.

On Capitol Hill, there is a feeling of frustration. Many legislators heeded the State Department's pleas for patience while delicate negotiations for the independence of Namibia were being pursued. Now, with the Namibian issue stalled, the situation in southern Africa more violent and volatile than ever, and no real progress toward fundamental change in South Africa itself apparent, those who put their trust in the administration feel disillusioned. It is time, many of them say, to send a "signal" to Pretoria that not all Americans believe in the administration's policy or share its optimism.

The House legislation is strongly opposed by the State Department, the business community, and, of course, by the South African government. Frank Wisner, deputy assistant secretary for African affairs, calls it "irresponsible." He stressed that monitoring a mandatory Sullivan Code will impose a heavy burden on the department for which it is not equipped. The IMF amendment, he says, has created a dangerous precedent by politicizing the Fund, a precedent that could hurt black African countries not intended as targets by the drafters of the measure.

American businessmen argue that making the Sullivan Code mandatory will cut across what they are doing voluntarily in South Africa because the intervention of the U.S. bureaucracy will stifle the companies' own initiatives. "It's ironic," said one, "that just as the U.S. corporate presence in South Africa got its act together — U.S. companies have spent $75 million on black education, training, and social welfare since 1977 — we have legislation that negates that effort."

"U.S. businessmen in South Africa," says James Symington, a former congressman whose law firm represents the South African embassy here, "are concerned about the mood and criticism in the United States. They feel abandoned by the U.S. when they thought they were doing something right in terms of their labor practices."

Businessmen also point out that there will almost certainly be difficulties with the South African government over monitoring the Sullivan Code if it becomes law. "South Africa could make it difficult for U.S. firms to do things publicly that they can now do privately," said a senior executive of a large firm active in the Republic.

Another concern is the effect of the no-new-investment bill on black South Africans who might benefit from the additional jobs that would result from a larger U.S. corporate presence. "These bills are not going to bring the South African government down," says Symington, "but they will hurt a lot of people over there."

The measure Pretoria seems to fear most is the ban on the booming Krugerrand. Worldwide sales of the one-ounce gold coin reached $1.5 billion last year, outstripping earnings from South Africa's diamond and coal exports. The United States is by far the largest market, accounting for roughly half the total sales.

The critics of the legislation suggest that a better way of expressing congressional disapproval of South Africa would be to pass a "sense of the Congress" resolution and vote more financial aid for black education and social welfare programs in South Africa. But there seems little doubt that the architects of the legislation have signals and symbols uppermost in their minds.

"The legislation is aimed at disassociating the United States from the South African government, showing that Americans are not satisfied with constructive engagement, and care about apartheid," says Howard Wolpe, chairman of the House Subcommittee on Africa. "We would prefer the administration to put the pressure on, but since it's not doing so, Congress has to fill the gap," he continued. "But the administration can make use of the legislation with the South African government by playing the good guy and saying: 'Look, if you don't reform, you'll get more of this.'"

Even the opponents of the legislation tend to agree that South Africa is becoming more of an issue in the country as a whole, particularly among blacks. The increase in black voter registration and the growing number of black mayors and elected officials are creating a strong base for a more effective black foreign policy constituency. Blacks' major concerns are still in the domestic field, but black activist groups and antiapartheid "rainbow" coalitions have begun to capitalize on the new black power that has emerged in a number of states and cities.

The key national organizations are TransAfrica and the Washington Office on Africa here in D.C., and the American Committee on Africa in New York. Their efforts are largely concentrated on rallying support for anti-South African measures in Congress, divestment by states, city colleges, and other public institutions of stock held in U.S. corporations doing business in South Africa, and cultural and consumer boycotts.

The biggest breakthrough in recent years has been the passage of divestment bills in several state legislatures, the most sweeping occurring in Massachusetts. Twenty-five states and 20 major cities have divestment legislation pending, according to the American Committee on Africa. The Washington, D.C., City Council has already voted to divest municipal pension funds worth $60 million of shares in 31 companies, but the measure has to go to Congress for approval.

Last September, Arthur Ashe and Harry Belafonte, supported by 60 show business and sports personalities, launched the first nationwide campaign to dissuade American artists and athletes from performing in South Africa. The boycott, which is coordinated by TransAfrica, has high visibility, particularly among blacks, and has a secondary goal of educating and politicizing the black community on the apartheid issue.

Conventional wisdom has always had it that American blacks are not much interested in foreign affairs, including Africa. It is probably too early to say whether there has been a sea change, but the consensus appears to be that "something is happening," that apartheid is beginning to play in Peoria where, incidentally, there is a group working on divestment. While it may not all add up to a "quantum leap," it is certainly more than a "blip on the screen."

None of this probably much worries President Reagan's advisers who may have already written off the black vote. But what is interesting is that, whether a serious black foreign policy constituency actually exists or not, the perception that it does and that South Africa stirs it more than any other issue, is undoubtedly having a considerable impact on individual politicians, including the Democratic presidential contenders. The House debates on the anti-South Africa legislation revealed a number of conservative congressmen — Republicans and Democrats — showing a new sensitivity about the issue, encouraged in many cases by the presence of a sizable block of black voters back home.

Before looking at the individual positions of the candidates, it is worth sounding a note of caution. In a series of question and answer interviews with the Democratic aspirants that appeared in the *New York Times* recently, Africa was not once mentioned. But within the African context, the candidates seem to be taking policy issues seriously and most of them produced detailed responses to questions posed by TransAfrica last summer, which were published in a special edition of *TransAfrica Forum*.

On recognizing Angola, Senator Alan Cranston of California declares he would "move promptly" toward recognition. "Normalizing relations with Angola is probably long overdue," says Senator John Glenn of Ohio. "It is a step I would be willing to take." Senator Gary Hart of Colorado believes that diplomatic relations between the United States and Angola could be "mutually advantageous."

Senator Ernest Hollings of South Carolina was the only dissenter among this group, declaring that he would oppose normalization as long as Cuban troops remain in Angola. Former Vice-President Walter Mondale chose a middle path. "We would be willing to sit down and work out an acceptable basis for relations with Angola," he told TransAfrica.

Turning to the imposition of comprehensive UN sanctions against South Africa as a means of dismantling apartheid and achieving Namibia's independence, Cranston favors such an action. Glenn advocates less sweeping measures that include discouraging new U.S. investment in South Africa and warning Pretoria that "foot-dragging" on apartheid and Namibia could lead to sanctions "at some time."

Hart considers sanctions "useful if they are applied judiciously and thoughtfully." To be effective, he says, they must be coordinated with other concerned nations and "particularly with those people we want to help in South Africa." Hollings supports sanctions because, although they are not a "desirable policy of first choice . . . the present situation leaves us with few alternatives." Mondale's view is similar to Hart's — he would be prepared to use sanctions in cooperation with other nations, but adds that the U.S. should be ready to use a range of unilateral measures such as "restrictions in the area of exports, nuclear materials, and air traffic."

Congressman William Gray's bill banning new U.S. investment in South Africa received the support of all the Democratic candidates, including Jesse Jackson who had not declared for the presidency when the TransAfrica survey was conducted. The contenders also lined up behind Congressman Stephen Solarz's three-part amendment to the Export Administration Act mandating the Sullivan Code, banning the sale of Krugerrands, and barring new bank loans to the South African government.

In sum, the Democratic hopefuls not only strongly oppose the administration's policy of constructive engagement, which shows no signs of being modified as the election year progresses, but have emerged with a more radical approach to southern Africa than that adopted by the Carter administration. Even allowing for election rhetoric, this suggests that there is indeed something stirring out there. Jesse Jackson, buoyed by his first major foreign policy foray in the Middle East and whose own views on South Africa have hardened since he went there four years ago, will no doubt help to keep his white opponents on the line. □

The Search for a Growth Strategy for Africa

BY CAROL LANCASTER

While specialists argue on the nature of the development process, there is hardly any disagreement that at the heart of development there must be sustainable growth in national production and income. A strategy for achieving this goal remains the fundamental development challenge facing many African countries: What can be produced economically and sold where demand is strong and returns are sufficient to encourage continuing investment and, ultimately, a general expansion in production and income? For much of the continent today, there is no easy answer to this question.

African countries gained their independence largely as small, poor economies, mainly producing and exporting primary products — agricultural commodities and minerals. The Ivory Coast and Ghana, for example, still rely heavily on the export of cocoa. Zaire and Zambia depend on the export of copper. Mauritius earns most of its foreign exchange from the export of sugar, and Sudan, from cotton. Proceeds from these exports, plus aid and any commercial borrowing or foreign investment, financed imports of consumer and capital goods. Growth was to be achieved through establishing new industries such as textiles, processed foodstuffs, beer, matches, or cement to meet the domestic demand. Investment in these industries was encouraged through the imposition of tariffs or quotas to keep out competitive goods from abroad.

It is now generally acknowledged in Africa and elsewhere that the strategy of industrialization through import substitution failed to promote sustainable growth. The markets that import-substituting industries were intending to serve were often very small. Even today, 27 countries each have a population of less than six million and much of that population is only barely in the money economy.

However, production need not be only for the national market. Manufacturers can expand their output and sales through exporting. That this did not happen in Africa was the result of a number of factors. First, the protection provided to new industries eliminated low-cost competition from abroad. Without such competition and often with monopoly access to home markets, new producers lacked the incentive to lower costs and increase quality, which would allow them to compete in export markets. Second, labor costs were relatively high in many countries (African economies were not labor-surplus economies like those typical of Asia) and the productivity of labor was low due to the generally unskilled nature of the labor force. Manufacturing wages in Zambia, for instance, have remained at roughly three times the level of such wages in India or the Philippines.

Third, penetrating foreign markets proved to be a serious obstacle. Even where African products were competitive, barriers to their entry frequently limited access to foreign markets. Developed countries sought to protect their markets from some of the light manufactures — such as textiles and footwear — in which Africa could potentially compete. And African governments themselves frequently excluded light manufactures from neighboring countries as they attempted to establish these same industries at home.

Not only did import substitution fail as a development strategy, it may have actually set development back through its impact on agriculture. The emphasis on industrialization led to a neglect of agricultural development and relatively little investment was made in this sector, where the majority of Africans earn their living. With the slow expansion of agricultural production and income, the vast majority of the population had a limited demand for the commodities that could be produced by domestic industries. Moreover, policies designed to encourage industrialization actually discouraged increases in agricultural production. Many governments sought to maintain low food prices in order to keep the urban cost of living and wage demands low. Low wages would hold down the costs of industrial production. However, low food prices also discouraged agricultural producers from expanding production and contributed to the need by African countries to import increasing amounts of food to feed their populations. At independence, Africa was nearly self-sufficient in the production of grains. In 1981, imports of grain had risen to 24 million tons and

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were expected to continue to increase sharply in the future.

Rather than reducing the import bill for manufactured products, in many instances import-substitution policies have increased that bill, making continued production highly dependent on the availability of foreign exchange to buy needed raw materials and spare parts. The steel plant in Ajaokuta, Nigeria, for example, will have to import all of its coke and some of its iron, making Nigerian steel probably the most expensive in the world. And when foreign exchange shortages become severe, as at the present time in much of Africa, imports essential for continuing production are often cut back, resulting in a reduction or, in some cases, a complete stoppage in production. Factories in Ghana or Sudan typically operate at one-third or less of capacity.

The growing economic crisis facing many African countries has provoked a critical examination in Africa and abroad of existing growth policies and a search for more promising alternatives. Two approaches have been debated by African and foreign observers: (1) the growth strategy contained in the Lagos Plan of Action, adopted by the African heads of state at the Organization of African Unity meeting in Lagos in 1980; and (2) the set of proposals in the World Bank's report, *Accelerated Development in Sub-Saharan Africa* (also known as the "Berg Report" after its principal author, Elliot Berg), published in 1981.

Both of these approaches recognized that African economic policies would have to change if sustainable growth was to take place. For example, agriculture could no longer be neglected, prices for farmers would have to be raised to remunerative levels, and investment increased. Exchange rates would have to be adjusted to levels more in line with market equilibrium. Quasi-governmental institutions or parastatals, which play such a large role in African economies, would have to become more efficient or be restricted or eliminated. However, the Lagos Plan and the Berg Report differed in two key areas: how policy reform was to take place, and what strategy African governments should adopt to promote growth.

The Lagos Plan of Action contains hundreds of recommendations for change in African economic policies, but does no more than exhort governments to adopt these changes. The approach to growth in the Lagos Plan is import substitution writ large for the whole continent; rather than relying on the world market for essential imports and the exports to pay for them, African governments are advised to establish their own industries to meet their needs. They would not attempt to do this individually as in the past, but on a cooperative basis regionally and, ultimately, throughout the continent. Economic union among African countries would ensure that a wide range of natural and human resources were available to support development and that markets would be big enough to sustain large-scale production, not only in light industries, but ultimately in intermediate and heavy industries as well, such as chemicals or transport machinery. New industries would be financed in part through a "massive transfer" of foreign resources.

The Berg Report takes quite a different tack. It barely mentions regional economic cooperation. Rather, it recommends that African governments expand their exports, increasing their foreign exchange earnings and permitting them to import needed consumer and capital goods from the most economical source. Protection of domestic industries would be limited or eliminated and investment would be directed towards expanding those exports that African countries can produce and sell competitively. Thus, rather than withdrawing from the world market as implied by the approach recommended in the Lagos Plan, the Berg Report advises African countries to increase their reliance on that market.

The other major difference between the Lagos Plan and the Berg Report is the emphasis in the latter on the need for policy reform and the implicit link between policy reform and increased levels of economic assistance for Africa. The Berg Report recognizes that while it is necessary, economic policy reform can be difficult and politically risky to African governments. Substantially increased levels of foreign as-

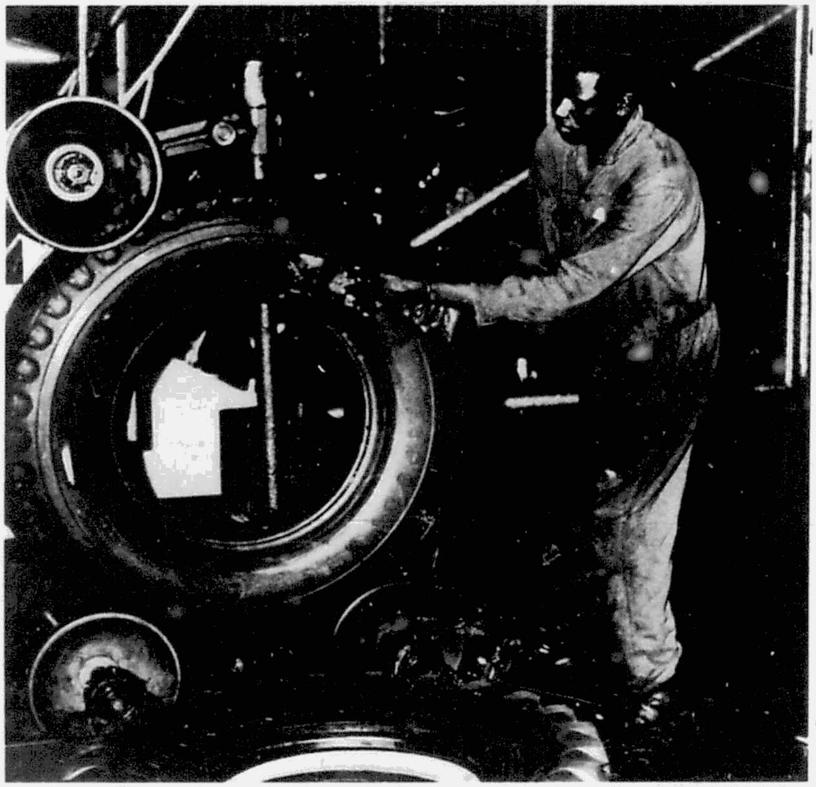

Photo: Camerapix

Producing tires in Kenya: Import substitution may have set development back

sistance would "lubricate the process of change" by softening the impact of policy reform on those groups adversely affected.

Both of these approaches have serious shortcomings as growth strategies for much of Africa today. The Lagos Plan of Action touches on an extremely important issue confronting many African countries: the very limited growth options for countries that are small, resource poor, often landlocked, and lacking in human and physical infrastructure. Economic cooperation is an obvious alternative. But it is one that has been tried in many parts of Africa and, with few exceptions, has failed. The East African Common Market, seen by many in the early years after independence as a promising example of effective economic cooperation on the continent, broke down in 1977 over disagreements between Kenya and Tanzania on the distribution of benefits from union and on basic differences in economic and political philosophies among the members. The Economic Community of West African States, established in 1972 by 16 countries, has yet to achieve any significant progress towards economic union. Other such arrangements, for example, the Preferential Trade Area among a group of 12 east and southern African states, remain little more than hopes. Simply put, the potential long-term economic gains from such unions have not been seen by political leaders as sufficient to offset the immediate political and economic costs of union. On these grounds, Africans and foreign observers alike are entitled to ask whether the growth strategy put forth in the Lagos Plan bears any relationship to reality.

Photo: U.S. AID

Africa's food imports: 24 million tons a year and rising

The Berg Report has different shortcomings. Its recommendations that African countries expand their exports as a means of recovery and growth would make sense if world markets for their traditional exports were strong or stable. In many cases, however, they are neither. Prices of commodities such as coffee and cocoa are at the lowest real levels since World War II and are not expected to recover before 1990. Moreover, demand for many of these goods is inelastic — it does not rise proportionately with falling prices. Thus, if all producing countries, or even a few significant producers, expanded their exports of these commodities, supplies could increase substantially, world demand would increase only a little if at all, and prices would fall even further. At best, exporters of these commodities must hope for a frost in Brazil or a political upheaval in a major producing country to unsettle markets and drive up prices.

Markets for African minerals — copper, cobalt, diamonds, uranium, and potash — are also depressed. World demand for these commodities tends to be a derived demand, dependent not so much on price, at least in the short run, as on general economic conditions in developed countries. Supply is often inelastic in the short term, thus leading to highly variable prices when demand suddenly surges or drops (e.g., as a result of a war scare or recession). The current weaknesses and continued instabilities in these markets make them uncertain sources of foreign exchange for governments relying on them to finance consumer and capital goods imports.

A second shortcoming in the Berg Report relates to the recommendation to African governments for policy reform, coupled with an appeal to donor governments to double their assistance to Africa. It appears in retrospect that the difficulties of achieving either meaningful policy reform or an increase in aid were greatly underestimated. Indeed, some African governments have initiated policy change. In a number of countries, agricultural prices have been increased, the size and role of government corporations have been reduced, and currencies have been devalued. Yet governments have moved slowly in the face of potential or real political opposition to such changes, and in some countries reforms have been eroded by lack of persistence or follow-through. Just one indication of the problems of implementing and maintaining policy reforms is the difficulties African countries have had in fulfilling the conditions of the International Monetary Fund programs throughout the continent. At one point in 1982, the IMF had cut off programs to seven African countries for their failure to fulfill the conditions of the loans.

In regard to donor assistance, the prospects for the foreseeable future are for a decline rather than a doubling in the real value of such assistance. Despite the World Bank's commitment to increase the proportion of its soft loans from the International Development Association (IDA) to Africa, the amount of these loans will fall with the reduction in the United States' contribution in the current replenishment of IDA. Due to the relatively low priority African problems have in the totality of U.S. foreign policy, to federal budget stringencies generally, and to the special reluctance of Congress to pass foreign aid bills in an election year, prospects are not bright that a decline in U.S. contributions to IDA will be offset by substantial increases in U.S. bilateral aid to Africa, which has risen only marginally in the past few years. (The recent proposal for a $500 million U.S. bilateral initiative for Africa reflects good intentions but is unlikely to become a reality without continuous pressure over several years on a reluctant Congress and the Office of Management and Budget. It remains to be seen whether this will occur. At any rate, the initiative includes ony $75 million for 1985.)

Assistance to Africa from OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries) governments has also fallen with the decline in the real price of oil and the disappearance of foreign exchange surpluses in major producing countries. Aid from France, West Germany, and Italy has risen somewhat in recent years, but in amounts that can hardly be described as substantial.

So what is to be done if Africa is to achieve sustainable growth? Africans must diversify their exports of primary products and invest in the export of processed and manufactured goods. Here, they confront difficult challenges. They must find and penetrate export markets. With the reduction or elimination of tariffs on imports from poorer developing countries by the United States and the European Economic Community (through the Generalized System of Preferences and the Lomé Agreement, respectively), the possibilities of finding markets have improved. However, should African countries become significant exporters of goods that threaten domestic producers in the U.S. or Europe, their access to these markets could be restricted.

Another and perhaps more difficult challenge is finding the investment — domestic or foreign — that will finance the establishment of processing or manufacturing industries for export. African countries are limited by their own inadequate physical and human infrastructure, their relatively high wages, and many governmental policies and practices that discourage such investment — red tape, bureaucratic inertia, price controls, indigenization requirements, sudden changes in key policies and personnel, and corruption — all exacerbated throughout the continent by budgetary and foreign exchange restrictions arising out of current economic problems. There are safer, easier, and often more profitable places to invest money, for both Africans and foreigners.

What are the implications of these problems for U.S. policies toward Africa? First, it is tragic that now, at a time when much of Africa most needs economic assistance, the United States has reduced its contribution to IDA, the major and possibly most effective source of development assistance to many African countries. As a result, U.S. policy has forced down resource flows to Africa, not simply by the amount of decrease in the U.S. contribution to IDA, but by three times that amount, since every U.S. dollar is matched by $3 from other donors who tend to follow the U.S. lead in setting their contribution levels. The U.S. cannot buy economic recovery and growth in Africa with its aid. Sustainable growth must ultimately be achieved by Africans themselves through their own efforts and policies — and luck with weather and the international economy. But the United States, by reducing its assistance now, could make the achievement of recovery and growth more difficult and prolonged.

Problems of African growth suggest a second point regarding U.S. aid to the region. During the past decade, U.S. aid generally has had a strong focus on equity, that is, on ensuring that the benefits of growth are enjoyed by the poor through concentrating on projects providing for basic human needs, such as health care or primary education. This is an understandable approach, but with Africa's current problems, a questionable one. For without sustainable long-term growth, African countries will have few benefits to distribute to anyone. American aid needs to be better targeted on establishing the preconditions for growth: improvement, maintenance, and expansion of infrastructure; development and dissemination of economically viable technical improvements for African agriculture; expansion of education so that there will be an adequate pool of vocationally and professionally trained Africans to support private- and public-sector investments; and policy reform so that potential domestic and foreign investors (including small farmers) will be encouraged to initiate or expand production. What must be done to establish the preconditions for growth will differ from country to country. And none is likely to be easily or quickly achieved. The United States must be flexible enough to tailor its aid to the needs of specific countries.

Prospects for African recovery and growth are not bright at present. But the current economic malaise through much of the continent may have had one beneficial effect. Africans themselves are deeply concerned about their economic problems, and have given fresh attention to how they can achieve sustainable growth. In a number of countries, governments have begun to attempt to deal with current problems. What kind of help will they have from the rest of the world? □

Africa and the U.S. at Odds

BY MONIQUE RUBENS

As the 1983 session of the United Nations General Assembly drew to a close the week before Christmas, its results left little cause for holiday cheer. UN Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar called 1983 "a turbulent year marked by much violence and tragedy," and warned that "current developments are ominous." Although most observers agreed that U.S.-Soviet tension did not cloud the assembly's work as much as had been anticipated, American policies continued at times to set the United States apart at the UN, reinforcing its self-image as a major, but often lone, fighter at the international organization.

Under President Reagan's administration, UN diplomacy took a back seat to economic and military might as a tool of American foreign policy. Its political orientation, typified by a global vision of perceived Soviet threats and a staunch determination to preserve the American ideals of a free-market economy and political liberties, came to the forefront at the UN in 1983 in such issues as the downing of the South Korean airliner, the Grenada invasion, the Gandhi mini-summit, and global negotiations. And the administration's policies of linking Cuban troop withdrawal from Angola to Namibian independence and "constructive engagement" with South Africa isolated it at the UN and continued to hamper progress on southern African issues.

To an uncommon degree, the UN's two principal arenas of political activity — the General Assembly (GA) and the Security Council — operated in tandem last year. The 158-member assembly is the UN forum in which world leaders express their views on international issues through speeches and the presentation of resolutions. Resolutions adopted by the veto-free assembly are purely recommendatory.

In contrast, those adopted in the 15-member Security Council, whose function is to maintain international peace and security, are legally binding on governments. However, unlike those in the General Assembly, the Security Council resolutions are subject to the veto power held by the five permanent members — the United States, the Soviet Union, Britain, France, and China. Yet, provided that it has otherwise broad support, even a vetoed resolution — like a General Assembly recommendation —can serve to keep the international conscience alive to issues that might otherwise die from underexposure.

In Security Council deliberations, the United States wields great influence not only as a permanent member with the right of veto but as a superpower of virtually unchallenged economic and political strength. Its traditional adversary at the council table is the Soviet Union. Between the rival giants and their supporters are representatives of a group allied with neither — the 101-nation nonaligned movement. In 1983, there were eight nonaligned delegations among the council's nonpermanent members, making the bloc's support crucial for achieving the minimum nine votes required to adopt a resolution in the absence of a veto.

Within the numerically dominant nonaligned movement, Africans represent the UN's largest regional group. In the Security Council, they exercise their influence through Africa's three nonpermanent representatives — last year, Togo, Zaire, and Zimbabwe. In the General Assembly, they can bring their influence to bear directly through the weight of the bloc's 50 member states.

For African nations, UN membership remains an important symbol of national independence and identity. Although subject to external voting pressures, they are sensitive to their roles as their region's representatives, particularly when they sit on the Security Council. The point is illustrated by the role Zimbabwe played in two surprise events that dominated UN attention last year — the Soviet downing of the Korean jetliner, and the American move into Grenada.

In the case of the Korean incident, the United States was able to muster only the bare nine-vote minimum, which — had the Russians and Poles not exercised their veto — would have won adoption of a Security Council resolution stressing the need for a "full and adequate explanation" of the Soviet action. Abstentions by Zim-

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babwe, China, Nicaragua, and Guyana further weakened U.S. diplomatic efforts to condemn the U.S.S.R.

The Harare delegation's abstention was especially galling to the Reagan administration, which had applied heavy pressure on Zimbabwe Prime Minister Robert Mugabe, then in Washington, to vote in favor. But Mugabe maintained that Zimbabwe's abstention was in line with the views of other southern African nations that Zimbabwe represented on the council.

Zimbabwe also stood apart from the U.S. on the Grenada issue. It voted for the Security Council resolution, which demanded the "immediate withdrawal of the foreign troops" and, more importantly, co-sponsored a similar GA resolution, which criticized "the armed intervention." Partly in response, and reflecting its willingness to use American economic power as a stick, the Reagan administration cut U.S. aid to Zimbabwe from $75 million to $40 million.

The image of the United States as a combatant in the UN arena fighting to preserve its positions was furthered by its UN ambassador, Jeane Kirkpatrick, who in summing up the GA session said the U.S. policies were "reasonably well defended" and declared she was "satisfied" with the session's results. But those successes she highlighted to prove her case were examples of damage control or prevention and only heightened the feeling of a United States at bay from its UN colleagues.

Attempts to put the question of Puerto Rico on the agenda and to oust Israel from the GA failed, she noted. She was equally "pleased" that moves to abolish the treaty governing Antarctica and the Western Sahara problem did not become "polarized" issues. Nor, she said, did the session turn out to be "a theater for East-West confrontation." Her evaluations gave further weight to a sense of an American siege mentality at the UN, which stems, explained a nonaligned diplomat, from the American perception that it "lacks friends" in the organization. He pointed out that in any resolution before the UN the Soviet Union can count on the automatic support of 23 to 25 countries. U.S. allies were far more likely to weigh domestic and regional considerations before casting their lot with the Americans. "Relative to our strength in the world, our position in the UN is weak indeed," said Kirkpatrick, although she added that it had improved "and will continue" to do so.

UN Secretary-General Perez de Cuellar and last year's GA president, Jorge Illueca of Panama, were considerably bleaker in their assessments of the session. "One of the most dangerous developments of the past year has been the impairment of communications between the major powers," said Perez de Cuellar. Both bemoaned the lack of progress on disarmament. The secretary-general said nuclear disarmament would be resolved only by the two major powers' coming to the conference table, while Illueca suggested a Security Council heads-of-state summit to improve communication.

Perez de Cuellar listed the Middle East, Namibia, Cyprus, Central America, the Iran/Iraq war, Afghanistan, Kampuchea, violations of human rights, and the world economic crisis as areas that continue to threaten international stability. The UN leaders' assessments of this session's achievements also represented exercises in damage control. That everyone was still talking about the trouble spots and that a dialogue was maintained was for both UN officials some measure of success for this year's GA.

East-West polarization, which, according to the Third World, often eclipses their concerns at the UN, led Indira Gandhi, India's prime minister and current chairman of the nonaligned, to invite world leaders to New York for discussions during the GA session. Described as a mini-summit, the event attracted 30 heads of state for two days of informal talks. The turnout was disappointing and marked by the conspicuous absence of President Reagan, who took the opportunity in his speech before the GA to carp at the Soviets and to chide the nonaligned. Not all its members, he said, "have shared the founders' commitment of genuine nonalignment."

But since Gandhi took over as head of the movement, most observers have been in agreement that it has moderated some of its previously strident tones and has tried to find solutions acceptable to the West. This was particularly evident in the issue of global negotiations, called for by developing countries, whose aims originally included sweeping structural changes in the world's economic relations and financial institutions. But progress on global negotiations has been stymied by developed countries, which, led by the United States, refuse to negotiate on any issue that might threaten their economic power.

Referring to the informal discussions on the subject held during the GA sessions, Ugandan Ambassador Olara Otunnu remarked, "The U.S. has not rejected global negotiations, but it has not been particularly forthcoming either." Alan Keyes, U.S. ambassador to the UN Economic and Social Council, maintained that it was not the U.S. place to push the process forward. Congressman Stephen Solarz (D-N.Y.), a U.S. representative to the 38th session, suggested that the U.S. should be "more willing to directly engage" the Third World on these issues, although he stressed he was speaking in his capacity as congressman, not as member of the American UN delegation.

At the end of the session, Illueca announced that progress had been made in the informal discussions, which would continue into the new year. Although no "specific commitments" were made, "a climate of trust" had been established, he said. Despite this cautious optimism, however, the actual launching of the negotiations still appears to be a long way off.

Debates on southern African issues during the 38th session provided insights into the seemingly unbridgeable gulf that separates the United States from the Third World at the UN. The Reagan administration's insistence on linking Cuban troop withdrawals from Angola to Namibian independence, and its policy of "constructive engagement" with Pretoria, continued to isolate it and blocked movement on these issues during the session.

Africans first succeeded in switching the focus of the stalled Namibia negotiations away from the five-nation Western Contact Group and back to the UN during a May 1983 Security Council meeting. Perez de Cuellar, after a trip to southern Africa last summer, concluded, "We have never before been so close to finality on the modalities of implementing Resolution 435" — the 1978 Security Council resolution that created the machinery for Namibia's independence — but added that South African insistence on Cuban withdrawal from Angola as a precondition for 435's implementation "makes it impossible to launch the United Nations plan."

Consistently striving for moderation and unanimous resolutions to make a stronger political case, the Africans, backed by the nonaligned, achieved Security Council condemnation of the U.S./South African concept of linkage in a resolution adopted in October. The final vote was 14 in favor, despite efforts by American Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Chester Crocker to obtain assurances of French and British vetoes. The United States, not wanting to isolate itself further, abstained.

For some time, the Americans and British had been pressuring the South Africans to withdraw their troops from southern Angola as a means of furthering progress on Namibia. South Africa's acquiescence — a proposal to disengage its forces for 30 days — came just before Angola brought its complaint against South Africa to the Security Council. Only the U.S. abstained on the ensuing council resolution, which demanded that South Africa "unconditionally withdraw" all its "occupation forces" from Angola. Instead, the United States put emphasis on the South African offer, hailing it as a "major new step."

But before anyone had time to clarify the South African terms, Pretoria's forces launched a major new attack in southern Angola. Within a fortnight, the Angolans returned to the Security Council, warning of a "worsening military situation" and bringing a counterproposal seeking Pretoria's pledge to withdraw its troops from southern Angola and to begin implementation of Resolution 435. The United States, still preferring to highlight the recent South African offer and annoyed at the resolution's "polemics," abstained along with Britain on the latest council resolution, which was stronger than its predecessor and which obliquely referred to the possibility of imposing sanctions against South Africa. But despite the proposed retreat of South African forces from Angola, the long-term prospects for a resolution of the conflict and for progress on Namibia's independence remain stalemated over the linkage issue.

Pretoria's increasingly militaristic stance against its neighbors makes it likely that UN sanctions against South Africa will be sought in 1984. Although the United States would veto sanctions, an informed source hinted that Britain may abstain, leaving Washington further isolated in its southern African policy. Asked about the purpose of pushing for sanctions in the face of a certain U.S. veto, SWAPO's UN representative, Theo-Ben Gurirab, retorted, "We're making a political case."

The lack of progress toward peace in southern Africa was matched by a stalemate in the Western Sahara, despite a concensus GA resolution that reaffirmed the one adopted by the OAU in June 1983, urging Morocco and Polisario to undertake negotiations for a cease-fire to create conditions necessary for a referendum.

With Algeria, Polisario, and Morocco all claiming victory for their positions, Morocco's then Foreign Minister M'hamed Boucetta quickly pointed out that the UN resolution did not mean Morocco had to sit down with Polisario leaders. Hopes for a referendum by the OAU December 31 deadline vanished when Morocco launched a major attack against Polisario forces, who claimed that Moroccan escalation was planned in collaboration with Washington. Although Ambassador Keyes said that the "mutually beneficial" U.S.-Moroccan relationship does not put the United States "in a position to dictate outcomes," U.S. support for Rabat remains an important factor in the Western Sahara equation.

Lack of policy planning to support its strategic aims, a tendency to shore up selected African allies with military rather than economic aid, and a concentration on the Namibian morass while missing opportunities to develop relationships elsewhere on the continent appear to be the hallmarks of this administration's Africa policies. At the UN, America's perceived support for South Africa and seeming disregard for African economic and political concerns has reinforced the perception of the United States as, at best, an aloof, uncomprehending superpower.

Economic, not military, assistance to Africa is sorely needed, particularly in the regions afflicted by drought. At the end of the General Assembly session, Perez de Cuellar drew special attention to Africa's economic woes. He launched an appeal for aid and in early 1984 visited eight West African countries to confer with senior officials about these problems. Perhaps this is one area where the secretary-general can achieve some success in an otherwise gloomy international scenario. □

South Africa's Stakes in the Border War

BY BARRY STREEK

There have been high points of optimism and low points of little progress during the prolonged international negotiations for peace in Namibia that have been going on for more than seven years since Dr. Henry Kissinger, then U.S. secretary of state, went to the South African capital of Pretoria on a much-publicized peace mission in September 1976. The South African decision to "disengage" its troops in southern Angola may turn out to be one of those high points, but in Namibia, where war is a grim reality, there is little expectation that the current round of negotiations will be any more successful than previous discussions in ending the violence.

A new grouping of six internal political parties, called the Multi-Party Conference (MPC) — which has been praised by South African Prime Minister Pieter Botha — has, for instance, already begun drawing up a constitution for a "post-independence" Namibia, preempting phases eight and nine for the implementation of Security Council Resolution 435 for a United Nations-supervised settlement of the dispute, where provision is made for a constituent assembly. The MPC has also said it was considering forming an interim government.

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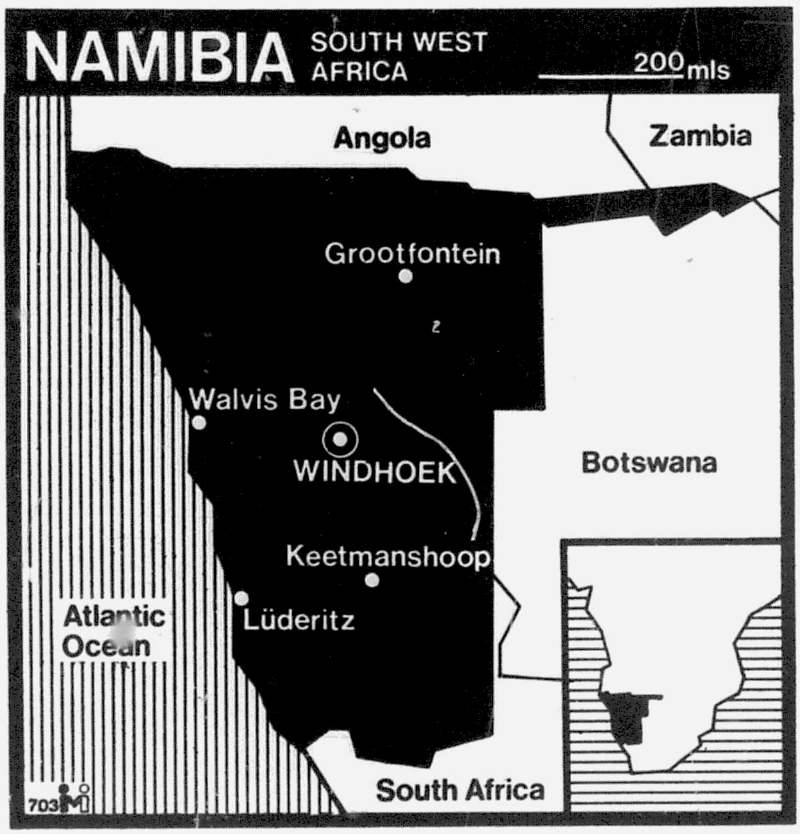
Indeed, one of the key figures in the MPC, Dirk Mudge of the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance, said the new grouping would have to prepare for the possibility that Resolution 435 would be indefinitely delayed by the Cuban troops' continued presence in Angola. It could not declare unilateral independence, nor could it put a constitution into effect, and it could not implement Resolution 435. "But we are not going to be caught with our pants down, so we will draft a constitution," Mudge said.

And in Cape Town, a survey of opinion among ministers, deputy ministers, and National Party members of Parliament in its defense and foreign affairs committees found that 82.3 percent said South Africa should not negotiate with the South-West Africa People's Organization and 88.3 percent disagreed with the statement that South Africa could not win the war against SWAPO.

These realities put optimism about a settlement in Namibia in its place, despite the war's heavy toll. The latest casualty figures indicate the heavy price being paid for the continuation of the conflict. According to the South-



West Africa Territory Force (SWATF), 7,894 SWAPO guerrillas have been killed between 1966 and August 1983. Of these, 633 died between January and August 1983. According to SWATF, between 1979 and September 1983, 303 civilians have died and 513 were injured in landmine blasts caused by SWAPO; 366 civilians were killed by the insurgents; and 1,341 civilians were "abducted."

But in a paper submitted to the United Nations conference on Namibia in Paris in April, the UN Council for Namibia gave a very different picture. SWAPO, it said, had "put out of action" 2,865 security force soldiers, destroyed 79 trucks and 37 armed personnel carriers, and shot down 18 combat aircraft, 14 helicopters, and two reconnaissance planes. The South African government disputed these figures — they were "absolutely ridiculous and untrue," the SADF said — but independent assessment of the situation is impossible.

The invasion of Angola in December 1983 and January 1984 again underlined the toll of war: according to official figures, 21 South African soldiers died and about 500 Angolan, Cuban, and SWAPO troops perished in the clashes, which included a tank battle near the town of Cuvelai. The SADF has never released injury figures, but for every dead soldier, many more have been wounded.

No official figure for the number of soldiers on the Namibian/Angolan border has been given, but estimates range from 20,000 to 35,000 to the UN Council for Namibia's figure of 100,000. Nor has any official figure been given for the cost of fighting the war, but it is clearly heavy — guestimates of the military costs to South Africa range from $1.6 million to $4.8 million a day. The South African government says Namibia is costing nearly $900 million a year.

According to Dr. Andre du Pisanie, a political science lecturer at the University of South Africa, it is not that its presence is well received: "South Africa's position is weakened because the army is not seen as a gentle giant protecting the people. There is a perception of the South African Defense Force as an occupying army and a destructive force. This is definitely increasing and is now well established."

But what is beyond any dispute is that South African whites have made a major financial, logistical, and emotional commitment to fighting the war in Namibia and Angola. Nearly every white family has a relative or acquaintance on what is called "the border" at any given time. At the age of 18, every young white man becomes eligible for two years' compulsory military service, part of which is likely to be spent in the hot, dusty sands of the border. After that, they will be called up for camps, some of which may be three months long.

In short, however one may assess the political role of South African soldiers

Photo: P. Marlow/Sygma

South African soldiers at observation post in northern Namibia: A financial, logistical, and emotional commitment to fighting the war

in Namibia, white South Africans have made a significant sacrifice to fight the war on the border. And they are not going to give up that sacrifice very easily. No South African government, particularly one facing right-wing pressure, can afford politically to strike any deal that is not acceptable to those people. The political price would simply be too high. This is one of the tough realities that has to be faced in any possible peace settlement in Namibia — and it is one that is often ignored or downplayed.

It has been suggested that South African whites might be persuaded to accept a deal that involves the withdrawal of the 25,000 to 30,000 Cuban troops from Angola coupled with an undertaking by all parties that Namibia will never be used as a base for guerrilla insurgency inside South Africa. This possibility cannot be dismissed, but, at the same time, the evidence in support of it is not very strong.

Indeed, the South African minister of defense, General Magnus Malan, an influential member of the government, was quite emphatic on the subject when he spoke in Prime Minister Pieter Botha's constituency of George in October 1982. South Africa, he said, could not withdraw from Namibia, as the operational area would then be transferred from the territory to the Northern Cape and South Africa would lose the initiative.

Malan's actual words are significant not only because they reflect thinking in the military establishment, but also because they say much about white motivations for their commitment to the war in Namibia. With Prime Minister Botha watching, Malan, the former head of the Defense Force, but now an elected Nationalist member of Parliament, said: "South-West Africa's [Namibia's] war is your war. If you withdraw from South-West Africa, then you are busy extending the front, bringing it 1,500 kilometers closer to the Republic of South Africa. You will shift the operational area from the Cunene in South Angola, where the struggle is actually taking place, to the Orange River, to the Northern Cape. If South-West Africa is communist, I see Botswana going in the same direction because it will be subject to pressure. And Zimbabwe will have no hesitation in becoming totally Marxist. Then there is Mozambique, which is already communist. Then you will have the red belt pulled tight on our borders."

UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi: Guerrilla activities are increasing Angola's need for Cuban support

To illustrate this interpretation, the government-owned television monopoly in South Africa produced a map of neighboring countries with red arrows and a red belt circling around the Republic from Angola to Mozambique, in the middle of which was a picture of the hammer and sickle. General Malan continued: "Then all our borders will be open for terrorism and incursions, in the Transvaal, Northern Natal, and the Northern Cape."

In the uproar afterwards — the official opposition in South Africa described his statement as "one of the most disturbing and destructive statements made by a South African cabinet minister in years" — Malan issued a clarifying statement saying that he "merely stated very clearly why we are in South-West Africa and why we cannot summarily withdraw."

And Foreign Minister Roelof "Pik" Botha said at a public meeting two days later that South Africa would have to accept the result of a free and fair election in Namibia even if it were won by SWAPO. General Malan had, however, given the clearest indication ever of government thinking on Namibia, and emphasized just how difficult, if not impossible, it will be for independence negotiations to be concluded that can satisfy both the requirements of UN Security Council Resolution 435 and the political aspirations of white South Africans.

On the other hand, for the first time questions are being asked since the latest invasion about whether it is really worth paying that price. Among those who have raised doubts about South African military strategies in Namibia and Angola are Professor Herman Giliomee, an Afrikaans-speaking political scientist; Neil Orpen, a military historian; and various newspapers. The antigovernment *Cape Times*, for instance, said in an editorial: "It is difficult to see where this policy is leading, other than to turn Angola into another Lebanon and provide a new flood of Soviet arms into the area." Still, the newspaper did also say that "the Botha government, we must assume, has given the military their head." It might also have said that a large majority of whites have given it their heart. As the former head of military intelligence, General V. Du Toit, put it after the invasion, the South African public was "very loyal." Despite the public airing of these doubts, the majority of white South Africans still fully support the government's military strategies — and they are not, for the present, going to give up in an election what they have fought for so long in battle.

Ostensibly, the only outstanding issue in the way of a settlement in Namibia is the presence of some 25,000 Cuban troops in Angola. Prime Minister Botha has time and again stressed that the Cubans would have to withdraw from Angola before any deal could be finalized. For instance, he told his own Cape Nationalists last year: "The government has always had a reasonable attitude towards a settlement, but we are not, and never will be, willing to support any plan unless a clear prior arrangement is made regarding the withdrawal of Cubans from Angola."

Certainly the Cuban presence in Angola is a major problem in the way of a solution, for not only the South African government but also the Reagan administration has linked the Cuban withdrawal to any settlement. The South African view is that the Cubans are a destabilizing factor in southern Africa, that they are agents of Moscow fulfilling the aims of Soviet expansionism, and that they facilitate SWAPO's "terrorism." The Frontline states have repeatedly rejected any linkage between a Cuban withdrawal and a settlement in Namibia.

In such circumstances, the prospects of a Cuban withdrawal seem unlikely for the foreseeable future. Those circumstances could of course change, but a continued war of insurgency by UNITA with continued support by Cuba and the Eastern bloc for the MPLA government appears the most probable course. If this is the case, settlement of the Namibian dispute with internationally supervised elections will continue to be elusive.

Indeed, one of the best informed military correspondents in South Africa, Willem Steenkamp of the *Cape Times*, argued that there were advantages to South Africa if the conflict were prolonged. Not only, he wrote, did UNITA's activities force the Angolan government to spread its troops throughout the large country, making follow-up operations against SWAPO "much easier," but they substantially hampered SWAPO penetration of Namibia because the guerrillas had to contend with UNITA forces and informers as well as the security forces on the Namibian border.

Moreover, the continued conflict constituted "powerful leverage on the Angolan government." There was also "the possibility that UNITA can be used to dislodge the Angolan-based Cubans and bring the border war to a satisfactory [to Pretoria] conclusion," Steenkamp wrote.


Photo: W. Campbell/Sygma

Former U.S. Secretary of State Vance and South African Prime Minister Botha discussing UN plan for Namibia in 1978: There is no expectation that current negotiations will fare any better

But what are the real chances of a Cuban withdrawal? It is difficult, at the best of times, to work out what is happening in Angola's civil war, but from reports reaching South Africa, it certainly seems that the guerrilla activities of UNITA are escalating, increasing rather than reducing the Angolan government's need for Cuban support. Moreover, it is clear that the Angolan economy has suffered badly during the war, preventing any significant recovery and increasing the need for outside support, which, to this date, has come from the Cubans and/or Russians. South Africa's support for UNITA has never been confirmed officially in Pretoria, but it is clearly important for the rebel movement's continued successes.

With that kind of assessment of potential aims, there seems to be little or no possibility of the South African government, or white people in South Africa, accepting any arrangement with the Cubans remaining in Angola. It is not that these political realities have changed significantly since the first high-powered negotiators started coming to southern Africa in an attempt to settle the Namibian dispute peacefully. Over the years, numerous top diplomats have attempted to promote a settlement in Namibia, including the former U.S. secretary of state, Henry Kissinger; the foreign ministers of the five-nation Western Contact Group, including the following secretary of state, Cyrus Vance, and the then British foreign secretary, David Owen; the former U.S. ambassador to the UN, Donald F. McHenry; the current U.S. assistant secretary of state for African affairs, Chester Crocker; and the UN secretary-general, Javier Perez de Cuellar. In January 1981, there were all-party talks in Geneva, but they did not result in any substantial progress toward a settlement.

During 1983, the British junior minister in the Foreign Office of African affairs, Malcolm Rifkind, and Crocker's deputy, Frank Wisner, have joined the list of those who have been to Pretoria to discuss the Namibian issue. Early in 1984, Crocker returned to South Africa and paved the way for the "disengagement" decision. But in spite of this extended Western diplomatic energy and in spite of the varying degrees of optimism over the years, finalization of a peace package in Namibia still seems to be a long way off.

When Dr. Kissinger met the former South African Prime Minister John Vorster in September 1976, they talked about, among other issues, independence for Namibia by the end of 1978. The international negotiators have stopped talking about dates any more — Perez de Cuellar merely talked about "substantial progress" in his visit to South Africa in August 1983, and Chester Crocker would only say the latest talks were "useful." For good reason. The real possibilities of a settlement in the near future just do not exist. □

Policy Options in Namibia

BY JOHN SEILER

If there is an end to the Namibian impasse, it is not yet in sight. South Africa has little incentive to strike a diplomatic bargain leading to early UN-supervised elections with their inevitable SWAPO victory — whatever form the vote may eventually take. Despite the grinding pressures of UNITA attacks, and the traumatic impact of the South African Defense Force's (SADF) Operation Askari in December 1983 and January 1984, the Angolan government has less motivation to give in to the South Africa-U.S. demand for Cuban troop withdrawal than it did before the December SADF attack began.

If anything, for Pretoria, the lesson of Askari was altogether reassuring. Finding signs of Soviet advisers and capturing Soviet arms not before seen in southern Africa demonstrates not only for South Africans, but for sympathetic Western audiences as well, that the Soviet threat is mounting. At the same time, in a feat of paradoxical reasoning not surprising to close observers of South African official processes, the South African government has concluded that it can cope with the new ensemble of forces directed against it.

The implications of this perception point away from a South African withdrawal of forces from the Angolan-Namibian front, contrary to the forced optimism characteristic of Reagan administration negotiations early in 1984 in the aftermath of Operation Askari. At best, Washington might succeed in prompting South African restraint from further raids into Angola, at least for the balance of the presidential campaign period, thus minimizing the marginal prospect that Democratic candidates and the eventual Democratic nominee might argue for U.S. withdrawal from the Republic as punishment for South African aggression and force South Africa toward the center of campaign issues in a way awkward for President Reagan to answer, and (much less likely) even costing him a substantial loss of votes.

At worst, the SADF might attack again in force, this time generating a significantly larger Cuban troop involvement and, if the engagement is prolonged and threatening to the SADF, bringing the Reagan administration to a serious appraisal of whether to help Pretoria and with what forces.

What can be done to avert such a foreboding moment in U.S. regional policy? Very little, given the intertwined perspectives that govern decision making at this time in Pretoria and Washington. South African righteousness about its regional role has been fueled by the apparent success of its coercive policies vis-à-vis Mozambique, Swaziland, and Lesotho, which are seen as a victory for tough-minded realism. Only the parallel sense of policy triumph in Angola may be open to alternative interpretations aimed at constraint of South African military initiatives. But from what souces are such views to come?

In an admirable effort toward this end, the U.S. government briefed senior South African intelligence officials about the limited aims and resources being brought to bear by the Soviet Union in southern Africa. Ironically, this briefing may have contributed to the boldness of Operation Askari, which was launched after this briefing and after the Soviet Union warned South Africa of the risks inherent in any escalation of the SADF role in Angola.

Given preliminary South African responses to the increased flow of Soviet military aid from September to November 1983 (it was taken as an inevitable outgrowth of Soviet aims for regional hegemony, but Pretoria did not connect its increase to its own earlier increased support for UNITA, nor did officials seem worried about the immediate military consequences), at what point, if at all, in the probable incremental escalation of Cuban involvement in fighting alongside Angolan troops against the SADF and in the presence of increased Soviet arms and advisers would the present South African perception of unblinking confidence reverse itself?

And what about the prevalent, though seldom articulated, perspective common to that coterie of U.S. officials now controlling the formulation of U.S. regional policy? Chester Crocker, the American assistant secretary of state for African affairs, undoubtedly maintains that admirable dispassion that led him to characterize SWAPO as reflective in part of genuine Namibian aspirations, but at least one of his senior officials has privately spoken of that organization as a "two-bit" movement that did not deserve U.S. support. However narrowly that narrow-minded view may be held in the Africa bureau

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of the Department of State, given the extraordinarily limited leverage U.S. officials have vis-à-vis their South African counterparts, it appears unlikely that these Americans will weigh SWAPO highly as they calculate where to press the South Africans about their plans for Namibia.

What are those South African plans? One more venture to tap a non-SWAPO (or potentially anti-SWAPO) black leadership cadre was launched in late 1983 — the Multi-Party Conference. From the administrator-general's perspective (to be more precise, from that of his senior adviser, Sean Cleary, formerly a senior official in South Africa's embassy in Washington and then briefly consul general in Los Angeles), the MPC represents a genuine effort to break the logjam brought about by the collapse of the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA) and the public humiliation of "second-tier" (ethnic regional) administrations in various official reports of their incompetence and corruption. Cleary, if not his more stolid colleagues in Pretoria, acknowledges tacitly that separate administration has failed unalterably in Namibia and that some vehicle is now required to bring a semblance of overall national planning and program implementation to the territory. He would like to channel those blacks not yet stigmatized by association with either the DTA or second-tier governments, and who have some competence and leadership potential, into taking a concerted lead toward this end.

There are such blacks, a dwindling number who have to this time refused to participate in any South African-sanctioned political dispensation for fear of an inevitable political loss to SWAPO, but who simultaneously have refused to come under SWAPO's umbrella, either because they fear Ovambo dominance in a SWAPO regime or because they see a role for their own talents only outside the SWAPO framework. Some of them, at a very late point in Namibian political life, have turned away from an embittering preoccupation with international negotiations (captured in the repeated torment of whether to meet with Contact Group and UN officials during Windhoek visits) to engage both urban and rural Namibians in what they call "nation building," but which functionally is no more than traditional community development work. The cruel irony is twofold — that it took them so long to turn away from the passivity of waiting for negotiations to work; and that no more than a negligible amount of community development work has been done in Namibia beyond the immediate confines of mission stations and in urban church centers.

Despite this burgeoning commitment to "nation building" by at least some significant black leaders, the prospects for the MPC or any subsequent mechanism taking on life as a motivator for national development remain bleak. As with every earlier South African venture at encouraging non-SWAPO black leadership, this one suffers already from two disabling stigmas. Association with Pretoria carries a risk that still outweighs any conceivable advantages, and no Ovambo or Kavango leader wants to commit himself, partly because of SWAPO's omnipresence in those areas, but partly because in his more optimistic moments he can see himself as leader of a non-SWAPO Namibian government because of his population preponderance.

In the longer run, the commitment to nation building may be joined by a very powerful ally. SADF senior commanders in northern Namibia without exception have taken on governmental-administrative roles nominally assigned to second-tier governments for want of second-tier competence or even presence.

Well beyond their vaguely stated mandate to carry out "civic action," these men are engaged in what amounts to colonial administration — policing of ordinary social conflicts and maintenance of limited services available to these areas. But at the same time, each commander has begun to focus on "development" problems. Because no explicit mandate has been given for this activity, a remarkable range of views and embryonic activities exists. None of these men has any deep-rooted commitment to separate development as Afrikaner ideology. If anything, working with black troops has persuaded them that too much has been made of the need for ethnic separateness, although none of them appears ready to renounce apartheid for South Africa itself.

Leaving aside for the moment the problems posed for the U.S. government by the stalemated negotiations and the risk of a sharp escalation in fighting caused by South African misperceptions of Angolan, Cuban, and Soviet motives, a hint of longer-term hope lies in this convergent preoccupation with nation building and development. In a comparatively short time, the view now held by sector commanders may dominate the SWA Territorial Force, and, in addition, as sector commanders and senior officers are reassigned to SADF headquarters in Pretoria, they will bring to those more sheltered quarters their greater realism about Namibian policies.

In Pretoria, their attitudes are likely to win over the SADF general staff and the present defense minister, Magnus Malan. Persuading P.W. Botha would be far more difficult, because any apparent renunciation of separate development in Namibia would be seen by critics within the Republic and abroad as a demonstration of eventual change for South Africa itself.

Even more to the point, right-wing Afrikaner opposition would stiffen and gain support not only from moderate Afrikaners but from English-speaking whites as well. The best that can be expected, given these political constraints, would be a mechanism in Windhoek with little formal power, but with substantial de facto power channeled in some tortuous fashion (via the administrator-general) into ethnic administrations. Although the cross-currents are more tangled than those that led in South Africa to the pending tripartite legislature, it is not unfeasible for Pretoria's constitutional planners to devise a similar scheme for an 11-part Namibian government with an executive providing direction not existent in the present administrative arrangements.

Is there any realizable alternative to this modest improvement in the parlous state of Namibian administration? The balance of usable forces suggests not. No one will give SWAPO enough support to mount an effective conventional invasion of Namibia. Hopefully, the Reagan administration will think better of giving any form of military support to South Africa if it should recklessly engage in expanded fighting inside Angola.

Needless to say, this conclusion leaves a bitter taste morally. There can be no illusions about the disintegration of normal life in Namibia already commonplace in Ovamboland and spreading into Kavangoland. Even if Koevoet killing and torture are now belatedly brought under some semblance of control after the public embarrassment of a magistrate's hearing in Rundu and extensive South African press reports, the overall impact of South African military presence has been destructive. Of course, SWAPO guerrillas contribute to communal instability through their own ruthless acts. And less obviously, the prolonged drought (upwards of four years in most of the north) has made normal life even more implausible.

Despite the life-giving presence of water points and ponds at many spots along the Oshakat-Ondangwa road (the result of South African piping of water from the Cunene River), livestock remain ill-nourished, there are few trees in Ovamboland, and there are no wild birds at all. Even if life is relatively normal in Kaokoland, Caprivi, and south of the operational zone in the rest of Namibia, the drought's impact and the absence of any serious development activities in themselves produce massive problems. Although Namibia is not included in the FAO's list of 22 African countries facing widespread hunger problems, in fact some black Namibians in the southern half of the territory are resorting to protein and vitamin tablets intended as supplemental feed for livestock. And even though the military-police hand is much more lightly applied south of Ovamboland, it is enough to stand at the Oshivello security gate at the southern border of Ovamboland and watch ex-SWAPO men in roadside tents peer through slits at blacks waiting for entry north to understand the insidious implications of the security force presence for most black Namibians.

What are the implications for U.S. policy? The prospect of U.S. military support for the SADF may be minimized by repeated and extensive airing of its altogether negative implications for U.S. interests elsewhere in Africa, throughout the developing world, and indeed in Western Europe. The widespread antipathy now commonplace about U.S. linkage of a Cuban withdrawal from Angola to SADF withdrawal from Namibia should make the implications of such policies palpably apparent to all but the most hidebound conservatives or racists in the Reagan administration.

The policy implications of the long-term stalemate in international negotiations present what will be in some senses more difficult problems. If President Reagan is reelected, his advisers on southern African policy may well be more conservative than Dr. Crocker and less inclined to question South African bona fides in Namibia and at home. In those circumstances, or even if a Democrat is elected, it will be necessary for critics of the South African presence and policy in Namibia to do more than vent moral outrage and political frustration in various outlets, however justified those motivations. It will be necessary to keep in touch with those individuals and groups within the territory whose commitment to "nation building" deserves support and requires financial aid. Doing this does not require disowning SWAPO. To the contrary, more open sympathy for SWAPO and at the same time to other black Namibians would be both morally appropriate and an accurate reflection of U.S. attitudes about black Namibians deciding their own future. In effect, the modest U.S. programs for black education and training within South Africa are beginning to reflect a similar attitude.

Helping Namibians through both UN and bilateral channels to meet some immediate development needs does not mean putting off a continued commitment to Namibian independence based on internationally supervised elections. Those elections are not imminent, but aid to Namibian blacks can only help to engender a social atmosphere in which black pressure for greater participation — with these elections as one important manifestation — will grow rapidly. □


Photo: Y. Nagata/United Nations

SWAPO leader Sam Nujoma: No one will give SWAPO enough support to mount an effective conventional invasion of Namibia

Books

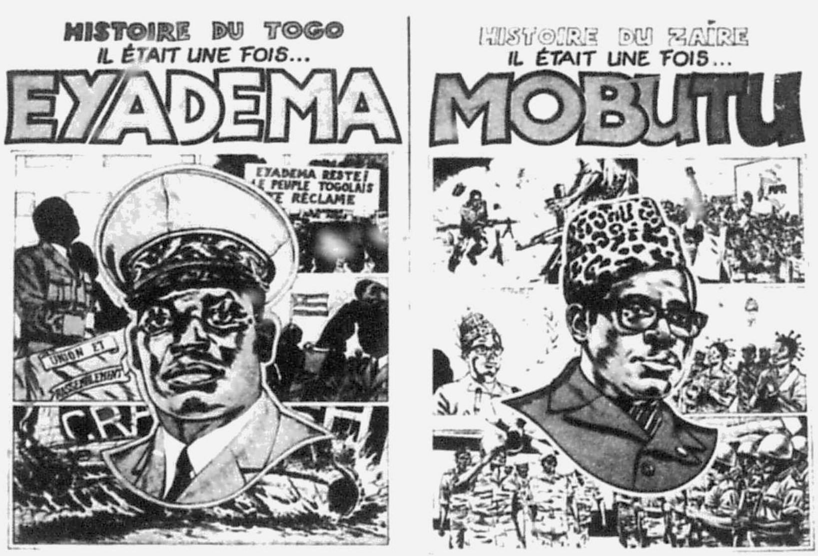
AFRICAN LEADERS AS COMIC-BOOK HEROES: REVIEW OF A BIOGRAPHICAL SERIES

Histoire du Zaire: il était une fois Mobutu. Paris: Afrique Biblio Club, 1977. Other editions (with the same title, but only the country and name changed) are available on: Omar Bongo (1980), Gnassingbe Eyadema (1976), Ahmadou Ahidjo (1980), Léopold Senghor (1980), King Hassan II (1980), Félix Houphouët-Boigny (1979), and Muammar Qaddafy (date unknown).

For about a decade, roughly between 1965 and 1975, one of the preferred ways of popularizing the image and ideas of African leaders was the publication of local versions of Mao Zedong's famous "Little Red Book." Togo's Gnassingbe Eyadema and Zaire's Mobutu Sese Seko each had their own "Little Green Book" of political aphorisms; Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana was all set to publish his "Little Black Book" when he was overthrown in 1966; and Didier Ratsiraka of Madagascar's "Red Book" now presumably guides the ideological convolutions of his AREMA (Vanguard of the Malagasy Revolution Party). The Eyadema and Mobutu "Green Books" are out of print; the Nkrumah "Black Book" is available only through his English publisher (Panaf Books Ltd.); and the Ratsiraka booklet is hard to come by even in Antananarivo itself.

An older and still active enterprise is the official publication of the leader's speeches and declarations. Collections of these may be had in most African countries, varying in form from cheap pamphlets to expensive, hardbound volumes and sets. The champion in that league is Guinea's Sékou Touré, whose collected words are now gathered in 25 volumes. Yet the little red, black, or green books failed to have the impact of their great model. They never became the political talismans of enthusiastic masses, and in any event, given widespread illiteracy and the usual turgidity of the prose, were little read even by party militants. The collected speeches fared little better because of their high cost and limited distribution (to foreigners and the political elite).

In addition to various time-tested methods of spreading the picture and words of national leaders — such as distributing official portraits; printing the leader's picture on stamps, coins, posters, and signposts; organizing acclamatory parades, rallies, and national referenda; flooding the media with adulatory materials, etc. — sometimes quite imaginative ways were devised to help in the task of image-building. The portrait button made its appearance, as did official prayers, hymns, and eulogies, plus the renaming of everything from abattoirs to provinces in honor of the leader. Recently, the presidential wristwatch became available in Gabon and Togo. The one in Togo, which can only be purchased at the RPT party headquarters in Lomé, is a Swiss-made wind-up time piece on whose face an image of General Eyadema fades in and out every 20 seconds.



Elevating leaders to the rank of political sainthood

By far the most interesting and ambitious recent effort at projecting official images of national leaders — created for and principally used in French-speaking Africa — is the cartoon-strip, comic-book style biography. Some time ago, it was observed that Francophone Africans, adults and children alike, had become as addicted to the full-length, large format (usually), hardbound comic book as had their French counterparts. The sale of the Tintin and Asterix series, for example, were almost as brisk in Francophone Africa as they were in France itself, even given difficulties of distribution and lower literacy rates. A small, enterprising Parisian public relations firm operating under the name of the Afrique Biblio Book Club, which had hitherto been involved in official vanity publishing for several African governments, approached them and others about doing a comic-book style biography on each of their top men. Thus far, they've been quite successful, having published cartoon-strip biographies of Senghor, Houphouët-Boigny, Hassan II, Eyadema, Ahidjo, Bongo, Mobutu, and Qaddafy (the only non-Francophone in the bunch). The printing runs are between 5,000 and 10,000 copies, which are then sold in the streets, bookstores, or at ruling party offices. The cost is usually moderate at the bookstore and party offices (about $3 each), but when they are sold by street hawkers, anything goes.

The comic-strip biographies are interesting for reasons other than their official origins. For one thing, they represent the latest official efforts to rewrite African history. They are deliberately tilted at the minimally and functionally literate masses, and are designed to elevate current leaders to the ranks of political sainthood previously reserved for the martyrs and heroes of the anticolonial struggle and the real and semimythical rulers and leaders of the past.

The uniform format of the comic-strip biographies is a size of 22×29½ mm (the same as the French cartoon books), with 48 pages, a printed hard or soft cover with a portrait of the leader, and the title *Histoire du* (name

The birth of Mobutu: Official popular myth making

of the country) and *Il était une fois* ("Once upon a time there was") followed by the name of the leader. Since Cameroon is a bilingual country, there is also an English-language version of the Ahidjo book, and the Qaddafy book appears in both French and Arabic.

The content format does vary somewhat, notably in the choice of whether or not a section on the history of the country is included. The Ahidjo book, for example, devotes 18 pages to Cameroonian history, and Senghor does not enter into his book until page 13. In the others, the leader is born on page one or two. Otherwise, the books are remarkably similar in their treatment of the lives of the leaders they glorify. Five related themes are usually treated in sequence:

First, the leader is already marked in some way for greatness during his youth and/or infancy. Eyadema becomes a champion village wrestler and achieves renown for his courage and wisdom. Young Mobutu single-handedly kills a leopard that attacked him and his grandfather. Bongo distinguishes himself in his studies; one of his teachers is made to describe him thus: "He's a brilliant pupil, studious, a bit too solitary. Excellent in French and languages." Ahidjo also distinguishes himself in his studies, as is the case with Senghor.

Second, the leader's political conscience is awakened by some unpleasant brush with colonialism, an experience that helps involve him in the nationalist struggle of his country. If the leader is not a member of the founding-father generation of nationalists, he is portrayed as a trusted friend or associate of other heroes of the nationalist period. Thus, Bongo is singled out early in his career by Leon Mba as a man of unusual intelligence and distinction, thus logically progressing to become the latter's natural heir. So also Mobutu is portrayed as an early admirer, friend, and collaborator of Patrice Lumumba.

Third, the leader's rise to power is natural, logical, or inevitable, and in any case, both right and legitimate. If Bongo is Mba's natural successor, so Mobutu appears at a critical juncture in Zaire's history as the only person capable of reconciling the warring factions and preventing the country from lapsing into chaos. Eyadema, who leads the coup against Nicholas Grunitsky (to save the country from "collapsing in disunion"), is eventually called to power to replace "a regime too corrupt to survive." Ahidjo becomes premier in 1958, according to his book, because he is the only man capable of saving his rebellion-torn country and of bringing true unity to Cameroon.

Fourth, the leader then overcomes

great obstacles (e.g., internal rebellion; conspiracies, including attempts to kill him; the machinations of wicked foreigners; political chaos; etc.) and builds a strong, dynamic, prosperous, and respected nation.

Fifth, the great of the world seek him out for counsel and advice. He is shown talking at the UN and/or communing with world and African leaders. For example, Eyadema is shown with Mobutu, Mao Zedong, Houphouët-Boigny, Houari Boumedienne, Sékou Touré, and Giscard d'Estaing; Bongo is shown with Giscard, Marien Ngouabi, Ahidjo, Senghor, Houphouët-Boigny, King Hassan II, de Gaulle, Pompidou, King Baudoin, Queen Elizabeth, Mao, Emperor Hirohito, Pope Paul VI, and President Nixon. Mobutu has the longest list: de Gaulle, King Baudoin, Queen Elizabeth, Nixon, Nasser, Senghor, Boumedienne, Eyadema, Mao, Kim Il Sung, Nicolae Ceaucescu, King Faisal, Indira Gandhi, Emperor Hirohito, George Foreman, Muhammad Ali, Giscard, and King Hassan II.

Clearly, these are self-conscious attempts at official popular myth-making by reconstructing national history around the person and personality of the leader. They also offer interesting insight into the varieties of self-serving images that African leaders seek to project. In such efforts, it is hardly surprising that history is made to serve the image-maker; hence, embarrassing episodes in the leader's life are retold in his favor, or new events are simply concocted out of whole cloth. The Eyadema and Mobutu books contain excellent examples of this kind of reconstruction. In the former, the killing of Togo's first president, Sylvanus Olympio, is shown as an accident; an unidentified participant in the coup against Olympio is shown shooting a shadowy figure trying to climb a wall "very near the American Embassy." It turns out to be Olympio. (The truth is almost certainly that Olympio was dragged from the U.S. Embassy parking lot — where he had been hiding in one of the cars — onto the street, where he was shot by Eyadema himself and one or two of his co-conspirators.) In the Mobutu book, not only is Mobutu portrayed as Lumumba's friend, but the latter's murder comes as an apparent surprise to the former, who is shown sadly announcing the fact to his colleagues. There is also the apocryphal story, told in great detail, about how the young Mobutu single-handedly killed a leopard that was attacking him and his grandfather, as well as the claim that his present name — Mobutu Sese Seko Kuku Ngbendu Wa Za Banga — was given him at birth by his father. (In fact, he was christened Joseph-Desiré.)

How are these books, and those like them, seen by their target audiences? The books, or their equivalents, are standard fare in government schools, and young children (as I learned in Cameroon and Togo) take them at face value. Their elders, however, wise in the political ways of their respective countries, are much less likely to do so. Nonetheless, they undoubtedly have some impact *because* they are officially disseminated and sponsored, and because the leaders involved have taken considerable pains to prevent contrary views from being circulated.

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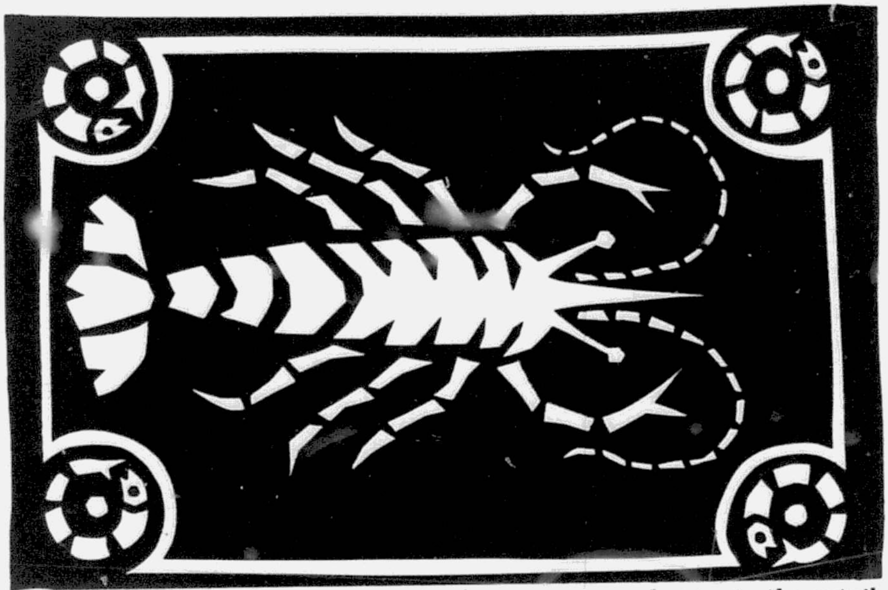

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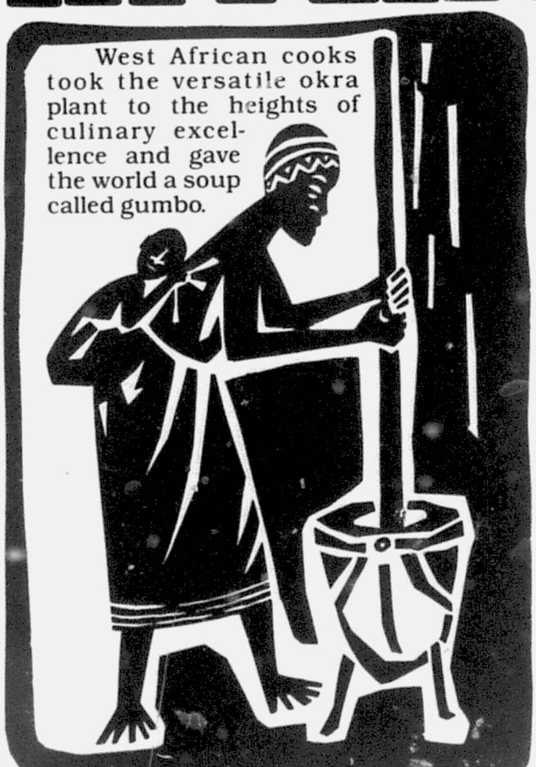

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