

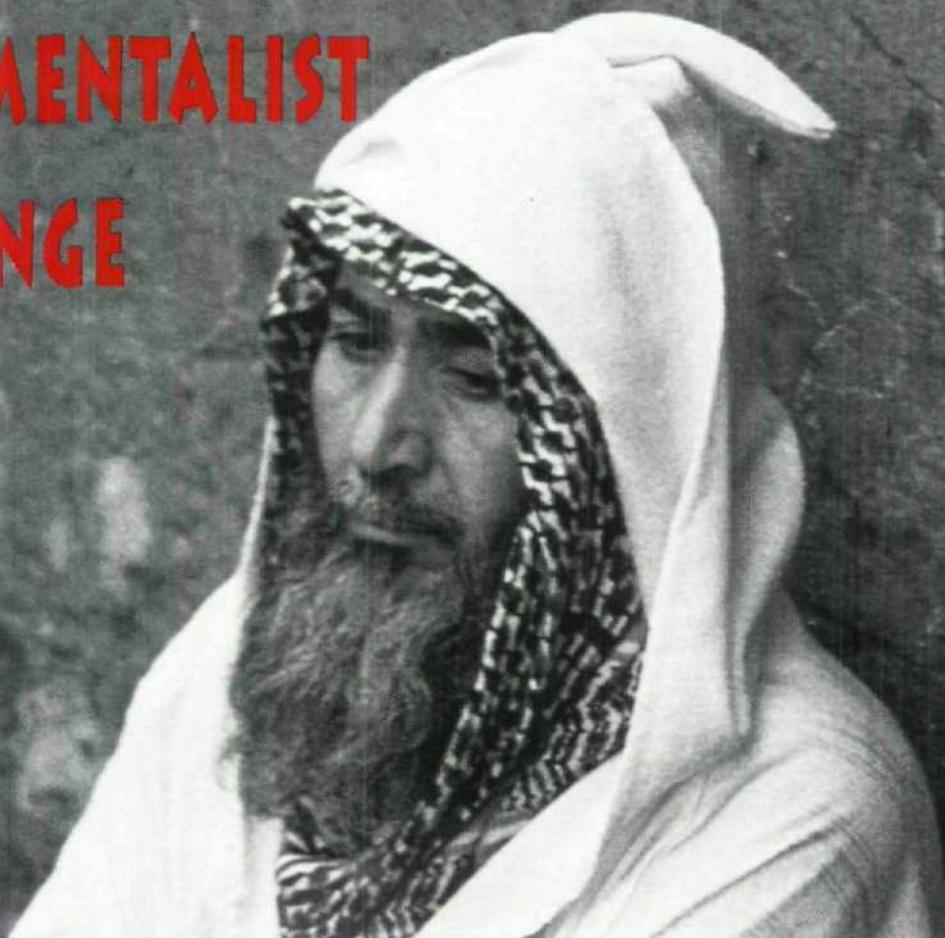
AMERICA'S LEADING MAGAZINE ON AFRICA

# AFRICA REPORT

MARCH-APRIL 1992

\$5.50

## ALGERIA: THE FUNDAMENTALIST CHALLENGE





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**Art Director**  
Kenneth Jay Ross

**Advertising Office**  
212 949-5666, ext. 728

**Intern**  
Anastasia Venetos

*Africa Report* (ISSN 0001-9836), a non-profit magazine of African affairs, is published bimonthly and is scheduled to appear at the beginning of each date period at 833 United Nations Plaza, New York, N.Y. 10017. Editorial correspondence and advertising inquiries should be addressed to *Africa Report*, at the above address. Subscription inquiries should be addressed to: Subscription Services, P.O. Box 3000, Dept. AR, Denville N.J. 07834. Subscription rates: *Individuals*: USA \$30, Canada \$36, air rate overseas \$54. *Institutions*: USA \$37, Canada \$43, air rate overseas \$61. Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y. and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: If this magazine is undeliverable, please send address changes to *Africa Report* at 833 UN Plaza, NY, NY 10017. Telephone: (212) 949-5666. Copyright © 1992 by The African-American Institute, Inc.

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The cover photograph of an Islamic Salvation Front supporter at Friday prayers in Algiers was taken by Pascal Parrot for Sygma.



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To the Editor:

The article that appeared in the January-February 1992 issue of your magazine by Nicola Jefferson, "Rwanda: The War Within," prompts me to draw your attention to some points that I feel need to be clarified or rectified.

To us, this article appears more like an indictment against the Rwandan nation—that the writer mistakenly refers to as "the Hutu state"—rather than a deep analysis that can be useful to the reader. The article takes up the bulk of the accusations made by the Rwandan Patriotic Front against the Rwandan government especially with regard to human rights, democracy, discrimination against the Tutsi. To the unbiased eye, however, the truth is entirely different.

All the prisoners taken during the October war have been freed except 30 who had already been convicted. The situation in prison is no different from actual living conditions in most of the country. There is a general shortage of food and medicines; people die of starvation and lack of medical attention. Most of our prisons date back to the colonial era and are overcrowded. This state of affairs cannot be attributed to a deliberate disregard of human rights by the government, but more to a scarcity of material and human resources needed to ensure proper living conditions, a fair trial, and the right to a defense for the prisoners.

With regard to freed persons, the government has recommended that their rights be fully restored insofar as concerns their employment and their passports. Most of them have received satisfaction.

As to the alleged massacre of Bagogwe, unfortunately, war does not spare civilian populations, much less those living inside the combat zones. These Bagogwe live at the foot of volcanoes that certainly were not spared by RPF assaults.

With regard to the troubles in the commune of Kibilira, these did occur. Nevertheless, following the appeal launched by the government and removal of some high-ranking officials of the prefecture of Gisenyi and the commune of Kibilira, the situation was brought under control. These measures denote the genuine readiness of the government to restore peace and order.

Regarding the problems that cropped up in the Murambi and Bugesera

regions, responsibility lies to a great extent on some political parties like the Liberal Party, that share the views of the aggressors and recruit young Tutsi to send to the front.

As the various tables show, the government has never discriminated against the Tutsi where employment and schooling are concerned. [Editor's note: Due to space constraints, we were unable to print the tables and accompanying data. Copies may be requested by mail.] Obviously for the moment, Rwanda lacks the means to face both educational and employment needs of the population. Consequently, independent of ethnic considerations, a great number of people are suffering. With regard to employment, public and private sectors put together cannot satisfy the demand for jobs.

Therefore, to all those who too quickly accuse the country of practicing the policy of exclusion, Rwanda sends an appeal for assistance to increase its capability to extend school facilities and to develop new areas that generate new jobs.

Vianney Mukandoli  
Chargé d'Affaires  
Embassy of Rwanda  
Washington, D.C.

Nicola Jefferson replies:

It is the unpleasant job of diplomats everywhere to defend the indefensible. Mr. Mukandoli has a particularly difficult task in his attempt to explain away the appalling human rights record of his government.

His points regarding arrests and detentions following the RPF October 1990 invasion are misleading. It is true that most, if not all, of those arrested after the invasion have been released. What he does not explain is why the government in the first place detained more than 8,000 civilians for up to six months in filthy, overcrowded prisons, without ever charging them with a crime. Rwanda's lack of resources does not justify the fact that detainees were denied food for several days, were confined in dark punishment cells, were beaten, tortured, and in some cases killed. Mr. Mukandoli's claim that these deprivations and abuses are the result of prisons which "date back to the colonial era" is unconvincing.

Contrary to what the ambassador writes, many ex-detainees "have not

received satisfaction" regarding their rights: Dozens have been dismissed from their jobs, including civil servants. Many others have not had their passports returned.

Perhaps the most misleading statements in Mr. Mukandoli's argument relate to what he calls the "alleged massacre of Bagogwe" and the incidents which occurred in Kibirira, Murambi, and Bugesera. On August 14, 1991, the Rwandan ambassador to Belgium admitted that "a massacre of Tutsi civilians...occurred in the [Bagogwe] region." Africa Watch and local human rights organizations have documented deaths of Bagogwe which are not attributable to rebel attacks. The minister of justice ordered an investigation into the matter, but to date it has not resulted in any indictments.

If there had been a "genuine readiness of the government to restore peace and order" in Kibirira, the government would have prosecuted the two officials it dismissed who were implicated in the killings. It has not done so.

Africa Watch, as well as local human rights organizations, documented the encouragement of and participation in attacks against Tutsi and others in Murambi by local authorities.

Nothing in the article is based upon information disseminated by the RPF, the rebel group that invaded the country in October 1990. The findings report what Africa Watch representatives documented or verified during their mission to the country, during which they visited nine of 11 prefectures.

Nowhere in the article is any reference made, explicit or otherwise, to a "Hutu state;" it does indicate that since independence, political power has remained firmly in the hands of the Hutu. The article does not purport to provide a "deep analysis" of the problems facing Rwanda—such an analysis was not possible given the space constraints.

Finally, notwithstanding government statistics, Tutsi face widespread and deep-seated discrimination in employment and education. Although this is not discussed openly as a national policy issue, it is a common practice. Africa Watch has collected testimony that details the relevant patterns of discrimination. Africa Watch has just released a 32-page report entitled, "Rwanda—Talking Peace and Waging War: Human Rights Since the October 1990 Invasion."

# UPDATE

## IN THE NEWS

### *In Liberia, Elections Are a Question of Trust*

The Liberian peace process took a step forward on January 10 when Charles Taylor, leader of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), allowed the two main highways leading out of the capital, Monrovia, to be opened and secured by the Ecomog peace-keeping force. But the interim government's difficulties in convincing Taylor to open the roads demonstrate the uphill path ahead of Liberia, away from its two-year-long civil war and toward free and fair elections.

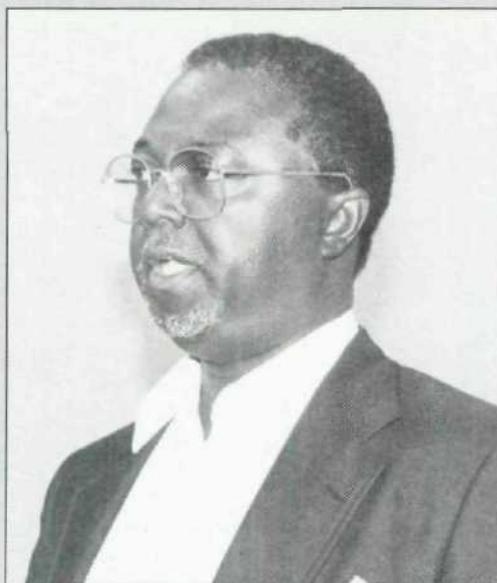
The Yamoussoukro IV peace agreement, signed in October 1991, stipulated that all of Liberia's roads be opened, and the warring factions disarmed and encamped by January 15. On December 20, with the peace accord stalled, the Ecomog-backed government in Monrovia imposed an economic embargo on Taylor's NPFL-controlled territory to force him to adhere to the Yamoussoukro terms. Five days before the deadline, Taylor re-opened the Monrovia-Kakata and Monrovia-Bomi Hills highways, but most of the territory outside of Monrovia remained under the control of the still heavily armed NPFL.

The opening of the main roads was characterized as a "major step forward in the peace process" by Interim President Amos Sawyer, but he added that the move "must be followed by the disarming" of the warring factions.

Liberian journalist and secretary-general of the Press Union of Liberia, Gabriel Williams, told *Africa Report*, "The process of disarming and encamping [the fighters] is very slow, painfully slow, but it has started. The opening of the roads on January 10 is the beginning. There may be instances of violations...It's a delicate situation, but the only way we'll be able to talk about elections is to get the guns from the [combatants]. The method that is being used now, which is one of build-

ing confidence, is the only way that you can really succeed in having elections."

Under the Yamoussoukro agreement, elections were to have taken place within six months of November 1. Currently, the six-month election deadline is being called a "floating" timetable by Liberia's election commission, meaning that the starting date is



*Sawyer called the opening of the roads a major step forward*

not fixed. The commission co-chairman, Patrick Seyon, said that the election "clock should start ticking" by the first week of March.

Liberians, remembering Samuel Doe's rigged election win in 1985, are wary of placing their trust in the Liberian election commission that is charged with overseeing the electoral process. Seyon compared the five-member commission to fish in a glass bowl, watched by all of Liberia, and said, "It is significant that this commission holds together because we represent the best hope and aspiration for returning the country to civil rule."

The commission faced a confidence crisis almost immediately after it was sworn in, on January 3, when Priscilla

Stewart, who along with Patrick Seyon is considered a representative of the Interim Government of National Unity (IGNU), resigned in protest over Taylor's appointment of Nyondweh Monkomona as chairman of the commission. Stewart claimed that the appointment of Monkomona, who is one of three commission members said to represent the NPFL, undermined its credibility. After Sawyer asked her to reconsider her decision, Stewart rejoined the commission. In a trip to the United States in January and February, the commission worked to convince largely Liberian audiences that it was indeed unified, independent of Liberia's political actors, and committed to seeing the process through to its conclusion—free and fair elections.

While the election commission has struggled to gain the confidence of Liberians, virtually every step taken by Ecomog to make Liberia secure for the voting has been challenged by the NPFL. In early February, the NPFL radio said that weapons searches being carried out in Monrovia by Ecomog were "outrageously dangerous and unacceptable." The Ecomog force reported finding arms stashed where former combatants live.

Adding to the tensions between Ecomog and the NPFL are the actions of the other warring factions. Taylor has cited clashes near the Sierra Leonean border with Raleigh Seekie's United Liberation Movement for Democracy as a major reason for the NPFL's refusal to lay down its arms. Prince Johnson, the rebel leader who tortured Doe to death, continues to display his brutal unpredictability. In January, he reportedly executed four commandos from his Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia, stationed at the Caldwell base outside Monrovia, for possessing Liberia's new currency, printed by the Ecomog-

Ernst Harsch

backed interim government. The president of the Press Union of Liberia, Isaac Bantu, and another journalist were detained and threatened with execution by Johnson at the Caldwell camp in January, apparently for not reporting on a press conference Johnson had held.

While the Ecomog peace-keeping

force has put Liberia on track toward free and fair elections, Liberians involved in the process say that full international support is needed to ensure that such elections take place. Equally necessary is aid to get the country back on its feet after the elections. One potential barrier to full international support has been a lack of ini-

tiative by the United States. Seyon said, "We had expected that the U.S. would play a more forceful role in resolving the conflict in Liberia. When we talk with people in Europe about assistance, they pointedly say to us, 'This is an American problem. We want to see what leadership the United States will take.'" ■

## INTERVIEW: PATRICK SEYON, LIBERIAN ELECTORAL COMMISSION CO-CHAIRMAN

**P**atrick Seyon, an academic and president of the University of Liberia, is co-chairman of the five-member Liberian Electoral Commission, which was sworn in on January 3. The commission is charged with conducting elections in Liberia within a six-month deadline, which was to have begun by the first week of March.

**Africa Report:** The election commission relies heavily on Ecomog to ensure that Liberia will be ready for elections. In particular, the disarming and encampment of the warring factions, which has been bogged down, must be completed by the peace-keeping force. If the terms set by the commission for free and fair elections are not met, what recourse does it have?

**Seyon:** The Yamoussoukro IV agreement specified that there will be encampment, disarming, and the opening of the roads. For whatever technical reasons, the process has not gone as outlined. The roads are open, but full encampment and disarmament have not taken place. The commission is firm in its view that unless the conditions for free and fair elections prevail in Liberia, we will not conduct the elections. This means that all armed parties must be encamped, they must be disarmed, and there must be free movement of people across the country.

If the commission finds that there is some barrier to carrying out its task, it may be necessary to go back to the Ecomog countries to seek their assistance to remove whatever barriers there are to holding free and fair elections.

**Africa Report:** You would suspend the process?

**Seyon:** We would suspend the process and go back to Ecomog.

**Africa Report:** The two main roads leading out of Monrovia are open, but there is a considerable amount of territory still under Taylor's control. You've talked about a lack of the resources needed to encamp NPFL forces as the main barrier to disarmament. But doesn't Taylor's reluctance to disarm play a significant role in this?

**Seyon:** It's hard to gauge from this point. If all of the barracks have been identified and all the living provisions were ready and Taylor raised objections to having his men encamped and disarmed, then one would raise the question of his commitment. In the absence of that, one is not likely to say whether or not it is his reluctance. If the Ecomog forces identify all of the living quarters required for encamping these people and they have the armory to store arms, and then there is reluctance or refusal to encamp and to disarm, then one can ask why.

**Africa Report:** One of the first steps in the election process is to conduct a population survey, but thousands of people have not been repatriated. What problems do you foresee in carrying out the survey?

**Seyon:** The survey is critical because the commission must be able to say what proportion of the population is eligible to vote. Otherwise, if there is a plurality, and someone challenges that plurality, we could have a major problem on our hands.

We know that some 650,000 Liberians are across the borders in neighboring countries. Some of these people are very anxious to come back home. There is a repatriation commission that has been established and is working to resettle refugees or returnees. The critical challenge—and the basic condition for refugees or returnees to return to their villages—is whether security conditions are such that they can return and pick up the pieces of their lives without fear, intimidation, or harassment. Now, fear and intimidation can be real or perceived. We hope that both the perception and the reality will match, so that people can feel safe to return to their villages. I'm optimistic from what I've seen in Sierra Leone and Guinea that Liberians will return home once they feel that there is reasonable security for them to return.

The survey is likely to take place in the second or third month of the commission's work to ensure that at least a substantial portion of the refugees have returned. A survey is not a census. It will be a reliable statistical sample of the 13 counties or the 90 constituencies to give us some indication as to the number of eligible voters. We are talking about some 800,000 out of the 2.4 or 2.5 million. As you know, 50 percent of Liberia's population as of the 1984 census is under age 20, so that we think that we will be able to get close to the 800,000 or so who are eligible to register.

**Africa Report:** Could you comment on your fund-raising activities for the election process in the United States?

**Seyon:** Quite frankly, when the commission was constituted and inducted into office, we assumed that the whole process of its funding was being handled by somebody other than the commission itself. No one told us that we would have to raise the money needed for the whole process! We have spent quite a bit of our time and energy since we have been in the U.S. talking with different people for support and funding.

We are of the view now that perhaps the best way to raise the needed funds is to request a donor conference on

*Continued on page 10*

## CÔTE D'IVOIRE

Côte d'Ivoire's main opposition leader, Laurent Gbagbo, was arrested along with dozens of others on February 18 when a march in Abidjan degenerated into some of the worst rioting the country has seen. Opposition leaders, including Gbagbo, who is secretary-general of the Ivorian Popular Front (FPI), and the Ivorian Human Rights League's secretary-general, René Degni Segui, were detained by the government for their inability to control the estimated 20,000 who attended the government-authorized rally.

Facing an FPI-sponsored civil disobedience effort called to gain the "release of our comrades," Prime Minister Alassane Ouattara has threatened to take legal action against the jailed leaders.

The march in Abidjan was part of a campaign organized by the FPI to protest President Felix Houphouët-Boigny's dismissal of a January 29 report which blamed senior military personnel for a brutal crackdown on students in their hostels at Yopougon, a campus near Abidjan, in May. The president had refused to take action against Army Chief of Staff Gen. Robert Guei, whom the commission considered solely responsible for the decision to carry out the operation, which involved assaults on and rapes of students.

The banned Federation of Students and Scholars of Côte d'Ivoire (Fesci) held a number of protests after the release of the report. Agence France-Presse reported the beatings and arrests by security forces of 16 of the group members, including the secretary-general, Martial Ahipeaud, following a February 13 demonstration.

In explaining the root cause of the student demonstrations, Martin Djezou Bleou, a law professor at the University of Côte d'Ivoire and a human rights activist, points to the almost intolerable conditions for the approximately "25,000 students in a university which was only designed to hold 6,000." Bleou told *Africa Report* that an uncertain future upon graduation also "leads the students to demonstrate from time to time in order to demand a change in the political system so that their grievances will be addressed."

Observers have called the president's refusal to act on the commis-

## POLITICAL POINTERS

sion's findings a new rallying point for the opposition which had lost momentum when Gbagbo was soundly defeated by Houphouët-Boigny in the October 1990 presidential election and its candidates did little better in subsequent legislative elections. Ironically, several leaders from the opposition had initially dismissed the commission as a government tool because it was dominated by members of the ruling Democratic Party of Côte d'Ivoire.

## MAURITANIA

Mauritania's President Maawiya Ould Sid Ahmed Taya scored a landslide victory in the country's first-ever multi-party election on January 24, claiming almost 63 percent of the vote. But the election returns were quickly followed by violence and allegations that the voting was rigged, and the opposition has threatened to boycott March legislative elections.

The most successful of the three candidates opposing Taya at the polls was Ahmed Ould Daddah, receiving just under 33 percent of the vote. Daddah, the half-brother of Mauritania's first president, Moktar Ould Daddah, had the backing of the most significant opposition party, the Union of Democratic Forces (UFD), and a number of other groups, including the unauthorized but influential Islamic Ummah Party, which have little in common apart from their opposition to Taya.

After the Supreme Court rejected petitions protesting the election from the three losing candidates on January 29, Ould Daddah told *Africa No. 1*, "I regret this decision. I thought the court had in its possession a number of concordant facts and a number of irrefutable cases of irregularity concerning these elections, and that a decision to cancel them would be perfectly justified." International election monitors reportedly acknowledged cheating by supporters of all of the candidates, but considered Taya's victory legitimate.

Opposition members claim that the government began an "oppression and

arrest operation" almost immediately after Taya's victory was announced on January 26. The violence apparently erupted when police broke up a demonstration Daddah's supporters were staging outside his headquarters. The opposition told Agence France-Presse that four within its ranks had been shot dead and 160 arrested in the ensuing crackdown. The ministry of the interior, posts, and telecommunications acknowledged that two "illegal protesters" died when security forces were forced to use teargas grenades in confrontations with the demonstrators. The ministry described the demonstrators as "groups of ill-intentioned people" who "took advantage of the freedom and tolerance witnessed by the country to undermine public security and order."

A curfew was imposed as of January 27 in the capital, Nouakchott, and Nouadhibou. The UFD claimed that the curfew in Nouakchott included a ban on political parties and the right to hold meetings, but this was denied by the director of public affairs and public liberties at the ministry of the interior. The curfew was lifted on February 5 and by most accounts, all of the political prisoners arrested after the post-election violence have been released. The last to be released included 27 members of the UFD who were being charged with incitement to violence. The organization, which enjoys the support of many of the country's blacks who account for 20 percent of the roughly 2 million Mauritians, had threatened not to participate in the March legislative elections if its members were not released. It is far from clear that the group will now commit itself to elections.

Adding to the uncertainty the threat of an opposition boycott is causing in the run-up to the March 6 legislative elections was a statement on January 26 by the Mauritanian Armed Forces of Liberation (FLAM) confirming a pre-election communiqué that the group would continue its armed struggle against the Taya regime. The armed black Mauritanian group said that "dialogue was impossible with the president." Taya has been accused repeatedly of oppressing the black minority and was responsible for the expulsion of tens of thousands of blacks in 1989 under the pretext that they were all Senegalese.

AFRICAN OUTLOOK

UN Truce in Somalia, But When Will the Fighting End?

During the Cold War, Somalia was never neglected by the international community: A seemingly endless supply of arms flowed into the country from the superpowers, who were intent on gaining a foothold in the Horn of Africa. The Cold War has ended, but the abundance of weapons shipped to Somalia over the years remains, fueling the country's bloody civil war. Somalis have asked why the international community has ignored their country, which has slipped into near anarchy since the United Somali Congress (USC) forced President Siad Barre to flee the capital, Mogadishu, in January 1991. Some of the harshest criticism has been aimed at the United Nations. Observers have said that despite the international organization's emergence at the end of the Cold War as the world's premier peace-maker, it has been reluctant to get involved in Somalia.

But the UN is hoping that a peace initiative it helped to launch can resolve the conflict. On February 14, representatives of Mogadishu's two warring factions, meeting at the UN in New York, signed separate pledges to end hostilities immediately and agreed to a formal ceasefire by the end of the month. But the promises have not stopped the latest round of fighting, estimated by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to have claimed 30,000 casualties since November 17.

The current conflict in Mogadishu is the result of a power struggle between two rivals within the USC leadership, Ali Mahdi Mohamed and Gen. Mohamed Farah Aidid, dating to January 1991 when USC forces under Ali Mahdi moved into the capital, forcing Barre's exit. When Ali Mahdi was named president of an interim government on January 29, without consulting any of the other armed groups fighting

against Barre, including Aidid's faction of the USC, a rift between the two leaders developed that countless reconciliation attempts have been unable to mend. Aidid reportedly bases his claim to be the legitimate leader of Somalia on his election as chairman of the USC during the group's June-July Congress. Ali Mahdi largely points to meetings held in Djibouti in July between various warring factions in Somalia when affirming his claim to the presidency. Neither leader recognizes the other's authority.

The warring factions of the USC are made up predominantly of rival sub-clans of the Hawiye, who populate the area in and around Mogadishu. Ali Mahdi's forces are made up of the Abgal, who have traditionally lived in the capital itself, while Aidid's fighters are of the Habar Gidir. Perhaps the most striking element of the conflict in Somalia is that unlike most of the other

war zones on the continent, its 7 million inhabitants speak the same language and even share the same religion, Sunni Islam. The country is divided, however, along clan and sub-clan lines. While the USC groups remained at odds with each other, almost a year ago the Somali National Movement, made up of the Isaaq clan, declared independence for the territory it controls in the north, naming it "the Republic of Somaliland." While Somaliland remains relatively peaceful, the rest of the country is partitioned in a tenuous fashion among the country's several clans.

On November 17, the current—and fiercest—fighting for control of Mogadishu broke out between the forces of Aidid and Ali Mahdi,

Camerepix



The UN peace initiative has failed to stop the latest round of fighting in Somalia, estimated to have caused 30,000 casualties

despite efforts by then-neutral clans to keep the two factions at bay. The threat of other clans becoming involved on a large scale in the fighting in Mogadishu remains a concern, as some have already seen limited fighting against the two USC groups.

The new secretary-general of the United Nations, Boutros Boutros Ghali, who took office on January 1, has promised that a resolution of the Somalia conflict is a top priority of the organization. The pledge by the UN chief, who gained experience in Somalia when he was Egypt's foreign minister, was welcome news to the war-torn country. Somalis had previously seen the UN move its office to Nairobi, Kenya, when the USC blasted into Mogadishu in January 1991. With the exception of a few exploratory visits, the organization did not have a presence in the country from that time until December 24, when Unicef posted four workers to Mogadishu.

From January 3-5, then-UN Assistant Secretary-General James Jonah went to Mogadishu to meet the leaders of the two rival factions, but failed in his attempts to secure a ceasefire. Coupled with the death of an ICRC worker in the capital in December, the murder of a Unicef worker, Dr. Martinka Pumpalova, in the north of the country, led the UN to limit its Unicef operation to one person in the capital. At the time, the international aid organizations still operating in Somalia, including the ICRC, were reportedly highly critical of the UN and considered Jonah's visit hurried and ill-conceived.

The UN nonetheless forged ahead with its peace initiative. On January 23, the Security Council imposed an arms embargo and called for a ceasefire that the secretary-general said, if enacted, would lead to a sorely needed, large-scale humanitarian aid project. Huge stockpiles of weapons in the country render an arms embargo ineffective, but the Security Council's show of concern for Somalia helped bring about a short ceasefire among the warring camps which still seek international recognition. On February 7, Jonah announced that the factions had agreed to send representatives to the United Nations in New York on February 12 to meet with mediators from the Organization of African Unity, the Arab League, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, and the UN.

When the representatives of the two factions emerged two days later with the announcement that they had agreed to halt the war, Jonah was reported by *The New York Times* to have said, "We really did not expect to leave the consultations with a ceasefire this weekend." But aid officials in Mogadishu were not surprised when the promised peace failed to materialize. They have learned to be skeptical of any peace agreement and have grown accustomed to seeing the combatants repeatedly renege on offers to allow deliveries of humanitarian aid.

The ICRC said that the latest round

of fighting in Somalia could cause mass starvation if a huge international relief operation is not carried out. Hundreds of thousands of Somalis are displaced and in need of food, including an estimated 250,000 of Mogadishu's residents who have fled the city. Many of the displaced outside the country have found conditions in refugee camps to be abysmal. In late January, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees said over 75,000 Somalis had fled to Kenya, creating a humanitarian crisis there. The death rate was reported to be eight per day. Without a break in

*Continued on page 11*

## Whites Decide South Africa's Future

The reform process in South Africa has been called "irreversible" by most of the international community, which is in the process of dropping sanctions imposed on the white minority government. But the country's black majority will once again be excluded from voting on March 17 when whites only go to the polls essentially to decide through a referendum if the negotiation process that began two years ago should continue or not.

The referendum asks, "Do you support continuation of the reform process, which the State President began on Feb. 2, 1990, and which is aimed at a new constitution through negotiation?"

President F.W. de Klerk announced the referendum the day after the right-wing Conservative Party defeated his National Party in a local election in Potchefstroom on February 19. The election had been heralded as a test of nationwide white support for de Klerk's reforms, although the western Transvaal town is over 90 percent Afrikaner and thus much more likely to be rejectionist than the general white population, which is 60 percent Afrikaner and the rest English-speaking, and far more supportive of de Klerk's reforms. Nonetheless, the president himself had visited the town to rally support for the National Party candidate, Theuns Kruger.

The results in Potchefstroom were followed by renewed demands for white elections by the Conservative Party, which maintains that the majority of whites do not support reform. Instead, de Klerk offered the referen-

dum and promised that his government would resign if it loses, paving the way for a whites-only election. But the president also said that if the referendum passes, another one to approve the outcome of negotiations—as he had promised in 1990—would not be held.

The Conservative Party announced on February 25 that it would participate in the referendum after threatening a boycott, which many within its ranks reportedly preferred in the hope that poor participation could force a whites-only election. Political experts in South Africa believe the conservatives have a far greater chance to win an election than a referendum. Upon accepting the referendum challenge, the party's leader, Andries Treurnicht, reportedly said, "Such a government deserves to be rejected and I therefore call on all white voters to reject Mr. de Klerk's reforms with great enthusiasm in his own referendum."

Treurnicht has openly worried about losing the referendum. His efforts to win will be hampered by the refusal of other right-wing groups to participate. The neo-Nazi Afrikaner Resistance Movement (AWB) leader, Eugene Terreblanche, announced that his group, which supports violence, would do all in its power to prevent whites from going to the polls on March 17. The South African Broadcasting Corporation said the Boer Homeland Party leader, Robert van Tonder, asked for its own referendum, "offering a choice between a free Boer state and a de Klerk, Slovo, new Third World South

*Continued on page 11*

## Seyon *Continued*

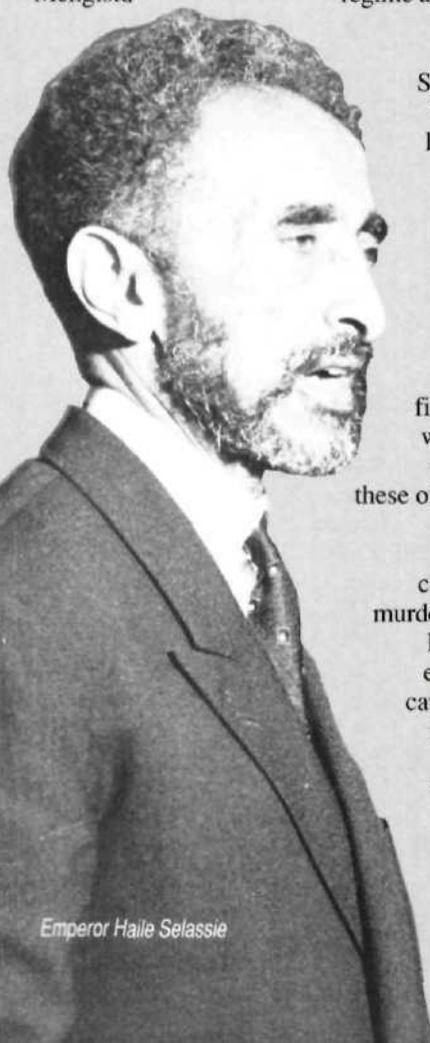
Liberia. We think that the support that Liberia needs goes far beyond the electoral process. The day after elections, somebody will be in need of safe drinking water, somebody will be in need of electricity or energy, somebody will be in need of garden tools, seeds, and what have you, somebody will need a job. Steps must be taken now to fully assess the reconstruction needs of the country and to put into motion the machinery of the UN and other donor agencies so as to rebuild the country and mobilize resources within the country itself, ensuring that those Liberians who fled the country

## Exhuming Selassie

In 1974, Mengistu Haile Mariam buried the ruler he deposed, Emperor Haile Selassie, beneath his office in Ethiopia's Imperial Palace "to see that the body did not rise from the dead," according to Voice of Ethiopia radio in Addis Ababa. Eighteen years later, forced from power himself and living in exile on a farm in Zimbabwe, there was little Mengistu could do to keep the emperor's spirit from rising into Ethiopians' consciences when gravediggers unearthed Selassie's remains on February 16.

The exhumation is the most notable of hundreds that have taken place since the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front came to power last May. President Meles Zenawi's government has reportedly authorized the exhumations to highlight abuses of Mengistu's 16-year reign and to allow relatives of the dead to grieve. Most of the bodies are victims of the "Red Terror" campaign carried out by the Mengistu

United Nations



Emperor Haile Selassie

regime against its opponents in 1975.

The day before Selassie's remains were found, the bodies of at least 60 top officials of the Selassie regime murdered in 1974 were uncovered from a mass grave at Addis Ababa central prison.

The Ethiopian News Agency had reported the previous week the finding of documents in which Mengistu's military council called for these officials to be executed.

The monarchist Mo'a Anbessa society claims that Selassie was murdered by Mengistu, who has maintained that the emperor died of natural causes. A formal reburial for Selassie, who ruled Ethiopia for 44 years, has been scheduled for July 23, marking the 100th anniversary of his birth. ■

and constitute the major part of the human resource can be repatriated so that they can take on the reconstruction effort. Unless these things go hand-in-hand with the electoral process, people will look on the electoral exercise itself as a hollow exercise. If development goes hand-in-hand with democracy, then we must make sure that the resources of development are put into place or mobilized at the same time that democratization is taking place. We would like to call on the UN family so that a donor conference on Liberia can be convened. A part of it would be for support of the electoral process, but the major part would be for reconstruction of the country.

**Africa Report:** What do you think are the main barriers to free and fair elections today?

**Seyon:** Three major problems can be identified. The first is the resources that are necessary to carry out free and fair elections. The resources must be available to conduct a population survey, to register voters, to train officials to man the polling stations, to get ballot boxes, and ballot papers. The logistics to move the ballot boxes to where they are supposed to be is needed, and computer hardware to generate voter rolls. All that, even down to candles to count the ballots after the polls are closed at the polling site so that you don't have the problem of transporting ballots that can get lost. If the resources are not available to do all that is necessary to conduct a free and fair election, we may not have one.

The second is internal. Liberians voted in 1985, after a new constitution had been adopted. The elections were generally free and fair, but the counting process created a problem. From that experience, Liberians have become cynical about the process. And they have even asked if there is any reason for them to trust that the commission will truly conduct free and fair elections. It will be a major problem if the Liberians cannot be convinced, through public education, that the ballot box is the best alternative to violence in resolving conflict, and that it is therefore important for them to exercise their right to ensure that they pick their leaders in a democratic fashion. If that process is not successfully carried out, it may pose a problem because there will be perceptions from whichever quarters that the commission will not carry out its work given its composition and that there is some trick that the commission is going to play or that someone has been predetermined to win. It is important to win the full support of the Liberian people to participate freely in the exercise.

The third is external. It is important that the observers, the international community, commit themselves to the process. They must be willing to be present, on the ground, to see that the conditions for free and fair elections are in place. The very presence of President Carter in Nicaragua made a difference in having the Ortega government turn the country over to a popular government. Also, we're told that his presence in Zambia made a difference. He was able to say to President Kaunda, "I've been there, I know what it is to lose an election." It made it easier for President Kaunda to accept that he had lost, and for him to give up power.

So, those three areas—the resources, the full participation of the Liberian people (who must be convinced that their votes are going to make a difference and that the ballot box is the best alternative to violence as a means of resolving conflict), and the participation of the international communi-

ty—are the major things that could make the process a success or a failure.

**Africa Report:** Can you describe Carter's role in the peace process? How effective a moderator is he?

**Seyon:** He went to Liberia after being invited by both sides, Taylor and Sawyer. He committed himself to participate and to oversee the election. He says that his integrity is on the line and that he is not going to participate unless the conditions for holding free and fair elections are fully met, and he has assured the commission that he will work with us to make sure that we conduct free and fair elections in Liberia.

He has become an elder statesman, and people are impressed that his foreign policy, based on human rights, was not just a political gimmick—he has strong feelings for human rights around the world.

You cannot help but be impressed when you meet with him. He expresses his concern over not giving the rule of law an opportunity to work. He even criticized the United States for rushing to war in the Gulf region and not giving diplomacy a chance to work, and that there was a tendency to validate

a fallacy that it is the threat of force that makes people willing to work, whereas reason is what makes people want to work. President Carter projects an image of the United States that no other president has been able to do, except John Kennedy.

**Africa Report:** Amos Sawyer says that he wants Taylor to participate in the election process. Is this view shared by the commission?

**Seyon:** The commission has not yet finalized the guidelines that will determine party and candidate qualifications. When those guidelines are finalized and published for everyone, they will constitute a basis for registering parties and individuals for participation.

It's my personal view, not the commission's view, that the commission should seek inclusion and not exclusion, and that it should seek the widest possible participation of all Liberians and let the people decide. If they want Mr. Taylor, they will vote for Mr. Taylor. If they want any other person, they will vote for that person. The judgment is what matters. ■

## South Africa *Continued*

Africa of unemployment, violence, bankruptcy and AIDS."

Shortly after de Klerk called the referendum, the African National Congress department of information and publicity issued a statement saying, "The ANC, Cosatu, and SACP [South African Communist Party] reject the notion of racial and ethnic referenda, and any exercise aimed at giving whites a veto over the future of our country. The prerogative to decide on the fate of negotiations resides with all the people of our country...A whites-only referendum is not only the hallmark of racism but also has the effect of delaying movement toward peace and justice for all people..."

"As we have underlined in the past, the support of various parties in actual negotiations will be gauged in elections to a constituent assembly which will be charged with the task of drawing up a new constitution."

De Klerk has defended his decision to carry out an all-white referendum on the grounds that the vast majority of the other groups in South Africa have already made clear that they support the negotiating process.

The general secretary of the hardline black group, the Pan Africanist Congress, which has so far refused to take part in negotiations, said that the holding of an all-white referendum "effectively nullifies" the talks under way, known as Codesa, because it shows that de Klerk and his party are "white supremacists." ■

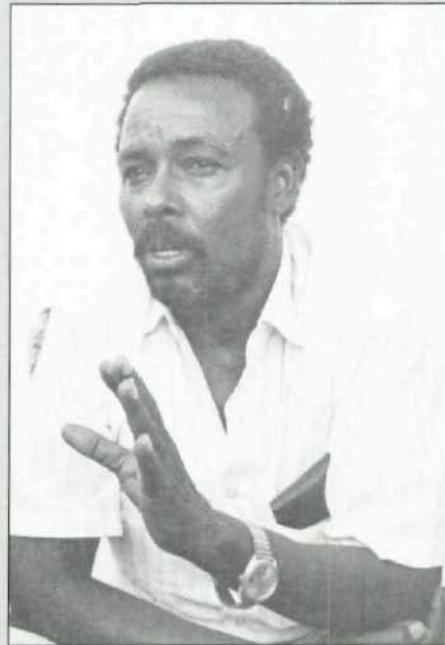
## Somalia *Continued*

the fighting, prospects to feed Somalia's hungry remain grim.

Getting the two USC groups to carry out a ceasefire is a daunting task. Ali Mahdi calls for international intervention, while Aidid rejects it. But

Aidid has reportedly said he would agree to an international monitoring team. Even if the two leaders can be convinced to sign an accord in good faith, as their representatives in New York promised they would, by most accounts the two factions control only a fifth of the 20,000 combatants in the capital. Observers in Mogadishu have pointed out that much of the fighting now is driven by hunger and vendetta, forces largely beyond the leadership's control. The most challenging component of a peace agreement may be the question of food: Without a ceasefire, large-scale food relief is not possible, but aid workers say that hungry combatants will not lay down their arms.

The United Nations peace effort has been called a failure, but it has shown Somalis that there is international interest in the plight of their country. Coordinated with the rest of the international community and mediators on a regional level, it could signal the beginning of a more fruitful peace effort. On January 23—the



Ali Mahdi claims to be the rightful successor to Barre

same day that the Security Council called for an arms embargo—leaders from Ethiopia and Djibouti requested a regional summit. The Eritreans have offered to send a peacekeeping force. Elders and leaders from Somalia's various other clans must also play a role in any ceasefire agreement, if it is to be lasting.

An array of details needs to be worked out,

but the world has acknowledged that the war must stop. The UN may be in a position to help channel this support to bring about a ceasefire and a humanitarian aid mission to the country. In the meantime, hundreds of thousands of Somalis are at risk of starvation. ■

## ZIMBABWE

Zimbabwe secured its first loan from the IMF in nine years, the lending organization announced on January 27. The loan, worth up to \$484 million over the next three years, is in support of the country's 1992-94 economic and financial reform program.

Earlier, Zimbabwe had secured credits from the African Development Bank and the World Bank worth \$181 million and \$175 million respectively.

The country's economy has been struggling since the launching of a structural adjustment program with the help of the World Bank in March 1991. The program is designed to foster economic growth by cutting government spending and liberalizing external trade, domestic prices, investment and labor regulations, and financial markets, but an inflation rate above 25 percent and a worsening balance of payments position have been severely hampering the effort. The current account posted a large deficit in 1991, as opposed to a small surplus in 1988. The *Financial Times* reported that the government had hoped to avoid the IMF credit, but the deteriorating balance of payments left it no alternative.

The South African Press Association reported on February 7 that an authoritative economic survey by Zimbabwe's Standard Chartered Bank published in Harare painted a "grim" picture for 1992, promising at best zero economic growth. The report said that the economic difficulties caused by the international recession, depressed commodity prices, and the absence of investor confidence in sub-Saharan Africa would probably be compounded by a serious drought. The survey warned that the country's SAP faced a serious political threat because of the difficult economic conditions.

## WORLD BANK

"Just between you and me, shouldn't the World Bank be encouraging more migration of the dirty industries to the LDCs [Less Developed Countries]?" Lawrence Summers, the chief economist at the World Bank wrote in a memorandum to some of his colleagues on December 12. When the memo was leaked in the beginning of February, it risked creating an uproar among the developing nations, which have always

## BUSINESS BRIEFS

mistrusted the IMF and World Bank-sponsored structural adjustment programs imposed on them as a condition for borrowing. The economist has said that the memo was intended to stimulate debate on an unfinished World Bank report on the global economy.

Among the reasons to resettle dirty industries in the Third World offered in the seven-page memo was that "a given amount of health-impairing pollution should be done in the country with the lowest cost, which will be the country with the lowest wages." The memo added, "I think the economic logic behind dumping a load of toxic waste in the lowest wage country is impeccable and we should face up to that." Among the other disturbing points Summers included to back up his argument are: "Under-populated countries in Africa are vastly under-populated; their air quality is probably vastly inefficiently low compared to Los Angeles or Mexico City." And, "The concern over an agent that causes a one-in-a-million change in the odds of prostate cancer is obviously going to be much higher in a country where people survive to get prostate cancer than in a country where under-five mortality is 200 per thousand."

The memo anticipated criticism that the World Bank is not concerned with the human face of development by stating, "The problem with the arguments against all of these proposals for more pollution in LDCs (intrinsic rights to certain goods, moral reasons, social concerns, lack of adequate markets, etc.) could be turned around and used more or less effectively against every Bank proposal for liberalization."

Shortly after the memo was leaked, the World Bank issued a statement saying that it did not represent the organization's position and that "Mr. Summers deeply regrets the obvious misunderstandings and apologizes for any misconceptions it [the memo] may have generated."

At least one Nairobi-based organization concerned with the environment

reportedly brought the memo to the attention of African countries.

The idea of transporting industries which pollute to the Third World—where toxic wastes have been dumped for years—in a regulated fashion, has its supporters. The influential conservative British publication, *The Economist*, which printed the memo, expressed interest in Summers' ideas. It wrote, "Mr. Summers is asking questions that the World Bank would rather ignore—and, on the economics, his points are hard to answer. The Bank should make this debate public."

In a related development, a plan designed to control global air pollution commissioned by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development was released in February which would set national quotas on emissions that could be traded among governments. The market-oriented plan would not actually allow pollution to be shipped between countries, but would let countries which pollute less than their quotas sell credits to countries that did not meet their limits.

## TUNISIA

Tunisia's first privately owned and managed mining venture, being developed by Société Minière de Bougrine, received backing from the World Bank's International Finance Corporation in February. *The Journal of Commerce* reported that the corporation will provide a \$14 million loan and a \$2.1 million equity investment in the mine, which is expected to produce about 38,000 tons of zinc and 8,000 tons of lead annually and create 200 jobs.

The \$50 million project, located in Kev province, will also receive a loan from the German financial institution, Deutsche Investitions Entwicklungsgesellschaft, worth \$11.3 million.

Fifty percent of the mine is owned by Metal Mining Corp., the Toronto-based subsidiary of Metallgesellschaft of Germany.

The German ambassador to Tunisia, Karl Heinz Kunzmann, has said that there are 140 German companies with investments in Tunisia, which he claims lead directly to 20,000 jobs in the country. Tunisia and Germany recently signed a cooperation agreement which provides Tunisia with \$24 million in financial assistance and \$9 million in technical assistance.



## DEMOCRACY DERAILED

Frustrated with 30 years of authoritarian rule, Algerians voted overwhelmingly for the opposition Islamic party. But the specter of an undemocratic fundamentalist regime based on shari'a law sent shockwaves throughout Algerian society, resulting in a military takeover. Stamping out the Islamic Salvation Front will not be sufficient to defuse the fundamentalist threat—Algerians' underlying social and economic grievances will have to be addressed.



Algeria believed it could stem the tide of Islamic fundamentalism by exposing it to the rigors of democracy. It thought that elections would allow the fundamentalists a voice in Parliament without giving them any real power. But the overwhelming success of Algeria's main fundamentalist party, the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), in the country's first multi-party general elections since independence caught everyone by surprise.

The prediction by the leader of the FIS, Abdelkader Hachani, a few days before the elections that his party would get 70 percent of the vote, was greeted with guffaws from journalists. But as results came trickling in after polls closed on the night of December 26, this forecast became more and more credible. By the time all the votes had been counted, the FIS had won 188 seats outright, just 28 short of an overall majority. Its closest rival, the Socialist Forces Front, managed only 26 seats.

Suddenly, Algeria looked like it was to become the first country to install an Islamic fundamentalist regime through the ballot box. "The people must be prepared to change their clothing and eating habits," said one of the FIS leaders, Mohammed Said, after the first round of the elections. The FIS had planned to introduce Islamic law, known as the shari'a. This would lead to such radical changes as cutting off hands for theft, stoning for adultery, a ban on alcohol, and the adoption of strict Islamic dress for women known as the hidjab.

But the second round of voting, in which the party looked certain to take control of the National Assembly, never took place. The vision of an Islamic government proved too much for the military, which stepped in and cancelled the elections. "Democracy has taken a holiday," said the leader of one of Algeria's 59 political parties.

The army justified its intervention on the grounds that it was defending the country from the threat of instability and civil war. It was faced with a dilemma—either to permit the election of an Islamic party which might prove hostile to the democratic system that had allowed it to come to power, or to call off the elections in the name of protecting the country's nascent democracy.

In municipal elections in June 1990, the FIS had won 54 percent of the vote, but since then it had lost support, as people saw that Islam alone could not solve the country's deep social and economic problems. The government believed that the FIS would do well in the general elections, winning a substantial number of seats. But it expected the vote to be fragmented among the many small parties contesting the poll and believed these could form an alliance to outvote the fundamentalists in Parliament.

Even though more than 40 parties contested December's poll, it boiled down to a contest between two parties, the FIS and the former ruling party, the National Liberation Front (FLN). The other parties were either too small or too regional to be of any consequence. The choice between the FLN and the FIS was seen by many Algerians as a choice between cholera and the plague. As a result, more than 40 percent of the electorate, 5 million people, did not vote.

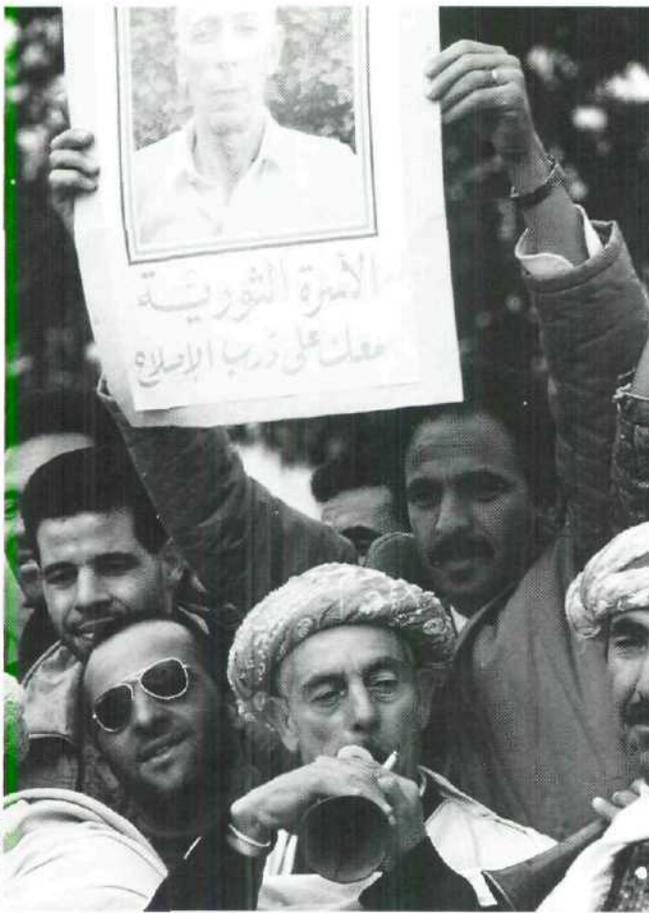
Of those who did make it to the polling stations, many chose the FIS as a protest vote against the FLN, rather than because they wanted an Islamic fundamentalist state. Most Algerians were disillusioned after 30 years of FLN rule. The party's mixture of Marxist economic doctrine and nationalism had left the country in a mess, with raging inflation, few jobs, and widespread poverty. Given a chance to express their discontent, the people voted for the FIS, with the result that against the FIS's 188 seats, the FLN managed only 16.

But the protest vote backfired. The FIS came within a hair's breadth of power, more through circumstance than through the choice of the people. The specter of an Islamic fundamentalist regime sent shockwaves through Algerian society. Few were convinced that the FIS, once in power, would respect the multi-party system. Statements by the party such as "democracy is blasphemy" and "no charter, constitution, just the word of Allah" did little to reassure Algerians that the country would be safe in fundamentalist hands.

Protest was widespread. Women's groups, trade unions, and intellectuals all raised their voices against the fundamentalists. The country's so-called democratic



Pascal Parodi/Sygma



Bernard Sygma

*Abassi Madani, left, leader of the FIS, casting his vote in the June 1990 elections*

*Above, Algerians carrying poster of the new head of state, Mohamed Boudiaf*

parties which were wiped out in the elections shouted loudest. They claimed that the FIS did not have a popular mandate to impose its will, pointing out that only 3 million of the 13 million voters had chosen the party.

The FIS was also accused of vote-rigging. More than 340 allegations of electoral irregularities were laid before the

country's highest judicial body, the Constitutional Council, most of them directed against the fundamentalists. Among them, the FIS was accused of intimidating voters by warning them that a vote against the party was a vote against Allah. These allegations led the prime minister, Sid Ahmed Ghazali, to complain that while the authorities had done all they could to ensure free and fair elections, other parties had interfered with the ballot.

But despite the allegations, President Chadli Benjedid, who was responsible for opening up the country's political system, was determined to pursue the electoral process. He believed he would be able to keep a fundamentalist regime in check. Algerian law states that only the head of state has the right to reform the constitution,

and Chadli believed that he could use this provision to contain an FIS victory. Apparently he had had talks with the FIS leadership on a framework for cohabitation.

But while Chadli may have been prepared to share power with the fundamentalists, the military thought otherwise. Army chiefs forced Chadli to resign, giving them the excuse they needed to call off the elections and stop the fundamentalists from coming to power. The military is deeply suspicious of the fundamentalists and did not hesitate to crush their street protests of last summer, during which at least 50 people were killed.

According to the constitution, the head of the National Assembly should have taken over after Chadli's resignation. But the Assembly had been secretly dissolved at the end of January, as the Parliament's president was considered to be too close to the fundamentalists. The military was given a free hand by the Constitutional Council, which ruled that the constitution made no provision for the prevailing conditions and was therefore no longer applicable.

The army's coup was carefully staged to avoid the appearance of a military takeover. Prime Minister Ghazali appeared on television to assure people he was in charge and not the generals. But with tanks and heavily armed troops surrounding key government buildings in the capital, Algiers, Ghazali was unconvincing.

Eventually, the generals settled for a five-man Council of State to fill the vacancy left by Chadli's resignation. The figurehead of the Council is Mohamed Boudiaf, a veteran leader of the war for independence. He was brought home after 28 years of exile in Morocco to give the new regime a semblance of historical legitimacy. But there is little doubt that the defense minister, Maj.-Gen. Khaled Nezzar, is the strongman on the Council. The government of technocrats brought in by Chadli last summer remains in place, charged with getting the country out of its economic mire.

The generals had spoken of the need to safeguard national security and public order, but their real motivation was clear. Having snatched power from the fundamentalists, the military-backed authorities went on the offensive to stamp out the movement. The FIS was one of the first organizations to be recognized as a political party after the introduction of a multi-party system in July 1989. Although the law specifically excludes political parties based on religion, the laissez-faire attitude of the Chadli regime allowed the FIS to flourish, with the mosques as its political network.

But all this changed after the coup, as the military-backed authorities set about enforcing laws which ban the use of religion for political purposes. The first target was the mosques. "The laxity of the state for the past two years is to blame for the deviation from the sacred role of the mosque," said Prime Minister Ghazali. As part of the campaign to dismantle the fundamentalist movement, imams sympathetic to the FIS were replaced by state-approved clergymen. Other imams were arrested for using the pulpit for political purposes.

*Alfred Hermida is a freelance journalist based in Tunis who contributes to The Times of London and the Observer and reports for National Public Radio and Christian Science Monitor Radio.*

# NERVOUS NEIGHBORS

**T**he military's intervention to stop the fundamentalists from coming to power in Algeria was welcomed by the country's neighbors, Morocco and Tunisia. The prospect of an Islamic regime in North Africa's largest state had prompted fears of a fundamentalist tide sweeping through the region. These concerns were further fueled by the fact that Algeria's Muslims are part of the majority Sunni Islamic faith, rather than of the Shi'ite minority which came to power in Iran.

Comments by the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) that it would "spread the faith inside and outside the country by persuasion or by terror" did little to reassure Algeria's neighbors. Morocco and Tunisia, deeply concerned by Algeria's experiment with legalized fundamentalist parties, sent delegations to Algiers to monitor the elections.

Both countries have banned their own Islamic fundamentalist movements and they used the street battles in Algiers last June between police and fundamentalists as further justification for their decision. But once the FIS agreed to take part in the elections and abide by the rules of the democratic game, the arguments of Morocco and Tunisia were looking a little shaky.

Tunisia refuses to recognize its own fundamentalist movement, Ennahdha (Renaissance), as a political party. Instead it describes it as a terrorist organization which has nothing to do with religion or politics. Ennahdha evolved during the 1980s, as a reaction to the authoritarian regime of the former president, Habib Bourguiba. As Islamic fundamentalism gained ground, Bourguiba stepped up his policy of repression. By the late 1980s, thousands of Islamic fundamentalists had been arrested.

The palace coup of November 1987, when Bourguiba was replaced by President Zine Al-Abidine Ben Ali, was heralded as the start of a process of democratic reform. But instead, the government's stance toward the fundamentalists hardened. Since Ben Ali took over, the army and police have been purged of Islamic sympathizers and hundreds of people have been arrested.

President Ben Ali was particularly worried by the success of the FIS, fearing that a democratic victory for the fundamentalists would encourage their Tunisian counterparts to demand political recognition. Despite the promises of democratic reform, Tunisia remains a dictatorship, ruled for the past 30 years by a single party, now known as the Democratic Constitutional Assembly.

The fundamentalist question has for months strained relations between Algeria and Tunisia. A number of Ennahdha leaders had been sheltering in Algeria and the refusal by the authorities to expel them infuriated Ben Ali. Last October, the Algerian prime minister, Sid Ahmed Ghazali, was forced to make a lightning visit to Tunisia to defuse the crisis.

Tunisia refrained from making any direct comment on the FIS's electoral victory, but made its feelings clear by briefly closing its border with Algeria and putting its security forces on alert.

In a speech, Ben Ali called on Arab leaders to cooperate in the fight against "organized terrorism carried out in the name of religion."

President Ben Ali was one of the first Arab leaders to congratulate Algeria's new head of state, Mohamed Boudiaf. He reaffirmed Tunisia's "total solidarity" with Algeria and indirectly criticized other countries such as Iran and France for trying to inter-

A further measure to eliminate the movement came with a ban on street gatherings around the mosques in the capital. FIS supporters traditionally gathered at the principal fundamentalist mosques in Algiers at Friday prayers to hear their leaders speak. The mosques were too small to accommodate all of them, so every week thousands would pray on the streets. Now this has been outlawed, and riot police and heavily armed troops patrol fundamentalist districts in Algiers every Friday.

As part of the crackdown, hundreds of fundamentalists were arrested, including Hachani and other FIS leaders. But the repressive tactics of the authorities did not provoke the outburst of fundamentalist anger that many expected. The fundamentalists were in no doubt as to what had happened: They had been robbed of their electoral victory. Chadli's resignation was a ploy to enable the elections to be called off and the events which followed

were a coup d'état against the Islamic state and the Algerian people, it said. "We call on veteran fighters, thinkers, religious leaders, senior army officers, and soldiers, and all those who love Algeria to take a stand against this giant of power," said the party.

But the FIS matched fiery speeches with an appeal for calm. Its leaders appeared to wish to avoid confronting the armed forces. "They want us to bring the people out into the streets so that they can shoot them," said Hachani at the first Friday prayers after the coup. "But we will not give them a pretext."

Despite the appeals for calm, some elements of the FIS seemed ready to turn to violence. Groups of young fundamentalist sympathizers have been involved in clashes with the security forces across the country, resulting in dozens of deaths and hundreds of injuries.

The intervention of the military has only served to

fere in Algeria's internal affairs. "The Algerians are best placed to know where their interests lie," he said.

Tunisia's interior minister, Abdallah Kallel, was more direct. The military-backed coup had, in his view, saved Tunisia from having to deal with a fundamentalist regime on its doorstep. In a speech to party militants, Kallel expressed his appreciation for "the action taken to redress the situation, which will, by its very nature, guarantee stability and security."

Tunisia's newspapers, which are under strict government control, rejoiced at the news of the coup. One of them compared the military's intervention to "a last minute change of direction by a train heading toward the abyss."

Perhaps surprisingly, Tunisia's fundamentalists did not denounce the coup against the FIS. Ennahdha's exiled leader, Rachid Ghannouchi, was guarded in his reaction. "What has happened in Algeria is not necessarily a plot against democracy," he said. Ghannouchi has tried to emphasize the differences between Ennahdha and the FIS. "In Tunisia, we are used to dialogue, to gradual change," he said. But these efforts to court the Tunisian authorities are unlikely to cut any ice as the government maintains there is no such thing as a moderate fundamentalist.

King Hassan II of Morocco can only be satisfied with the turn of events in Algeria. As soon as Mohamed Boudiaf was named as head of Algeria's Council of State, the Moroccan authorities began treating him as a head of state. After spending the best part of 28 years in exile in Morocco, Boudiaf is bound to be sympathetic to the concerns of the Moroccan authorities.

King Hassan shares Ben Ali's suspicion of Islamic

fundamentalism. On the eve of President Chadli's resignation, King Hassan warned about the dangers of Islamic fundamentalism. "Fundamentalism is a threat, because it is the expression of backwardness which translates into a certain form of dictatorship," he said, adding that the phenomenon would never be allowed to grow in Morocco.

Morocco has taken firm action to curb its fundamentalist movement, Justice and Charity. The movement was outlawed in January 1990 and five prominent members imprisoned, while the organization's leader, Abdelsalem Yacine, was placed under house arrest.

Islamic fundamentalism has not found Morocco as fertile a ground as Algeria. This is partly due to the religious nature of the monarchy. King Hassan maintains that he is a descendant of the prophet, Mohamed, and so claims he has spiritual as well as temporal authority.

While on the one hand suppressing the fundamentalist movement, King Hassan is also trying to tame it and bring it into the political fold. Since fundamentalism is not yet the potent force it is in Algeria, he can afford to adopt a more conciliatory approach. As part of his efforts to court the movement, King Hassan has magnanimously offered to release the movement's leader from house arrest.

The reverse of the FIS in Algeria has dampened the ambitions of Moroccan and Tunisian fundamentalists to seek political recognition. The sudden cancellation of the elections and the subsequent repression of the fundamentalists has cast doubts on the chances of an Islamic movement coming to power through the democratic process. ■

—A.H.

postpone a permanent solution to the fundamentalist issue. In February, the military government imposed a year-long state of emergency. It is doubtful that the authorities will allow an Islamic fundamentalist party like the FIS to compete in any elections. The country's head of state, Mohamed Boudiaf, warned against the use of Islam for political purposes, while Ghozali threatened to ban any party which refused to respect the rules of the democratic game.

Banning the FIS will not mean the disappearance of Islamic fundamentalism. "The FIS could be dissolved," said one of the party's leaders. "But it will live on in the hearts of its supporters." The fundamentalist movement was already well developed before it took on the shape of a political party. During the 1980s, the movement filled the gap left by a morally and economically bankrupt state. Two years ago, it, rather than the authorities, supplied

blankets and medicines for the victims of an earthquake.

The military-backed authorities know they have to act on a social level to cut the grass from under the fundamentalists' feet. On taking over, the authorities said their first priority was to relaunch the economy. They seem to have learned the lessons of the past. When in January the fundamentalists tried to raise funds for flood victims, the government issued orders banning any organization from raising money for charity on the grounds that such action would usurp the role of the state. Instead, the government announced its own aid program for the flood victims.

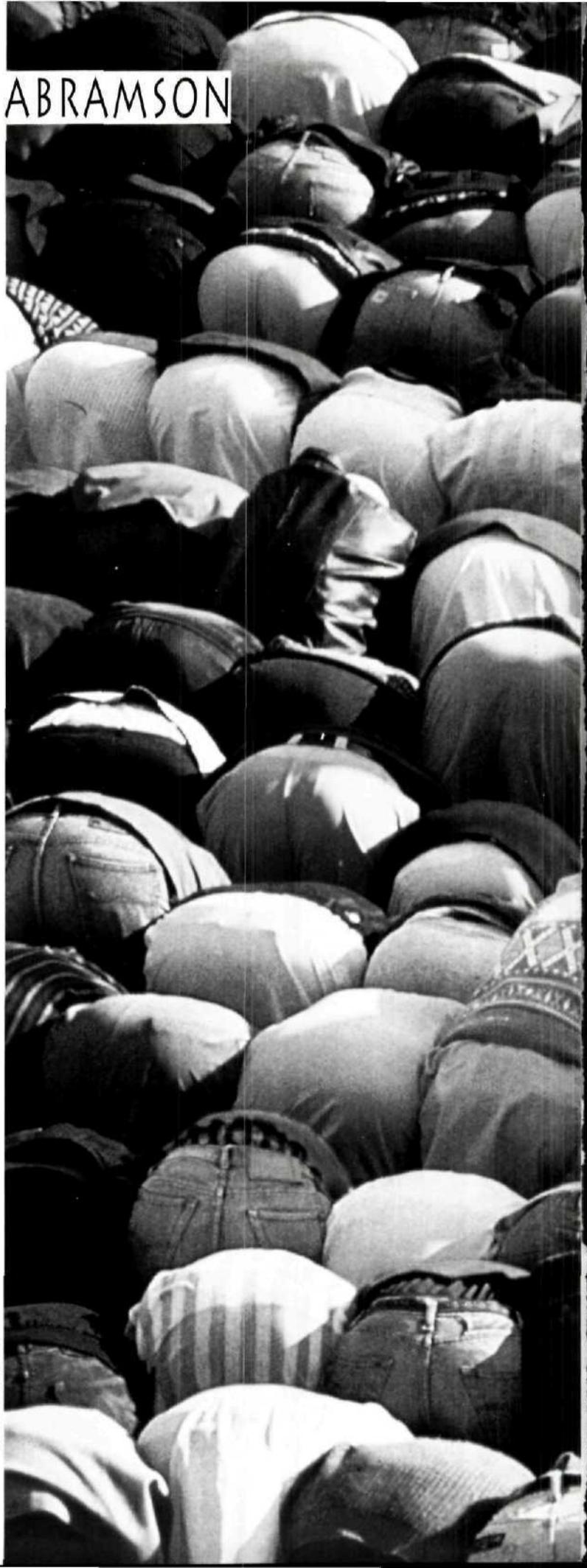
The FIS may have been denied power this time around, but Algeria's fundamentalists remain confident that their turn will come. The message from the leadership is patience. "Even if we are killed or go to prison," said Hachani, "we will one day have an Islamic republic." ○

# RISE OF THE CRESCENT

In the aftermath of the Algerian military's crushing of the Islamic Salvation Front, fundamentalist movements in other North African nations are unlikely to challenge their respective governments. With the exception of Sudan, where shari'a law is being imposed, fundamentalists across the region have been kept under tight control, with many of their leaders exiled or imprisoned.

**F**rom Algeria to Sudan, Islamic fundamentalism is growing political roots in Africa. When thousands of Algerians took to the streets in October 1988, protesters shouted variously in support of democracy, lower prices, and greater availability of food. By the time nearly 200 protesters had been killed in confrontations with security forces, the name of a charismatic young preacher, Ali Belhaj, had become well known as *one of the leading voices behind them*. But there were few open calls for an Islamic state in those days that led President Chadli Benjedid to announce his plans to end the National Liberation Front's (FLN) 30-year monopoly on power.

*Gary Abramson, a foreign correspondent and editor for the Madrid daily El Sol, has covered North Africa for several U.S. newspapers over the last six years.*





The Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) has taken up its mission of re-Islamizing Algerian society from the bottom up, relying on the neighborhood mosques and Koranic schools, and in some cases benefitting from the Arabization program sponsored by the government. But it is difficult to know just where the dividing line is in its massive and recent political success between those who support its program for an Islamic state and those who want to deliver a sharp reproach to the FLN leadership.

Its first political triumph in June 1990, in which the FIS won control of a majority of municipalities in the first free local elections since independence, led to an even greater upsurge of support. But within a year, its sponsorship of another round of street demonstrations, some violent, led the authorities to imprison its two top leaders, Belhaj and Abassi Madani, and declare a state of emergency.

Six months later, the fundamentalists won 3.5 million votes in the first round of the country's first free poll for Parliament. More than 5 million of the 13 million registered voters did not participate. The second round, in which the FIS was nearly assured of reaching an absolute majority of the 232 seats, was set for mid-January.

The wide range of popular reaction to the army's halting of the elections, removal of Chadli Benjedid, and repression of the fundamentalists, culminating in the party's banning in early February, gives some sign of the fault lines in Algerian society. Many middle-class Algerians say the country would have been ruined by a FIS victory, and Westernized women, in particular, breathed a sigh of relief that they will not be "sent back home" from their jobs, see contraception banned, and girls sent to segregated schools, as some FIS leaders had suggested. But many poor Algerians seem not to have felt much alternative to voting for the fundamentalists in order to make clear their disgust with the enormous problems that the new junta recognizes it will have to remedy, at least in part, before giving up power in December 1993, as it has announced.

With its emphasis on justice and religious ethics, the FIS had no trouble winning converts among the victims of the corruption and inequality evidenced by the comfortable life of the old political leadership and the appalling housing and other conditions in which most other citizens have lived since the oil- and gas-based subsidized economy crumbled in the early 1980s. If the Western-inspired efforts to develop the country have failed, so argue many fundamentalist supporters, the Western values which underlie those efforts are just as much to blame for the dissatisfaction and emptiness which has gripped many Algerians.

But support for the fundamentalists turned out to be by no means universal even during the latest wave of violent protests that shook nearly all of Algeria's 20 major cities in the first week of February. In the Berber-dominated mountain town of Batna, site of some of the worst violence with 14 dead and 67 injured, it was not difficult to find young men in blue jeans who felt, despite the stagnation of the country's economy, that the European-influ-

enced way of life offered a better alternative than the austere society they imagine would arrive under a FIS-led government.

More than 300,000 young Algerians enter the labor market each year, just one of the burdens of the country's extraordinary population growth rate of 2.7 percent, but job creation fell last year by one-third. One of the few ways out for many is to eke out a living as a *trabendiste*, or small-time black market entrepreneur. Flights to and from Algiers and Spanish coastal cities like Alicante are full of young men loaded down with recorded tapes, jeans, auto parts, and anything else scarce and portable enough to make the trip worthwhile. One of these youths, observing the destruction in Batna as army helicopters circled overhead for signs of disturbance, identified himself as a "bland Muslim." "You'd have to be crazy to stick your guts out in front of the bullets to defend the FIS," he said.

### MOROCCO, A MIDDLE PATH?

Despite its closeness to Algeria, the public face of Morocco reflects a mutual tolerance of things Western and Muslim that has fed the growth of a Muslim political movement seen as considerably more moderate than the FIS. In perhaps superficial terms, though the majority of Moroccans dress traditionally in djellaba and women often cover their heads with a kerchief or veil, the woman executive who dismounts her motorcycle in a miniskirt faces little reproach.

Under the intentionally non-political name of Justice and Charity, Morocco's fundamentalists say they seek social change through peaceful means and by example. Unfortunately for its imprisoned leadership, this has also meant questioning the religious rectitude of the Commander of the Faithful, King Hassan II. The group does not question the king's role as head of state; rather, explains a lawyer defending one of the imprisoned fundamentalists, there is some doubt among them that the monarch can legitimately claim the religious leadership, which is a strong factor in his popularity, without applying shari'a, or Koranic law, to the country.

Following a series of protests last year at the campuses of the Universities of Fez and Oujda, in which up to a hundred persons may have died according to some accounts, the fundamentalists have come under official pressure. Their leader, Abdelsalem Yacine, was recently put under house arrest and the group is forbidden to preach at the mosques whose imams are loyal to the king. In recent weeks, however, followers of Justice and Charity have been seen gathering at the conclusion of Friday prayers at the mosque in Salé, considered a fundamentalist stronghold.

Other opposition parties in Morocco, such as the nationalist Istiqlal party, appear to be adopting some of Justice and Charity's return-to-roots rhetoric while steering far clear of any calls for an Islamic state. Their leaders also condemn the imprisonment of the fundamentalist leadership as a violation of freedom of speech, a particularly strong political issue in Morocco where a relatively free



press questions everything but two taboos: the king's right to rule and the kingdom's claim to the Western Sahara.

Moroccan officials like to draw a contrast with Algeria's experience with fundamentalism by noting the continuity of their society in the last few centuries, compared to the sharp break with tradition brought about by Algeria's war of liberation and three decades of socialism under the FLN.

### TUNISIA, UNDER THE THUMB FOR NOW

On Algeria's eastern border, where Islam is officially protected by the state, the Ennahdha (Renaissance) fundamentalist movement remains banned and its leader, Rachid Ghannouchi, in exile. Following the FIS's victory in the first round of elections in Algeria, Tunisian television offered brief reports and the government waited five days before commenting.

Despite Ennahdha's prohibition, Tunisian fundamentalist candidates running as independents in the 1989 parliamentary elections garnered 13 percent of the vote, making them the second largest political grouping after the governing Democratic Constitutional Union. Last May, the interior minister denounced a "diabolical" fundamentalist plot to assassinate President Zine Al-Abidine Ben Ali. Two months earlier, three of the group's leaders, including one of the founders of the movement in Tunisia, Abdelfattah Mourou, distanced themselves from Ennahdha after some of their comrades attacked a local office of the ruling party and a guard was killed in the flames.

In contrast with the FIS, with which it claims to maintain close ties, Ennahdha recruits many supporters among intellectuals and the Tunisian petit bourgeoisie, at times allying itself with leftist organizations. But that does not calm the government in Tunis. With 740 miles of hard-to-patrol border with Algeria, no one was surprised in October when an apparently fundamentalist attack was launched in the no-man's land near Bir Rouman and Algerian authorities quietly expelled nine Ennahdha members to Sudan two months later. "If an Islamic republic takes hold in Algeria, Ghannouchi will be broadcasting on radio the following day, right next to us," said a Tunisian minister, speaking of Ennahdha's exiled leader.

### SUDAN, FUNDAMENTALIST FROM ABOVE

The call for an Islamic state is being championed in Sudan not from the mosques but from behind the throne, in the person of Hassan al-Turabi, whose National Islamic Front was a coalition partner in the elected government of Sadiq al-Mahdi, overthrown in June 1990. Turabi's party is now considered to have masterminded the coup that was led by Gen. Omar al-Beshir and removed its erstwhile partner.

So, rather than having to quash a fundamentalist movement from below, the military junta that runs Sudan is readying the imposition of Islamic law in a country in which one-third of the population is either Christian or animist. In government offices, women have been told to wear clothes that cover them from head to ankles or lose their jobs. Islam, says Turabi, is the only ideology left to inspire the younger generation.

Most of the Muslims are Arabic-speakers from northern and central Sudan. The junta is strengthening its links with Iran and is looking to other Muslim nations for financial support.

Its draft shari'a law is based on the one that Turabi, a jurist with degrees from the Sorbonne and the University of London, drew up under the dictatorship of Gaafar al-Nimeiry in 1983.

### EGYPT, CLOSE WATCH ON NEIGHBORS

The fundamentalist missionaries trained by neighboring Sudan have caused worries for Egyptian officials, who have strengthened their border patrols. The Muslim Brotherhood, born in Egypt 64 years ago, has been kept under tight control since Egyptian authorities blamed it for an assassination attempt against President Gamal Abdel Nasser in 1954 and banned the group.

The Muslim Brotherhood, however, has rejected violence since then, disavowing the 1981 assassination of Nasser's successor, Anwar Sadat, by a fundamentalist fringe group, and has not supported Algeria's fundamentalists openly. "Our differences lie in tactics...the goal is the same, but the question is how to reach it," the Brotherhood's 72-year-old spokesman, Mamoun al-Hodaibi, told reporters in late January.

One of the country's leading judges, Said Ashmawy, is also one of the country's most respected authorities on Islamic law. His challenge to ideals of the Islamic state, presented in books such as *Political Islam*, has become a public challenge to the fundamentalist ideology, which is the subject of healthy debate in Egypt, in contrast to most other Muslim countries.

Hodaibi warned, however, that the Egyptian government's support for the military crackdown against the FIS could lead to a change in tactics. "What happened in Algeria is a message that the road to peaceful change is blocked with tanks and cannons, which means that these organizations must consider pursuing other means," said Hodaibi, a retired judge. His group's pursuit of an Islamic state, he explained, will remain peaceful "for now." ○



*There is little escape from hunger and homelessness in Hararghe, eastern Ethiopia*

Betty Press

# LIVING ON THE EDGE

Years of tyranny ended last year with the collapse of the Mengistu regime, but now that the repressive machinery is gone, insecurity and poverty are plaguing many areas of Ethiopia. The transitional government, run by the victorious Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front, is counting on the regions to exercise local autonomy to address these problems as the country begins the complex process of reorganization.

**A**t seven o'clock every morning, residents of Addis Ababa's Hilton Hotel are awakened by the sound of a military drill. Soldiers of the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), who took over Addis Ababa last May after the collapse of the Mengistu regime, are put through their paces on the hotel's volleyball court. They look as stiff and uncomfortable in their new boots and camouflage combat uniforms (reportedly a gift from Saudi Arabia after the Gulf War) as they are in their role of policing the streets of the Ethiopian capital, now awash with beggars and street-children. The former guerrilla

fighters from Tigray, it seems, still have a yearning for their old plastic sandals and the open space of the highlands.

Post-war reconstruction is always painful and difficult, but particularly so in Ethiopia which is also recovering from years of political tyranny. Ethiopia's transitional government, headed by Meles Zenawi, has stepped up its deployment of regular police in Addis Ababa, aware that the continued presence of large numbers of EPRDF soldiers in the streets could lead to friction. "Many local people, such as the Amharas, still regard the EPRDF as an occupying force, and they're not welcome," one observer said.

The government has shortened the night curfew in Addis Ababa which now runs from 1 am to 5 am, but residents have become alarmed by a sharp increase in the number of armed robberies recently, and it is understood that the EPRDF now has orders to shoot on sight during the curfew.

But while law and order is generally being maintained in Addis Ababa, insecurity in the rural areas is becoming endemic as many administrative structures still have to be established and there is growing conflict over land tenure.

Official figures from Ethiopia's Relief and Rehabilitation Commission show that 845,000 people are either displaced or "returnees" (those who have come back to Ethiopia after having been refugees in neighboring countries). Unofficial estimates put the figure somewhat higher. In addition, 160,000 ex-soldiers and militiamen have been demobilized and repatriated into the rural communities, while the government commission responsible estimates that another 100,000 ex-servicemen have demobilized themselves.

The charter adopted by the transitional government last year gives Ethiopia's different nationalities or ethnic groups the right to self-determination. As a result, the repressive mechanisms maintained by former President Mengistu Haile Mariam have been released, leading to an upsurge in political tension and ethnic strife, as well as increasing banditry. An Ethiopian insurance company has begun offering a policy known as "B.S.G.," providing coverage against "bandits, shifta, and guerrillas."

"When the country was at war, there was a frontline and you knew exactly where you were in terms of safe areas," one man commented. But sporadic insecurity has been reported recently in many areas of the west, south, and east of Ethiopia. Furthermore, the government has consistently failed to admit that a serious problem exists. A foreigner traveling south by road toward Moyale on the border with Kenya last month stopped in a small town to ask local officials if the road ahead was safe. He was assured it was, but minutes later a bullet-riddled vehicle was driven into the town carrying six dead bodies, all victims of "an incident" on the road.

The area most under stress is Hararghe in eastern Ethiopia, which includes the vast Ogaden region. Here, there is little escape from hunger and homelessness. As our small aircraft taxied to a stop on the dusty, windswept plain above Jijiga, men, women, and children emerged from their nearby "tukuls," makeshift homes constructed from tree branches, cardboard, and sometimes sheets of plastic tarpaulin. They clustered around the plane, its propellers still spinning, in the vain hope that we had brought a consignment of food supplies.

The frontier town of Jijiga has been a center for relief operations since 1988 when tens of thousands of Somalis fled the civil war in their country to seek refuge in camps set up along the border inside Ethiopia.

However, the people of eastern Ethiopia live on a

knife-edge. Drought over the past two years has meant widespread food shortages. And the region has been plagued by insecurity since the fall of the Mengistu regime last May, bringing relief work to a near standstill in recent weeks. Relief convoys have been ambushed, vehicles hijacked, and aid workers have been attacked. "The general shortage of food is an important element in the unrest. People are fighting for what little food there is. Only about a third of the total needs are getting through at present," said Margaret O'Keefe, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees representative in Jijiga.

Jijiga is a microcosm of the problems in the Horn of Africa. Somali refugees, Ethiopian returnees, and locally displaced people all share the limited resources of a region which historically has been neglected and pitifully underdeveloped. At the same time, local political groups such as the Oromo (Ethiopia's largest ethnic group) are flexing their muscles for the first time and challenging the limited authority which the EPRDF wields in the Ethiopian countryside.

"Under Mengistu, these problems would have been sorted out in drastic fashion," an observer said. "He [Mengistu] would have sent in the MiGs to bomb a couple of villages, even using napalm."

In January, a team of senior government officials, United Nations staff, and representatives of international aid agencies visited several centers in eastern Ethiopia, meeting elders, political groups, and refugees in order to initiate some form of dialogue and reconciliation. "In recent years, the government used to send down instructions and these local groups were not used to assuming any responsibility," said Timothy Painter, the head of the United Nations Development Programme office. "Now they're gradually beginning to take on responsibility and realize they have to talk to each other if they want to solve these problems," he added.

"No one here wants to overthrow the transitional government, but they do want local autonomy," one Jijiga man explained. The government is unwilling to employ the strong-arm tactics used by previous regimes, and EPRDF soldiers are known to be reluctant to provide armed escorts for relief convoys, demanded by the aid agencies.

President Meles Zenawi told foreign diplomats in February that his government was making every effort to overcome the problems, but was counting on the regional administrative centers to deal with the security situation.

The Ethiopian leader recently welcomed two important visitors, President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt and President Ibrahim Babangida of Nigeria. The visit by the two heads of state was obviously intended to signal that Ethiopia is fast gaining a position of respect in the international community. A few days later, Ethiopia's minister for foreign economic relations, Abd al Majeed Hussein, returned from Washington to announce that Ethiopia had been granted a \$672 million aid package to help rebuild the country's shattered economy.

However, foreign diplomats in Addis Ababa have expressed disappointment at the slow pace of political development. "Meles Zenawi wants to prove he's a democrat, and everything is now done by consensus. But nothing ever gets decided," one political analyst complained.

A bewildering array of political groups has now emerged in Ethiopia. The latest count revealed 150 different organizations, including those in Eritrea, which has

formed its own provisional government pending a referendum on independence. Referring to the nationalities issue and the government's decision to divide Ethiopia along ethnic lines, another observer remarked: "We're in the midst of the most stunning experiment in Ethiopian history. There's not much optimism around at the moment, but the challenge for the international community is to hold the faith as the experiment is conducted. And 50 million people here are hoping it works." ○

## MENGISTU'S FORGOTTEN MEN

**T**he officer in charge of Addis Ababa's Central Prison, a wispy, youthful-looking man in his twenties, could not have been more helpful. On arrival, I thanked him for allowing me to visit the political prisoners, members of the Mengistu regime, who have been held since the EPRDF take-over last May. "It's a pleasure," he replied enthusiastically. "Who would you like to see first?"

He led the way into a dimly lit corridor where a group of men stood talking. "This is Legesse Asfaw," the officer said. The short figure in the blue tracksuit was not the one I remembered having seen on the podium overlooking Abiot Square 16 months earlier when President Mengistu Haile Mariam had presided over his last Revolution Day anniversary parade.

Legesse, a Dergue (revolutionary government) hardliner, former secretary of the Workers Party of Ethiopia and one of the more feared members of Mengistu's Marxist regime, was captured last May after making two attempts to escape from Addis Ababa. On the second occasion, he was apprehended by local residents who showed considerable restraint by handing him over to the EPRDF authorities unharmed.

"I'm here awaiting trial. I don't know what I'm going to be charged with. I've got nothing more to say," Legesse mumbled, looking decidedly uncomfortable at the prospect of being drawn into any further conversation.

By contrast, however, the former vice president, Fisseha Desta, who gave himself up to the EPRDF last May, welcomed the opportunity to offer his account of Mengistu's reign of terror and pass judgment on the failures of the old regime. "All of us around him were afraid of his power. He didn't abide by the constitution or the law."

Fisseha, once one of Mengistu's closest aides and a leading member of the Dergue since its inception in 1974, claims there was no collective responsibility for many key decisions. He cited the affair of the senior military officers accused of plotting a coup in May 1989. When the attempt to overthrow Mengistu failed, the officers were arrested and tried. However, Fisseha said Mengistu intervened in the judicial process and personally ordered the execution of the men. "This was Mengistu's decision, and these are the sort of things I really regret. This was a gross violation of human rights."

When asked whether Mengistu carried out the executions himself, Fisseha replied: "I don't think so. He had all the machinery to do that."

He also said the Red Terror campaign, when thousands of government opponents were rounded up and killed in the 1970s, had been "out of control."

But observers describe Fisseha as "a Mengistu hatchet man," someone whom the president trusted, although Fisseha never held positions of outright power. However, he was a Tigrayan and regarded with some suspicion by other members of the politburo during the war against the Tigrayan-based EPRDF.

Understandably, Fisseha is now trying to distance himself from former president Mengistu. "In the last five years before he fled to Zimbabwe, he was a dictator. My memories [of him] are not good ones. I remember him only for his wrong-doings."

He said Mengistu failed to seek a political solution when faced with mounting rebel opposition. "A lot of lives would have been saved if he [Mengistu] had done so."

The former Ethiopian leader recently claimed in a tape recording that some of his top military commanders, including Legesse Asfaw, sabotaged the war effort by collaborating with the rebel forces. When told about these utterances from Mengistu, Fisseha commented: "This is the normal excuse of all dictators."

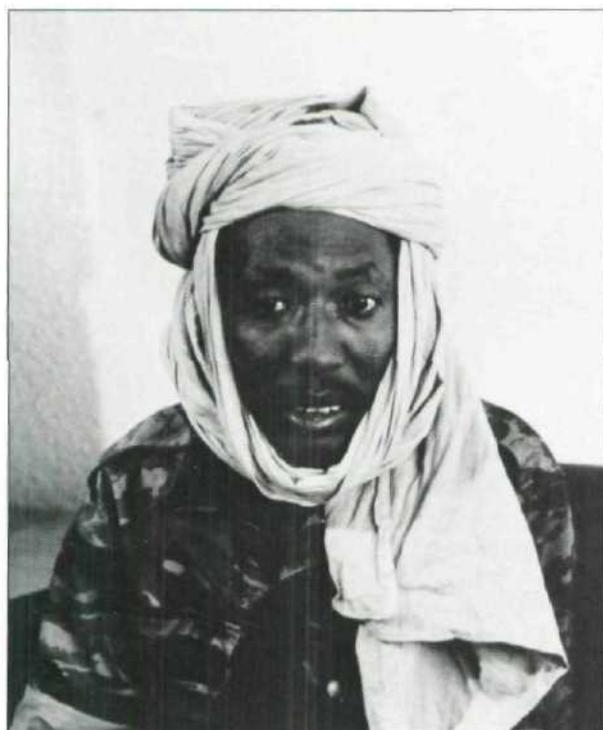
Fisseha said he and his fellow political prisoners (members of the politburo, the central committee, the former ruling party, the armed forces, and other government collaborators) were well treated in prison by the EPRDF. However, they recently signed a petition to demand their release, claiming that their continued detention without trial was a violation of the charter adopted by the transitional government. The Council of Representatives of the transitional government recently established a special office of the procurator-general to investigate the cases of those being held.

"My conscience is clear and I don't think there will be any charges against me," Fisseha said. However, he remains confident that any trial will be fair, adding: "Otherwise the new government won't be any better than the previous one." ■

—P.B.

# PLUS ÇA CHANGE

The new regime of Idriss Deby, which promised to restore democracy after ousting Hissène Habré, has resorted to arbitrary arrests and summary executions against suspected opponents in the face of cross-



Pillas/Sygnma

border raids from rebels loyal to the former president. But France, which supports the Deby government and provides military aid, has begun to criticize its

methods, reminiscent of those used by Habré himself.

**B**oltram is a village in Massokory, about 85 miles north of Chad's capital, Ndjamena. "This is where we stopped Habré's rebels," Capt. Lamine, of the Zagawa ethnic group, tells us in shaky French. He leads us to the battlefield where guerrillas of the Movement for Democracy and Development (MDD) were pushed back a week before, in early January.

"We killed more than 400 rebels during the battle. We lost 15 of our own. The battle was fierce." To emphasize the violence of the clashes, Capt. Lamine points to a 2 x 2 yard pile of dirt. "There, underneath, we buried 54 rebels." Unless the cavity below was extremely deep, the captain's claim seemed unreal: It would be impossible to bury that many corpses in such a grave.

On the battlefield, 15 or more burned-out Toyotas are strewn about, charred weapons still attached. These wrecks, scattered across the sandy wasteland of Boltram, bear the inscription MDD, "proof" that they belonged to the guerrilla movement.

More than a hundred fighters wearing battle dress—heads covered in cheikh kaki (turbans worn by nomads), revolvers strapped to their belts, and Kalashnikovs slung across their shoulders—buzz around their pristine militarized Toyotas, a modern version of the camel teams of yore. These vehicles transport as many as 25 fighters, and strapped to their sides are clusters of rockets, rocket launchers, and bazookas.

Many among this Boltram loyalist force are members of the Patriotic Movement for Salvation (MPS), created

by Idriss Deby in March 1990 when he was in exile in the Darfour region of Sudan, near the Chadian border.

Our guide, Capt. Lamine, had been a fighter in the Armed Forces of the North (FAN) of Hissène Habré before crossing over to the MPS three months before Idriss Deby seized power in Ndjamenà in December 1990. "Today, I'm 100 percent MPS," the young captain tells us.

At age 27, Lamine is a veteran. The past 11 years of his life have been spent as a guerrilla. "I left school at age 16. I didn't know what to do, so I became a fighter. For me, fighting is a job. I can't count the number of people I've killed. Sometimes that bothers me. For example, among the MDD rebels, there were some former comrades of mine. They stayed with Habré. Me, I'm for Deby now."

Lamine's experiences reflect the drama of the armed conflicts which have periodically ravaged Chad over more than a quarter-century. The most recent episode was an incursion by MDD rebels in the area of Lake Chad on Christmas eve. The guerrilla rebels are some of the thousands of Chadians who fled the country with arms and baggage after the fall of Hissène Habré. Most, unlike Habré who lives in exile in Senegal, took refuge in countries bordering Chad, primarily in Nigeria's Borno state and in southern Niger. Both countries have served as a rear base for the MDD rebels.

The rebels, whose goal is to oust Idriss Deby, "the tribalist," renewed their attacks at the beginning of February, before being pushed back once again to their cross-border retreats.

The MDD attack launched at the end of December and early January came as a shock to President Deby's regime. The president, who had promised "the restoration of democracy to Chad," urgently appealed to France to hold back the rebels. Ndjamenà sent word that a major attack involving 3,000 rebels had occurred, and Habré was inches from a return to power if the attack succeeded—arguments, it seems, that convinced the French authorities.

In response, Paris sent military backup—450 paratroopers—to Ndjamenà between January 1 and 2. In addition, four French air force Jaguar aircraft stationed in Dakar, Senegal, waited, ready to intervene. Later there was astonishment that Paris would have come so quickly to President Deby's rescue. Not only did the MDD rebels number no more than 500, but in a communiqué issued by the French ministry of foreign affairs, the attacks had at first been referred to as a Chadian internal affair. Paris would later justify the sending of troops to Ndjamenà by claiming that the decision was "tied to France's commitment to support the democratization process pursued by President Deby."

*Assane Diop, a journalist at Radio France International, is a specialist on African affairs.*

Our visit to Boltram, then to the area of Lake Chad where the rebels had infiltrated, convinced us that the scale of the guerrilla attack had been largely exaggerated. How else to explain the fact that the civilian population suffered no damage during the conflict? At Boltram, settlements situated near the battlefield remained intact. Few rocket shells, the preferred weapon in the Chadian conflict, littered the battlefield. The acacia trees which dot the semi-arid land showed no sign of scorching.

That said, without the airlift of French soldiers, the MDD rebels, who approached to about 250 miles from Ndjamenà, would not likely have been stopped at Boltram. The presence of French military backup in Ndjamenà allowed the Chadian Republican Guard, numbering 1,500 men, to leave their camp in Ndjamenà to lead the counter-offensive.

The Chadian Republican Guard is composed largely of fighters belonging to President Deby's Zagawa ethnic group. The fighters in this force assisted their "chef de guerre" in seizing power. Their ranks include Sudanese Zagawa from the Darfour area. It was this praetorian guard, many of whom are MPS adherents, rather than the 50,000-strong national army, which led the counter-offensive.

The commander of the counter-offensive, Mahamat Ali Abdallah, says he is close to Deby. In peacetime, he manages the profitable insurance company, Star, in which the Chadian government is a major shareholder. Not surprisingly, Ali Abdallah is key to the MPS, giving it a politico-military aura, a kind of "tribalist Zagawa shield," observed a leader of the moderate Chadian opposition.

This view is not shared by many in Ndjamenà's diplomatic circles. "They maintain a reign of permanent terror in their overarmed Toyotas. The sky is the limit for them. They demand free drinks in the bars in towns. Sometimes they steal private cars, or shake down local busi-

*Searching for water: Armed conflicts have ravaged Chad for more than a quarter century*



John K. Isaac/UN

nessmen," recounts a French expatriate living in Chad for the past 10 years.

The Republican Guards' exactions leave one skeptical about Deby's announced intention to democratize. The image of Deby the democrat crumbled one week after the failure of the December-January rebel attack. On the nights of January 8 and 9, the directors of a number of public firms and members of the opposition were the victims of a particularly brutal crackdown.

The day after, the Chadian minister of the interior announced 18 arrests and four deaths, but according to humanitarian groups in the area, there were 60 or more arrests and over 10 deaths. In Western embassies, reports of arbitrary arrests and summary executions were confirmed.

According to the minister of information, "among those picked up, many of whom were killed while resisting arrest by the security services, were Hissène Habré sympathizers." Based on "irrefutable proof" added the minister, "we know these people were rebel collaborators."

Stocks of arms were discovered in private homes—additional proof, the Chadian authorities claimed. According to an investigation by the Chadian Human Rights League, each family in Ndjamenà has an average of six weapons, a claim not denied by the authorities. The overarmed population in the Chadian capital is a cause of the conflicts which have ravaged the country from the fall of Tombalbaye in 1965 to Idriss Deby's seizure of power in 1990.

Lol Mahamat Choa, the mayor of Ndjamenà and founder of the Assembly for Democracy and Progress (RDP), doubts the Chadian minister of interior's justifications for the bloody raids. "I'll admit one thing," Choa said, "nine member of the directing committee of my party were arrested. Four others were savagely killed in their homes by members of the security forces."

Choa is convinced that these "purges" are aimed mainly at "cutting off the head of the RDP"—the first political movement to have held a congress last December in the course of Deby's promised democratization.

In humanitarian circles, it is noted that there were many Kanem among those arrested or killed, a community which is located in the Lake Chad region, through which the rebels passed at the time of their attack. In short, there is talk of "tribal score-settling." A connection is also made between this affair and the October 13, 1991, massacres and arrests of officers or members of the Hadjarai community. Then, Deby arrested Maldom Bada Abbas, the number two in the regime and ex-minister of the interior, on charges of attempting a coup. Later, a frame-up would be revealed. Maldom, from the central region of the country, represented the Hadjarai within

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the regime. The purges of the Hadjarai and the January arrests of political leaders are viewed as a plot by the Zagawa to seize absolute power.

Criticism of the Deby regime's methods quickly flowed over Chad's borders. Paris, which had exhibited a certain solicitude toward Deby up until then, began to change its tone. A communiqué issued by the Quai d'Orsay on January 13 denounced "the toll on human rights in Chad."

In Chadian opposition circles, many compare the methods used by Idriss Deby's political police to those of ex-president Habré. Among the agents of the Chadian security services, the CRCR, are those who had

collaborated with Habré's former political police, an organization responsible for the deaths by torture or summary execution of 10,000 real or alleged opponents between 1982 and 1990.

Since last October, the independent *Ndjamenà Hebdo* has devoted space in its columns to an inquest on human rights violations perpetrated by the CRCR. The newspaper explained that Idriss Deby's political police were trained by agents of the French Secret Service headed by Col. Paul Fontbonne. This Arabic-speaking officer is officially a close technical adviser to Deby. In an investigation by the French press, it became known that Fontbonne knew Deby in Sudan and followed him and his troops from Darfour to Ndjamenà.

In Paris, where policy on Africa is the domain of Elysée Palace, Fontbonne's analyses of the Chadian situation consistently took precedence over the telegrams of the French ambassador, who has been posted in Ndjamenà since March 1991. It took reports by *Libération* and Radio France International to prompt French authorities to recall Fontbonne at the end of January.

The decision to recall Fontbonne was France's admission of error in its assessment of the Chadian situation. France demanded changes from Deby to maintain its support and the result was an amnesty declared at the end of January for all political prisoners, including Maldom Bada Abbas.

Domestically, President Deby's credibility was damaged by these revelations. "Today, the head of state is sitting on a razor's edge," explained one opponent. On one side, his ally France demands that he democratize. On the other, members of the Deby clan, the Zagawa, are not all in favor of the democracy option. Clan divisions are currently tense. The Hadjarai, Maldom partisans, are mobilized in the center of Chad, ready to exact revenge on the regime. As for the northwestern Kanem rebels, they have not entirely lowered their guard despite their two failed attacks in January and February. In Chad, more than ever before, power is determined not by ballots, but bullets. ○

# THE ECONOMICS



World Bank

Is there an automatic linkage between democracy and development? Although Western donor-nations have conditioned aid on political reform, there is no evidence that democracy automatically leads to better government. Indeed, some autocratic governments have been efficient and market-oriented. Democracy, then, must be an end in itself.

**W**ill political liberalization in Africa help or hinder market-based economic reforms?

As political considerations are added to the list of conditions that African governments are expected to satisfy before they can get much-needed, yet rapidly dwindling, development assistance, this question is of increasing concern to Western donors. It is also uppermost in the minds of the continent's new democrats who—newly in power or jostling for position in forthcoming elections—are fearful of what they will have to offer voters in return for their support.

The question is worrying to both parties because experience elsewhere, and in Africa itself, suggests that there is no automatic linkage between democracy and development. Indeed, at least in the short term, there may be conflicts between the two objectives. There is thus an increasing tendency to emphasize the longer-term relationship between political and economic reform, as well as to view democracy as an end in itself, rather than a means to prosperity.

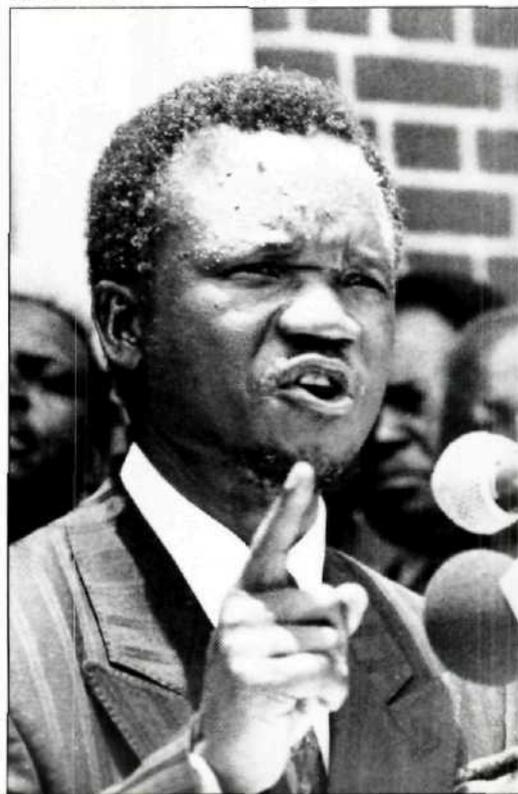
As a recent briefing paper put out by the London Overseas Development Institute puts it: "While there are some encouraging signs, developing country experience in the 1980s does not give firm assurance that greater

democracy will result in better economic management, effective adjustment policies, or faster economic growth. Ultimately, democracy's case may stand better on its own."

One reason for the quandary in which donors and African countries find themselves is the rapidity with which changes are taking place, and the finality with which political conditionality has been added to the agenda for the 1990s.

At the start of the decade, only six African countries—Botswana, Mauritius, Namibia, The Gambia, Zimbabwe, and

*The World Bank's vice president for Africa, Edward Jaycox, above, and Zambian President Frederick Chiluba, right*



Sarah-Jane Poole

# OF DEMOCRACY

Senegal—claimed multi-party systems. Yet during the course of 1991, at least seven more of Africa's 53 countries held multi-party elections or reverted to political pluralism after years of single-party or military rule. Similar changes are contemplated in close to a dozen more countries over the next few years.

At the heart of these changes are the hostile external economic environment and domestic policy failings which have left most Africans poorer today than when their countries achieved independence in the late 1950s and early 1960s. This, along with developments in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, has cast doubt on the age-old arguments put forward in favor of benevolent dictatorships.

Expressions of internal dissent have emboldened multilateral agencies like the World Bank which, in its seminal study of why Africa has not been able to break out of the vicious poverty cycle, concluded that: "The root cause of weak economic performance in the past has been a failure of public institutions...Africa requires not just less government, but better government."

The 1989 study, *Sub-Saharan Africa: From Crisis to Sustainable Growth*, has been taken up enthusiastically by Western donors.

Freed of the need to use aid to back their "strategic interests" with the ending of the Cold War, and under increasing domestic pressure to account better for aid money—especially with Eastern Europe joining the line—donors have added "good government" to the checklist of conditions for aid. Others include free market economic reforms, respect for the environment, curbing population growth, and promoting the role of women.

While the World Bank's definition of "good government" has been framed in technical terms as "a public service that is efficient, a judicial system that is reliable, and an administration that is accountable to the public," that of Western donors has increasingly assumed political dimensions.

In June 1990, British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd set the trend when he declared that "countries tending toward pluralism, public accountability, respect for the rule of law, human rights, and market principles should be encouraged."

Shortly after, at the francophone summit in La Baule, President Mitterrand added: "We do not conceal our expectation that true democracies with multi-partyism, free elections, and respect for human rights will be estab-

lished, and we will encourage developments that lead to them." As a result of the lead given by Britain and France, the EC has signed a charter which links future aid to respect for human rights, less corruption, democratic politics, and a free press.

The U.S., mindful of abandoning old friends too rapidly, initially adopted a more technocratic, World Bank-style definition of good government. Increasingly, however, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Herman Cohen has made it clear that good government includes Western-style political reforms.

The U.S. and other Western donors have in turn been bolstered by the United Nations Development Programme Human Development Report, which—based on its conclusion that "the lack of political commitment, not financial resources, is often the cause of human neglect"—includes for the first time a "human freedom index," ranking countries according to their observance of political freedoms.

The new consensus among Western donors on political conditionality was underscored late last year when the meeting of aid donors in the Kenya Consultative Group in Paris resolved to withhold further assistance to the nation for six months pending progress in both political and economic reform.

While the World Bank distanced itself from the political aspects, the decision on Kenya—once regarded as a darling of the West—sent home the message that political conditionality is now firmly on the agenda. What's more, President Daniel arap Moi's about-turn in announcing that Kenya will hold multi-party elections this year vividly demonstrated the power of Western countries to influence the course of events in a continent where aid accounts for 10.2 percent of GDP.

What is less clear is whether political reform will necessarily advance the cause of IMF- and World Bank-prescribed structural adjustment programs—at least in the short-term.

A major source of discomfort is the age-old debate of whether democracy is a prerequisite for, or product of, development. Western countries, it is pointed out, began the process of acquiring wealth through wholly undemocratic means that included autocratic regimes at home, slavery and colonialism overseas. Demands for political liberalization came much later.

Similarly, the "tigers" in Southeast Asia such as South Korea, Taiwan, and Singapore have all been nurtured in quasi-autocratic environments. Moves toward greater

political freedom have followed only recently and, in many cases, still do not satisfy Western criteria.

In Africa itself, many of the countries which at least until recently were regarded as having relatively efficient administrations, such as Togo, Kenya, and Malawi, could hardly claim to be democratic.

Similarly, in countries that have been through cycles of military and civilian rule, such as Nigeria and Ghana, there is little evidence linking more participatory forms of government with better economic performance. As the Overseas Development Institute paper notes: "Democratic regimes appear to be no more successful than authoritarian ones in achieving economic growth or a lower degree of income inequality."

Indeed, empirical studies carried out by the Institute suggest that "authoritarian rule is likely to generate higher domestic savings as a basis for higher levels of growth whether by forcing public saving or by promoting inequalitarian policies which indirectly assist higher growth."

Democratic governments, the paper adds, have not necessarily proved better at administering austerity measures and may in fact be at a disadvantage. "Whether democratic or authoritarian, elected or not, weak political rulers unable to command support from divided parties, coalitions, legislatures, or key support groups cannot initiate broad economic reform programs," the paper notes. An example of this often cited in Africa is Ghana—the IMF's star pupil—which, many economists contend, is unlikely to have been able to undergo structural adjustment for so long without a strong military government, albeit one that has enjoyed a fair degree of public support.

Probably the strongest correlation that researchers have come up with is between political instability and poor economic performance. Yet, at least in the short run, analysts note, the transition from single-party and military regimes to democracy is likely to exacerbate instability.

A few African countries, notably Benin, Zambia, Cape Verde, and São Tomé and Príncipe, have achieved this transition peacefully. In others, where autocratic rulers have yielded to half-measures and are still struggling for their political survival, such as Zaire and Togo, economic circumstances have deteriorated drastically and are scaring away foreign investors. Even in countries that have turned full circle, and where democratic elections are scheduled to take place this year, like Kenya and Ghana, question marks over the outcome of elections have led to a wait-and-see attitude on the part of the private sector.

Countries undertaking both political and economic reform are learning that there are often conflicts between the two. Mozambique's industrial sector, for example, has been virtually crippled by strikes which have rocked the country ever since it lifted the ban on industrial action, and in response to wages which have been suppressed as part of an austerity program.

So far, Western donors have assumed that democratically elected governments will also endorse market-

based economic reforms. But it is conceivable that an opposition party could rally popular support against IMF and World Bank-style reforms. The real test of the West's commitment to lofty political ideals would come if such a party won democratic elections.

Yet Western history, and recent events in the Eastern bloc, suggest that political democracy is unsustainable unless coupled with markets over the longer term. Moreover, a major finding of the World Bank study is that in the long term structural adjustment programs will only succeed if they have public support. As World Bank Vice President for Africa Edward V.K. Jaycox puts it: "You can't have an uninformed and non-participatory population, and a massive theft of public funds, and have development."

The most poignant illustration of this thesis is undoubtedly Zambia where, after 27 years of rule marked by a zigzag pattern of capitulating to the IMF and World Bank one day and to popular demands the next, President Kenneth Kaunda had led a once-flourishing country to an economic standstill.

Despite his trade union background, the country's new president and head of the Movement for Multi-party Democracy, Frederick Chiluba, grasped from the start that he would have no choice but to implement the harsh measures that Kaunda's United National Independence Party postponed.

"We explained that before the elections, we explained it during the elections, and we have explained it after the elections," noted Zambia's acting vice president, Godfrey Miyanda. As a result, the Chiluba government, still riding the wave of popular sentiment that swept it to power in October, has been able to lift subsidies on maize meal, paving the way for a resumption of dealings with the IMF and World Bank, and unblocking crucial aid.

The Chiluba government has demonstrated in several other ways how a peaceful change of administration can contribute to better government, and hence better long-term economic prospects. Soon after assuming power, Chiluba—often compared to Poland's Lech Walesa—announced a massive privatization program which could earn state coffers \$2 billion, to help offset the \$7 billion debt he inherited. Ten thousand ghost workers have been knocked off the payroll; concerted efforts are being made to tackle key policy failings of the past, such as the singular pursuit of copper; and additional incentives are being given to foreign investors.

Zambia's reformers have added another key dimension to the development versus democracy debate, comforting to Western donors and African democrats seeking to break the political deadlock in their countries. This is the often repeated conviction of the MMD that whether or not democracy leads to immediate material benefits, it is a goal to be striven for in and of itself. As Vice President Miyanda puts it, "The desire for freedom is inborn in all of us. There are fears that democracy won't bring growth, but I wouldn't swap it for anything else." ○

Two years after Africa's reform movement got under way, opposition parties are finding it difficult to build multi-partyism within a culture of authoritarian rule. One complicating factor is the military, which for years was used to prop up autocratic regimes and crush dissent, but now wants a role in the emerging democratic process—and has the power to back up its ambitions.

**T**he growing clash of political cultures which is emerging out of the democratic movements throughout West and Central Africa is the as-yet largely unfought battle which will decide the character of the continent's future. As reformist parties gear up to the real challenge of overthrowing 30 years of entrenched single-party rule against the background of worsening economic decline, the realization that after two years of protests, only three of the region's mainland dictators have been ousted is necessarily forcing a rethinking of approach by the reformers.

So far, democracy has rid only one mainland West African country—Benin—of a single-party ruler. Civil war in Liberia brought the painful end of Samuel Doe, and a military uprising led to the overthrow of Mali's corrupt dictator, Moussa Traoré. Even now, few reformers in the region actually believe Benin provides a beacon of hope for other countries. The disastrous rule of the pseudo-Marxist Mathieu Kérékou resulted in such a weak administration that democracy is regarded as having been less influential in his demise than his own failure to find the enthusiasm to continue.

## THE MILITARY FACTOR



Margaret A. Novick

Elsewhere, opposition parties are now finding themselves forced into self-analysis as they struggle to build a foundation for their support within a culture of single-party rule whose former proponents actually appear stronger than they were before demands for political change began to take root in the autumn of 1989.

From all points of view, credibility has become the key issue. Democracy's weakness is that it necessarily forces accountability, thereby depriving governments of the opportunity to conceal mistakes. Whereas the dictators had the relatively straightforward task of creating administrations which had the almost sole task of ensuring the preservation of the regime, democratic governments are faced with institutionalized scrutiny, checks and balances, the absence of fear within the administration, and a honeymoon period which has now come to an abrupt end.

Two attempted coups d'état, in Togo last December and Congo in January, marked the end of the honeymoon for all the reformist governments of the region. Both events raised questions which few people ask during a *honeymoon*. Having forced these questions onto the political agenda of both countries, as well as forcing reformers in other countries to take note, the military in both countries then proceeded to insist that they also had a role to play within the democratic process and that effectively they would not allow anybody to deny them that role, on the muddled grounds that such a denial would be innately undemocratic.

**A** second similarity between the two countries is clearly the composition of the armies. Both are dominated by the ethnic groups of the country's respective presidents, both of whom are disgraced but still hold varying degrees of power. In Togo, members of President Gnassingbé Eyadéma's family led the coup which resulted in a missile attack on the residence of Prime Minister Joseph Kokou Koffigoh and forced the unbanning of the former ruling party, which was the soldiers' major demand.

A third similarity, in terms of the events themselves, was the silence of the respective heads of state when the reformist governments were under threat from the military forces. Neither Eyadéma nor Congo's president, Denis Sassou-Nguesso, raised a finger to prevent the army from taking over, imposing curfews, killing demonstrators in both countries, and generally discrediting the reformists. It is clear that, given that the reformist governments are currently the only available bodies in each country with any hope of steering the changes, the presidents' lack of support for them can only realistically be interpreted as a sign of their lack of support for the reforms themselves.

This is of little surprise. But it raises a further question of how far reform has to go before it actually has the approval of the most influential members of society. It is clear that the events in Togo and Congo have shown that a total overhaul of all institutions is necessary. This will

mean excluding non-democrats from the reform process, and will necessitate taking tough action against those who try to halt it. It would, for example, logically mean that Congo's army chief of staff, Gen. Jean Marie Michel Mokoko, be tried for treason.

This is clearly not going to happen, mainly due to the lack of credibility afforded the reformers in the wake of these military uprisings. In both cases, the reformist governments were proved to be weak, lacking leadership and having made serious errors. Members of Togo's legislature took the decision to ban Eyadéma's Rally of the Togolese People Party while Koffigoh was out of the country. The decision, which the opposition leader, Edem Kodjo, says was taken by the national conference and not by the legislature, reflected the demands of hardliners within the government, and was not approved by Koffigoh himself.

In Congo, errors on the part of Prime Minister André Milongo also fueled the fire of discontent within particularly unsympathetic sectors of the armed forces. Three days before the soldiers seized the national radio and television stations and occupied the international airport in Brazzaville, they had aired their objection to the appointment of Col. Michel Gangou as minister of defense, as well as to government reform of other sections of the armed forces. Milongo refused to listen to the army's objections, and was about to be censured by the legislature when the mutiny took place. Milongo's decision to flee Brazzaville during the uprising further undermined his credibility, as he was reluctant to put himself in the firing line when the time came to defend his own decisions.

His difficulties were made more complicated by the nature of the army's objections. Milongo said reform of the army command structure had to be detribalized. The army high command responded by saying that the reforms were intended as a way of improving Milongo's chances in the forthcoming presidential election.

The events in both Lomé and Brazzaville show that the army believes it has a direct and rightful interventionist role, and that it is prepared to argue that its role is based on democratic principles. This conundrum is proving an extremely difficult one for the reformers to contend with. Their difficulty has both historical and political foundations. The armies' traditional role, particularly in Togo, had been to ensure the silence of opposition to the regimes which created them. Both countries' national conferences revealed the full horror of the experience of political prisoners who had endured torture, imprisonment without trial, and the despair of not knowing whether they would ever see the reforms now being tentatively carried out.

The clearly political role of the armies as the oppressive arms of the regimes is now becoming the starkest hangover from the years of one-party rule. This issue is one that few of the national conferences in the region actually faced in any practical way, largely due to fear of the armies taking action to disband the conferences, as happened in Togo. Now that at least two armies in the

*Mark Huband is West Africa correspondent of The Guardian (London).*

region have revealed the hands they are prepared to play, it is the question of the transitional governments' credibility, as well as of how deep-rooted democracy has become after two years, that is now necessary for the reformers to face.

Compared to the armies, as institutions within the state, the transitional governments lack credibility. They were not elected, they were largely created by reformers who come from either the academic or professional sectors and find it difficult to claim a popular appeal on anything but a general level, and they are made up of people who have shown themselves capable of making serious errors.

The military in both Togo and Congo have waited for the reformers to make their mistakes, and then tried to step in as a credible alternative as the true defenders of democracy. By contrast to the civilian reformers, the armies are strong and have proved themselves capable of playing a role in the affairs of state, in such a way as to have allowed the dictators many years of uninterrupted dictatorship, stamping out dissent as a sign of their effectiveness.

The military's argument has certainly failed to convince the more educated sectors. Whether it has garnered any sympathy among the uneducated, who feel that the reformers are too quick to condemn the past and the people who dominated it, is clearly difficult to say. While 50,000 people took to the streets of Lomé on February 8 to protest about the role of the military, there has been little protest in the north of the country, the region from which much of the army top brass comes.

That raises a further question over the issue of credibility and the armies' claims of having democratic credentials. In both Togo and Congo, the senior ranks are dominated by the same ethnic groups as the respective presidents. In Togo, the Koffigoh administration was largely dominated by the Ewe, who are most numerous in the south of the country. In Congo, Sassou-Nguesso, despite his supposed Marxist leanings, preferred the army to remain in the hands of officers from his region, a factor which led to Milongo's attempts at forcing through reforms.

The ethnic element, which will soon come to the fore as a major part of the overall debate on the nature of the democracy Africa's reformers wish to create, is only now starting to play a more open role. The most successful of Africa's post-independence leaders tried to establish an ethnic balance within government as a way of offsetting the potential geo-political crisis created by the inheritance of colonial borders. Now one of the major areas where the reformist politicians diverge from the established view is on this issue. Generally, the reformist view prevailing in West Africa is that maintaining an ethnic balance is a form of positive discrimination which leads to some of the best

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talent being excluded from the administration.

However, a major problem facing reformist parties throughout West Africa is the nature of their support. While the academics and urban professionals have often been in the vanguard of reform, convincing the rural peasants of the promise held by democracy has become increasingly difficult with the logic of the arguments which initially helped to create the opposition parties. It is on the village level that the ethnic issue is most potent. The dictators' exclusion of

some ethnic groups in favor of their own inevitably lies at the root of some opposition parties' support, while those parties are theoretically trying to move away from ethnicity. The Ewe in Togo are pro-reform because of their exclusion from power under Eyadéma, and for this reason have dominated posts in the reformist government. But they are therefore faced with the dilemma of having a philosophical objection to using the ethnic issue, but at the same time knowing they would be ignoring a vital and enduring aspect of the political history of the rulers they want to depose, if they ignored it. Equally, they want to win votes and know that to do so means confronting their opponents on every level.

Conservative members of the old ruling parties in other parts of the region who have managed to retain power in the face of the democratic challenge acknowledge that the stalling of the democratic process will heighten the importance of the ethnic issue. Equally, they regard economic improvement as the key to the success of the democratic process. As the let-up in Africa's economic fortunes becomes increasingly evasive, the disappointment of popular expectations of the democratic movements and the difficulties being faced by reformers either in government or opposition to bring change and a clear lead toward a better future are threatening to throw the entire process off track.

While the sensation of democracy cannot now be denied to the people who have already felt it, it is clear that the character it must take on to survive within the context in which it is trying to be born will be shaped by the violence of Congo and Togo. Both governments made mistakes. What is becoming widely acknowledged is the necessity to create a climate in which these mistakes do not deprive the reformers of a second chance at leadership.

But while armies remain political and the heads of state effectively give their approval to plots aimed at undermining the reform process, whatever its shortcomings, more drastic steps clearly need to be taken to sever the military from the political power. Until this happens, the reformers will find it hard to convince the people that they have created a more solid basis for development than the dictators they have fought to overthrow. ○

One of the last of Africa's old-guard politicians, Sir Dawda Jawara, leader of the Gambia for 30 years, has apparently decided it is time for a change. At first withdrawing himself from contention in the May elections, he then relented and decided to run again. Jawara and his party have dominated the nation's politics since before independence in 1965 and his eventual retirement could usher in a new era of multi-partyism.

**S**ince February 18, 1965, Gambia has been independent. This fact has escaped general notice because few non-Gambians know where or what Gambia is, and little about it is on a scale likely to attract attention. A tiny enclave jutting into Senegal, on the West African coast, Gambia is Africa's smallest and poorest new independent nation. It has no railroad, no daily paper, no university, one airport, and one city...Slightly smaller than Connecticut, Gambia does not loom very large on the continent of Africa. Mapmakers, in fact, sometimes forget to include it. This annoys the few Gambians who look at maps."

These words begin *Enter Gambia—The Birth of an Improbable Nation*, a 400-page thesis, part anthropological, part socio-political, based on a year's research done in Gambia (now the Gambia) by American journalist Berkeley Rice around the time of independence. It is a volume as sharp in its analysis and detailed in its descriptions as it is irreverent—some go as far as saying disrespectful—in its tone.

Were Rice alive today, he might be interested to know little has changed. The airport, albeit much advanced (it is designated as a NASA emergency landing site) is still the only one; the capital Banjul (then Bathurst) is officially the only city, though urbanization has taken root. There is still no daily paper (with adult literacy at little more than 30 percent, it's easy to see why); Brikame's College of Higher Education is as close as the country has got to a university; and there is not a single railroad in sight (instead, roads varying from excellent to abysmal link the capital to the hinterland).

As tortoise-slow as acquiring the trappings of nationhood may have been, the Gambia's achievement has been to carve itself an international niche far greater than its diminutive size. Old-timers, while ruing the state of the roads or the lack of a work ethic among today's civil servants, will be the first to blow the country's trumpet as a bastion of multi-party democracy, a flagship of human rights, and a role model for Africa in terms of the peaceful co-existence of its assorted ethnic groups.

"Since 1963," wrote Rice, "these friendly, easygoing people have been under the moderate and capable leader-

ship of Prime Minister David K. Jawara, a shy, bespectacled former veterinary officer." As a student of Africa's turbulent pre- and post-independence history, Rice would be surprised to see the 67-year-old Alhaji Sir Dawda Kairabe Jawara still at the helm and apparently as much in control as ever.

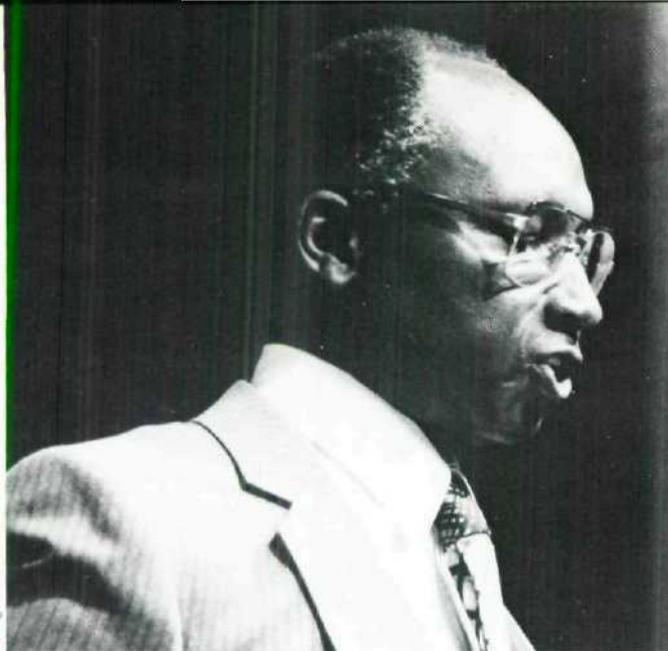
But times change. With many of its population of nearly 1 million (320,000 in 1965) set to vote in a sixth multi-party general election in May this year, the Gambia is on the verge of a new era. Jawara marked its advent last December at the fifth ordinary congress of his ruling People's Progressive Party (PPP), which despite multi-partyism, has never been defeated at the polls. At Mansakonko, some 90 miles from Banjul, Jawara stunned the party faithful when, in a speech accepting renewed election as party secretary-general and leader, he said: "I have decided, when my term expires on the 11th of April 1992, not to offer myself again as a presidential candidate."

Citing fatigue for his decision, Jawara said he was happy to step down "because I do know that the PPP and the Gambian people are now steeped in a political culture which has come to stay. We have, over the past three decades or more, nurtured a political culture of democracy, tolerance, respect for human rights, respect for the rule of law. And I have absolutely no doubt that within this political climate we have developed a team spirit."

Shouts of "no, no, no" greeted his bombshell, with crowds of party militants refusing to countenance the departure of their father-figure. As Momodou Gaye, editor of the PPP newspaper, *The Gambia Times*, put it, "Party militants still believe he has a role to play...as president of this country." Expressing shock at the reaction to his announcement, Jawara mollified panic-stricken delegates by promising to reconsider if they felt his timing had been bad.

In the wake of the December 4 affair, Jawara confirmed the fears of his supporters when, during the Organization of Islamic Conference summit in Dakar a week later, he told the Senegalese daily, *Le Soleil*, that once the PPP had come up with a new candidate, he would also be stepping down from the party leadership. By his return, however, his position had shifted.

On December 12, Jawara told Radio Gambia he would



"continue consultation...and take a final decision." Under intense pressure from party mandarins, by December 16 he told the BBC it was up to the Central Committee to decide. The next day, following four hours of heated debate, a PPP spokesman gleefully shouted from the balcony of the party's Leman Street headquarters: "Sir Dawda is our presidential candidate." *The Point*, a new weekly, described the event thus: "A deafening cheer erupted from the street below, and so ended the tension which had reigned over the Gambia since President Jawara announced his decision."

Tensions may have eased, but analysts wasted no time in brushing off the cobwebs gathered by years of political

peak of his popularity. Now, who knows?" Whatever the analysis, all agreed that politics would never be quite the same.

Matters of the succession—on which Jawara had remained silent despite a barrage of questioning that reached its peak on the eve of the country's Silver Jubilee of independence in 1990—inevitably took center stage once Jawara's *volte-face* had been generally interpreted as an act of altruism designed to save the PPP from itself. The most popular scenario is that after the predicted PPP victory, Jawara will wind down his presidency and step down halfway through his five-year term after the party (with his guidance) has agreed on a successor. Education, Youth, Sports, and Culture Minister Bakary B. Darbo, the skillful technocrat who many had assumed was the automatic choice since he has been vice president for 10 years, emerged as favorite—only to be castigated by another PPP faction as a "tribalist."

Darbo, who represents the cream of the educated Mandinka ethnic group of which Jawara is also a member, is identified by pundits as leader of the so-called New Breed. This Mandinka-dominated group of young intellectuals is, say rival politicians, keen to infuse the country with its rapid development philosophy, whose cornerstones are greater discipline and increased investment in rural areas. Old-guard politicians, an ethnic mix whose maneuverings were largely behind Jawara's change of heart, argue development must necessarily have Banjul as its focus. They make a persistent case for "the politics of consensus" and fear Darbo's accession will threaten their near-monopoly of commerce and rob them of what little

# ENDING AN ERA

stagnation and looking at the jittery effect Jawara's bombshell had on the party in particular and on the country at large. Many had protested the president's decision to go because he was genuinely loved, argued some, and the only man with the constituency, skill, and background to hold together the country's multi-ethnic potpourri. Others used the phrase "crocodile tears," noting that far from mourning the loss to the nation, hangers-on were crying for themselves, since without Jawara's political patronage or personal endorsement of their candidacy, they would never regain their parliamentary seats.

Still others saw the December 4 affair as yet another stroke of a master-politician, who despite his love of the job, was shocked by the democratization trend that had claimed his contemporary Kenneth Kaunda in Zambia and sought to bolster his position by testing just how popular he was. One even mused: "It was fitting for him to reveal his intention at Mansakonko, the Hill of Kings. For if he had stuck to his decision, he would have gone at the

*Peter da Costa is a freelance journalist based in Banjul, the Gambia.*

influence they have left in the government administration.

Some party hawks, members of the old guard, insist Jawara relented because he couldn't leave before the party agreed on a successor. In a closed State House meeting when a PPP delegation tried to convince the president to stay, insiders say Jawara expressed his disappointment that the party lacked unity over a new presidential candidate. Proponents of the "smooth political operator theory" prefer the version that Jawara knew his understudy was not entirely acceptable, but preferred the sentiment to emerge from the party rather than himself.

What remains undisputed is that Darbo, also party treasurer, is the best of a cabinet riddled with inexperience and mediocrity. Part of the Jawara legacy is that his personality has so dominated politics that no one has dared to offer their candidacy. Those who presumed between December 4 and 17 were immediately castigated by party mandarins who view any hint of ambition as treason. All depends on how successfully the party can heal itself. The word, however, is that if Darbo's group fails to survive the in-fighting,

the country's second president may come from outside the PPP.

One man viewed as an outsider with a chance is Sheriff Mustapha Dibba, next to Jawara the man with the strongest power base. Dibba, a PPP co-founder in the late 1950s, was Jawara's understudy and first vice president when the country became a republic in 1970. Differences in ideology saw him expelled from the party and by 1975 founding the National Convention Party (NCP). King of the Baddibus, his North Bank ancestral home, Dibba found himself without a seat in Parliament after the 1982 elections (accused of being involved in a Libya-backed coup attempt in 1981, which provided the only serious threat to Jawara's rule, Dibba spent the election run-up behind bars).

It is no secret that Dibba has been seeking ways to come in from the cold, but PPP bosses have given short shrift to NCP proposals for an alliance or coalition. With five seats to the PPP's 31 in the House, the NCP may be the official opposition, but with a record of failure and no alternative agenda, its appeal at the polls remains limited at best. This notwithstanding, Dibba polled 27 percent to Jawara's 59 in the 1987 presidential election.

If the NCP's chances have been hampered by Jawara's 360-degree about-turn, they have also been affected by the emergence last September of the People's Democratic Party (PDP). Led by medical practitioner Dr. Lamin Bojang, the PDP is bankrolled by a former NCP financier and is made up of NCP defectors. Considered a lightweight with little chance of ever winning a parliamentary seat, Bojang has nevertheless led the campaign for a "freer and fairer" election.

In a joint election petition (drawn up with the Gambia People's Party of another ex-vice president, Hassan Musa Camara), Bojang demanded that the opposition be granted equal access to the state media, that government vehicles be used strictly for state and not PPP business, and that international observers be drafted to monitor the May 1992 poll. Promising to ensure the first two points, Jawara has rejected the idea of foreign observers, saying this would tarnish the Gambia's painstakingly built reputation for a transparent electoral process.

Elections office sources, however, told *Africa Report* that the idea of an indigenously staffed electoral commission has been on the cards since last year. If put in place, this may tighten up procedure. Little has been said, however, about redrawing the electoral boundaries—a campaigning point of the extraparliamentary People's Democratic Organization of Independence and Socialism. Pundits expect little from the opposition but say the de facto one-party state of affairs that has marked the Gambia's 27 years of independence could change with Jawara's departure—provided the growing educated class comes down from its anti-politics high horse.

For his part, Jawara is bracing himself for the critical examination of his legacy that will inevitably follow his abdication. Skillful foreign policy has resulted in huge inflows of aid (at over \$90 per capita, estimated as one of

Africa's highest), much of it misdirected and misappropriated; diversification from the sole reliance on groundnuts, which at independence accounted for 95 percent of revenue, is well under way with tourism and fisheries playing an increasingly significant role; work is full speed ahead to exploit the scientifically identified offshore and onshore oil reserves that may turn the country into a little Kuwait; and the economy, under IMF/World Bank tutelage, has stabilized, making the country a role model for successful structural adjustment programs.

But as Jawara himself was first to say in 1965: "Independence is not a magic formula that will turn our groundnuts into diamonds." Infrastructure remains poor, while rural development, largely in the hands of foreign NGOs, remains slow. Farmers are battered yearly by the effects of world market prices and desertification as their children abandon the homesteads for the burgeoning urban sprawls of Brikama, Serekunda, and Bakau. And accountability in the civil service, while on the increase, remains lacking. Nevertheless the general perception is, to quote octogenarian Lloyd King, "We have survived."

In his New Year's message, Jawara sent out signals about the society he wanted to leave beyond his stewardship. Calling on Gambians to inoculate themselves against divisiveness by developing a sense of national consciousness, he said: "There is no alternative to tolerance and the democratic way of life...[unity] is crucial to our future as a viable nation...our sense of unity should allow us to form a community that is free of discrimination between people and that strives for reciprocal solidarity." Every individual, he added, must respect the value of diversity and direct it to the common good. Reading between the lines, experts of "Jawaraspeak" say he was telling whoever succeeds him that tribalism, sectionalism, and intolerance of minorities are out and consensus-based politics of inclusion is in. Failing that, nothing short of disaster might occur.

Diplomats hinted as much in their New Year's messages. British High Commissioner Alan Pover said it would be a shame for Jawara to bow out now, while other representatives of donors said privately that a Jawara clone was imperative for the country to get its present share of assistance. Others mused that perhaps what the country needed now was not a father-figure, but a disciplinarian.

Between now and the May election, new twists are likely to unfold. That the Gambia is on the eve of change, however, is beyond dispute. Sampling opinion on how long it would take the country to achieve economic independence and development, Berkeley Rice quoted a British technical adviser as saying things would sort themselves out in a hundred years or so. And Rice's view: "It should not take that long, but it will certainly take more than one generation. If this seems like a long time to wait, Gambians might recall one of their own Wolof proverbs: '*Danka danka, jaɓa golo*' (soflee, soflee, catchee monkey)."

Rice could not have been more accurate in his reading of the Gambian psyche, for that fatalistic "wait-and-see" attitude still characterizes the country today. ○



# UNITY AT LAST?

Decades of bitter enmity and sometimes horrific violence between Burundi's two major ethnic groups—Hutu outnumber Tutsi six to one—is the focus of President Pierre Buyoya's "national unity" reforms. Once entirely Tutsi-dominated, the government now has a Hutu majority, the educational system has been rid of its pro-Tutsi bias, and a program of multi-party reform has been launched in which all ethnic groups must be represented.

**||| BURUNDI |||** BY ALLISON BOYER

Alain Noguez/Sygmia





ational unity is an obsession in Burundi. No longer will one refer to the 84 percent Hutu and 14 percent Tutsi, or the 1 percent Twa, Burundi's three ethnic groups, but rather to "the people of Burundi." Monuments to unity have been erected

throughout the country. One afternoon a week, the government takes time off to engage in "national unity sports." Legislation being drafted to permit political pluralism is being pursued in the name of national reconciliation.

During the first two years of his rule, President Pierre Buyoya released hundreds of Hutu political prisoners, jailed several corrupt Tutsi government ministers, ended the repression of the Roman Catholic church (seen by the previous government as a vehicle for a Hutu revolution), and brought an end to a discriminatory education policy favoring the Tutsi. Uprona, the single ruling party during the past 30 years, has survived three coups and in varying forms of mutation has served three successive heads of state. Entirely Tutsi-dominated until 1988, Uprona could today be considered a party of national unity—a model example of peaceful cohabitation in the halls of power.

Today the government is headed by a Hutu prime minister, Adrien Sibomana, and Hutu represent the majority in the cabinet. The reforms initiated by Buyoya are unprecedented, determined, and widely welcomed by Western aid donors.

However, a Hutu prime minister or even a majority Hutu cabinet has not convinced everyone that peace among Hutu and Tutsi can be lasting or is even desirable. Extremist Hutu, grouped in the movement, Palipehutu (Parti pour la Libération du Peuple Hutu), continue to attempt to sabotage the reconciliation process, capitalizing on the residual fear and mutual suspicion summed up by the Kirundi word, "Ikiza," or "catastrophe."

The Buyoya government has worked hard to lay the groundwork for multi-party non-ethnic politics to take hold in Burundi. On February 5, 1991, the Charter of National Unity was adopted, a document—or rather pocket-sized pamphlet—inviolable above all laws, including the constitution.

The charter was drafted under the auspices of Uprona. Although it was adopted by 89.21 percent of the

electorate, no amendments were made to the text. The opposition charges that definition of the term "national unity" should have been open to national debate.

The country's fourth constitution, which will go before a referendum in March, is step two in the project to create a climate of confidence between Hutu and Tutsi. A commission created in March 1991 composed of 35 members including lawyers, church, military, and one member of an opposition political group, produced a 145-page report, "The Democratization of Institutions and Political Life in Burundi," which was the object of debate in the 120 communes of the country. In mid-January, the draft constitution was presented to the president. From January 24 until February 15, the public had a chance to peruse the text before the vote.

Awaiting the referendum on the constitution, however, the 1966 Law 001/034 institutionalizing single-party rule remains in place. The various opposition parties cry foul,

demanding that political activity be legalized in order to allow dialogue. But as Hutu secretary-general of Uprona Nicolas Mayugi explains, "We have reasons for controlling the democratization process. If we were to lift this law, we would be operating in a void, without rules for political parties to follow. It would be anarchy."

However, Melchior Ndadye, president of the moderate Hutu-dominated Frodebu, the sole member of the opposition to sit on the commission, resigned in August on the grounds that the commission was not sufficiently broad-based and that the text contained glaring omissions and articles which make a mockery of the principles of democracy. Uprona's secretary-general Mayugi defends a constitution



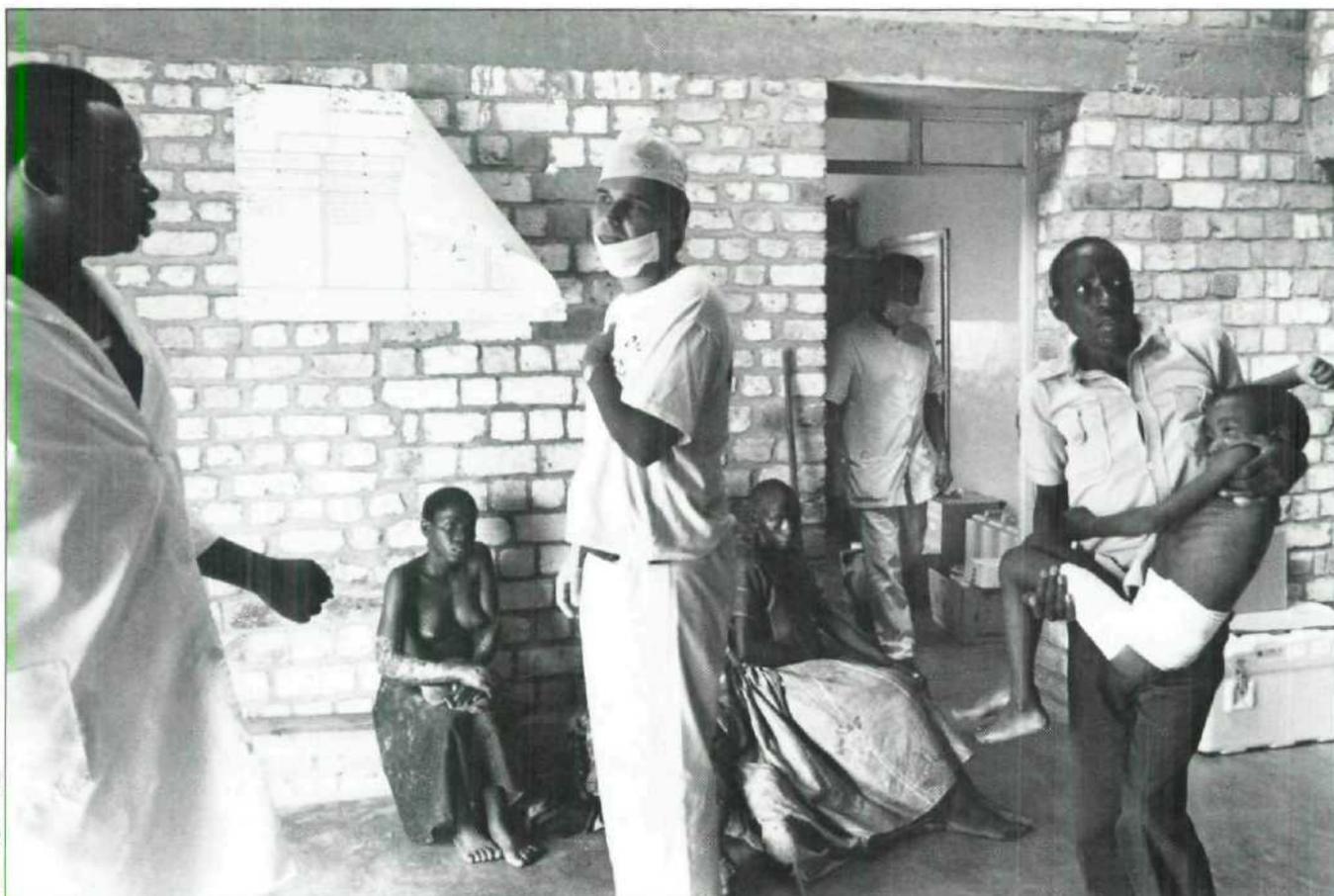
Ndadye

tailored to bring an end to the tragic consequences of ethnic politics in Burundi. "It is important that the constitution ban what we saw as wrong yesterday."

Article 56 of the constitution states that no party created on the basis of ethnic affiliation will be legalized. While the constitution requires that all ethnic groups be represented in a given party, the president of the Constitution Commission, Gerard Nyungero, insists that "there will not be a quota imposed on the number of Tutsi or Hutu belonging to these parties. The essential is that these parties reflect national unity."

Frodebu's Melchior Ndadye sees things otherwise. "A dangerous contradiction exists," he says, "between the banning of parties based on tribal affiliation and the stipulation that each party which will be authorized must have among its founders and members representatives

Allison Boyer is a freelance journalist based in Paris specializing in African politics.



**Left, President Pierre Buyoya**

**Above, wounded Hutu refugees who fled 1988 massacres, at hospital in Rwanda**

from each of Burundi's ethnic groups." According to Ndadye, any attempt to insure that all ethnic groups are included will exacerbate rather than alleviate the tensions surrounding the ethnic issue.

If no quota is to be imposed, how then will it be determined

whether or not there are Hutu and Tutsi in a given party? The president of the Constitution Commission remains resolute. "Burundi is a small country," Nyungero avows, "everyone knows each other. If a party is composed exclusively of one ethnic group, we'll know it." Hutu secretary-general of Uprona Nicolas Mayugi proposes that each party draft its own "mini-constitution" which would stipulate that "all Burundi citizens without distinction for ethnic affiliation may be members of a given party."

The ban on ethnic parties poses logistical problems for nascent groups awaiting the green light to begin their fundraising and campaigning. Article 56 of the constitution prohibits parties from receiving external financing. Unable to accept external sources of support, there remains a risk that such parties may be forced, clandestinely, to turn to ethnic support to insure their survival.

For its part, the ruling Uprona will, with the adoption of the constitution, disconnect from the state. Official cars and other material benefits will be returned. Mayugi explains, "In 1991, the state budget granted Uprona 272 million Burundi francs (\$1.4 million). In 1992, not a sin-

gle franc. From now on, we will be supported by our members."

But Burundi's new fundamental law will not just ban ethnic-based political activity. The constitution which declares Burundi a republic implicitly prohibits the formation of parties advocating the reinstatement of a monarchy. "Republic? What republic?" cry the would-be monarchists. The 1966 coup d'état which ousted King Ntare V and proclaimed a republic was led by three subsequent putschists: Capt. Michel Micombero, Col. Jean-Baptiste Bagaza, and Maj-Gen. Pierre Buyoya.

Created in September 1991, the Royalist Parliamentary Party (PRP) exists, according to its founders, in large part because it is implicitly banned by the republican constitution. According to the PRP's Bujumbura leader, Jean Bosco Yamuremye, "the Burundi people never decided in favor of the end of the monarchy."

The party advocates a parliamentary monarchy, with a prime minister and a Hutu-Tutsi mixed council of notables. Isn't a monarchist party anachronistic in Burundi in 1992, one might ask? Not at all, according to Yamuremye: "The king, who will act as an arbitrator, remains above ethnic categorization—a constitutional monarchy is the only way to insure national unity in Burundi."

Perhaps the most delicate issue facing President Buyoya concerns the future of the armed forces. Neither the Charter of National Unity nor the constitution make reference to its composition. Maj. Lazare Gakoryo, commander of the commando force and member of the Constitution Commission, maintains that it will be left to

future governments to amend the constitution to bring the army "into the framework of national unity." "The army cannot be left indifferent to the democratization process," the major insists.

Undeniable fact: The army remains strongly Tutsi, and the limits of democratization may depend to an extent on the willingness of "ultra-Tutsis" within the military to accept reform. The Tutsi-dominated military has played a major role in the country's political life. The three heads of state since independence—Micombero, Bagaza, and Buyoya—are Bahima (a Tutsi sub-caste). Bahima officers have controlled the army since 1972. Buyoya owes his own place at the top to junior officers from his province of Bururi, precisely from his own hills of Vianda.

The Burundi military currently numbers between 15,000 and 20,000, large it would seem for a country of its size. While Maj. Gakoryo refuses to give any statistics on the ethnic configuration of the army, he insists that the military has changed.

Melchior Ndadaye, leader of Frodebu, proposes the dissolution of the armed forces and the creation of a national army and gendarmerie based on equal recruitment from each of the country's "collines," thus avoiding the re-creation of a regionalist monoethnic force. Not practical, according to the major: "With such a system if the gendarmes or soldiers are sent to maintain order in their fiefs, it's more than likely that they could refuse to follow orders. On the other hand, if we announce a program of recruitment throughout all the districts of the country, selection by competition will determine the candidates chosen."

Reform within the military, however, cannot erase overnight the mark left by periodic brutal Tutsi repression of Hutu civilians. Dr. Sylvestre Brancira, a 37-year-old psychiatrist trained in France, remarks that among his clients a good number have an obsessive fear of uniforms. For many Hutu, the sight of a uniform is synonymous with tension. The doctor explains: "Very often inter-ethnic tensions are stirred up by the fact that when a Hutu sees a soldier, his reaction is that he must defend himself or be killed by this soldier, who he automatically identifies as a Tutsi." According to the doctor, Palipehutu, the extremist Hutu movement, plays heavily on this phenomenon.

The violence which broke out on November 23, 1991, between Palipehutu and the security forces in the capital, Bujumbura, and in the northwestern province of Cibitoke bordering Rwanda, provided a chilling reminder of the limits of the capital's lofty declarations.

According to the authorities, the conflict involved the security forces and a modest number of armed "tribal terrorists"—members of Palipehutu. Although ethnic tension and violence did not spiral out of control as it has in the past (1965, 1969, 1972, 1988), the official death toll rose to 551. Gervais Habyarimana, vice president of the Burundi League of Human Rights, estimates that the number of dead exceeds the official figure by far. Laurent

Kagimbi, a Hutu secretary of state, admits that there were cases of misconduct among the security forces. He speaks of sanctions taken, but is unwilling to say how many or what kind.

Over 150 people were arrested in connection with the violence. Many were released, while others await trial. There has been no official investigation into the incidents, but the Human Rights League, in concert with the government, has followed the legal proceedings closely.

In mid-December, 228 Rwandans were questioned by the police. The majority, without identification papers, took refuge in the Rwandan embassy in Bujumbura, demanding to be repatriated. After further questioning, 100 or so were expelled from the country. Those who remained in custody, according to the Burundi authorities, were "infiltrators" who had been involved in the November Palipehutu offensive.

The Burundi government openly accuses its Rwandan counterpart of tolerating the presence of armed insurgents of Palipehutu. According to Luc Rukingana, president of the Burundi National Commission on the Return and Reintegration of Refugees, refugee camps inside Rwanda serve as recruitment and training centers for the rebel movement.

Voluntary repatriation of refugees is key to the policy of national reconciliation embarked upon by the Buyoya government. In a tripartite accord signed by Burundi, Tanzania, and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in August 1991 in Dar es Salaam, the signatories insisted upon an amnesty to ensure that repatriation is effected in a voluntary manner.

At present, the majority of Burundian refugees are concentrated in Tanzania. Most of them, numbering 200,000, are Hutu who left their country following the bloody clashes in 1972. Estimates by the UNHCR indicated that 50 percent of the 200,000 refugees living in Tanzania wish to return. Based on figures provided by the diocese of Burundi, between January and December 1991, a total of 18,500 Burundians had been voluntarily repatriated from camps and settlements in Tanzania, Zaire, and Rwanda.

But the continued violent activities of the Palipehutu have disrupted efforts by the Burundi government and UNHCR to instill a climate of confidence. According to Rukingana, Palipehutu leads a disinformation campaign in the camps claiming that all people who accept repatriation are executed upon their return to Burundi. The Burundi government for its part will sponsor visits this year to the interior of the country by Burundian refugees, who will then return to their camps to describe the situation accurately.

The vast majority of the Burundian people appear to agree with Buyoya that it is time to embrace national unity and turn the page on yesterday's scores. Once the democratic institutions are in place, Palipehutu may find itself with no ammunition left to stir up the demons of ethnic hatred. ○

# PRESSURE FROM ABROAD

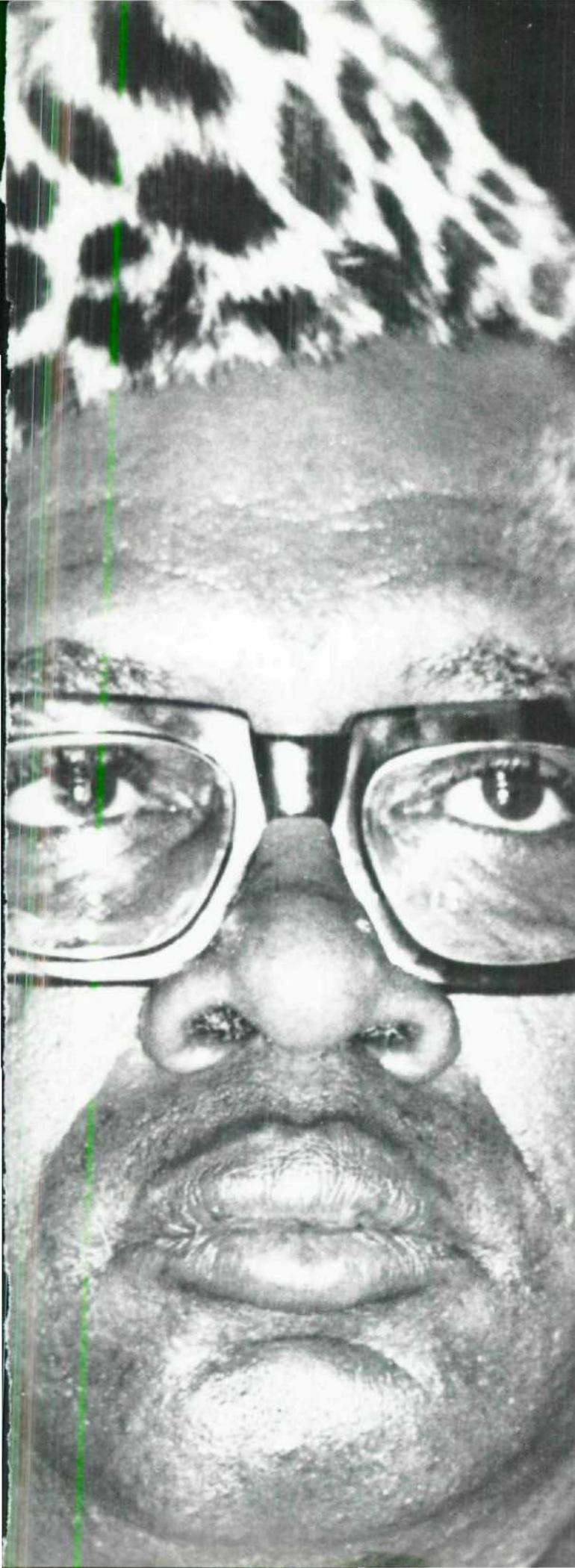
Foreign pressure on Zaire is fueling the effort to forge a democratic restructuring, underpinned by the economic and political clout of the three major donors, France, Belgium, and the United States. But while Paris and Brussels are clear about the solution—the removal of President Mobutu Sese Seko—the U.S. appears undecided on whether to continue propping up its long-time ally. In the meantime, the worsening crisis has heightened the possibility of more violence.

*Herman Coben, assistant secretary of state for African affairs: Must President Mobutu, left, give up power or stay on as head of state?*



Margaret A. Novicki

Carriemix



**Z**aire's long stumble from crisis to crisis has rapidly become a battle between what President Mobutu Sese Seko defensively describes as the corrupters and the corrupted. But fueling the potential for conflict in the country is the increasing lack of clarity over who fits into these two categories.

Determined to extoll the virtues of what has quickly come to be regarded as Africa's democratic path, foreign powers with influence on the continent have been keen to advocate the imposition of their blueprint for democratic change. This has hinged on the holding of national conferences, at which the old regimes go on trial, interim administrations are appointed, and the supposedly democratic heart of African politics is allowed to blossom after years of apparent repression.

Foreign pressure on Zaire is fast becoming the main driving force in the country's political equation. It is important to understand why that pressure exists, to decide whether it is consistent and disinterested, and to establish whether or not it is being applied appropriately.

The United States has now cut off all assistance, including emergency aid, to Zaire, while the European Community has suspended development assistance. These decisions were taken in response to a decision by Mobutu and Prime Minister Nguza Karl-I-Bond to suspend the national conference. On February 5, following visits to several former donor nations who refused to resume their aid to Zaire, Karl-I-Bond appealed for

humanitarian aid to be resumed. This request was made specifically to Belgium, which scrapped its aid program following the military's massacre of students at Lubumbashi University in May 1990.

Belgium has said that it will only listen to requests for aid from the national conference itself. Karl-I-Bond, in what clearly ranks as a sign of how desperate his three-month old government is to find arguments in its own favor, said the resumption of humanitarian aid would be a mark of Belgium's respect for human rights and that Belgium's insistence on the primacy of the national conference was an interference in Zaire's domestic affairs.

Belgium's position is complicated by its own domestic political crisis following deadlock at a general election on November 24, when French and Flemish-speaking members of the coalition led by Wilfred Martens fell out over the issue of arms exports. Splits have traditionally existed over the Zairian issue along the same linguistic lines. Flemish speakers, many of whom formed the vanguard of Belgium's colonial rule in Zaire, tend to be more pro-Mobutu than the French speakers. The delicate coalition within the bilingual context of the country means that policy on Zaire has a very deep significance for internal Belgian politics and can fuel serious divisions within the political establishment.

France, like Belgium, has been arguing ever since the army-led Kinshasa riots of September 1991 that Mobutu must simply step down and

**Kinshasa:**

*The economic crisis has heightened the potential for more violence*

*Mark Huband is West Africa correspondent of The Guardian (London).*



Betty Press

preferably leave the country. This point of view has led to Mobutu accusing France of plotting to overthrow him, an accusation denied by the French. In November, Zaire illegally tapped diplomatic communications between the French embassy in Kinshasa and the foreign ministry in Paris, in which the French ambassador Henri Rethore was allegedly heard plotting to destabilize the Mobutu regime.

But despite historical links with Zaire, French and Belgian influence is minor compared with that of the United States. While France and Belgium are linked through Africa's francophone community and, in Belgium's case, as a former colony which it pillaged and abused until independence in 1960, the U.S. connection is more specifically with Mobutu himself.

In an interview onboard his river boat, the *Kamanyola*, last year, Mobutu was forthright in his claim that the U.S. would not try to replace him. In this he appears to have been right. Since September 1991, the U.S. has dithered in its demands of the ally it promoted and supported in order to facilitate its wars and subversion in Africa. Initially, both France and Belgium found it difficult to know where the U.S. stood, while they were making their demand for Mobutu's departure.

Now the U.S. position is even more murky. The assistant secretary of state for African affairs, Herman Cohen, has consistently been outspoken in his criticism of Mobutu, citing human rights violations, corruption, and all the abuses of power which the U.S. refused to acknowledge when Mobutu was playing a role in American foreign policy, particularly in Angola. However, these criticisms have been tempered by the U.S.'s apparent acceptance of Mobutu staying on as head of state.

Testifying to the Senate subcommittee on Africa, Cohen said on February 5 that Mobutu must "effectively give up power to someone else, preferably from the opposition, so that a transition to a free and fair election can take place." But, confusingly, he went on to say: "We're not asking him to leave. We feel he should remain as president so he can control the military force until there is an election at which point the people will decide. If Mobutu, with his control of the security apparatus, including people who engage in covert operations...does not support a transition process, then it cannot succeed."

The cutting of aid, as well as the loss of prestige afforded Mobutu by U.S. criticism, are two aspects of the foreign pressure on him. A third aspect comes from within the central African region. Mobutu's role in the Angolan issue has continued. The U.S. air base at Kamina, from which the CIA channelled weapons to Jonas Savimbi's Union for the Total Independence of Angola (Unita) rebels during the 16-year civil war, is still functioning. Mobutu's role as the conduit for CIA funds to his

brother-in-law Holden Roberto's FNLA forces in Angola in the mid-1970s enriched the Zairian president by \$1 million worth of embezzlement. Now, Savimbi himself has said that the departure of Mobutu would destabilize central Africa, and particularly Angola in the run-up to elections.

Against the background of a current 23,000 percent annualized inflation rate, massive unemployment, and the continued absence of many expatriates who formed an important part of the business community, Western pressure for the resumption of the national conference—which has been in almost uninterrupted suspension since it was opened in August 1991—has started to resemble advocacy of an article of faith whose magic powers are rapidly diminishing.

The U.S., Belgium, and France were all extremely angry that Karl-I-Bond suspended the conference, saying that it was behaving unconstitutionally and that it was sowing division within the country. The prime minister had assured all three countries that he would resume the conference, and publicly at least, he appeared to be carrying out a dramatic U-turn. But since the latest suspension of discussions, the arguments put forward by foreign governments as reasons for its resumption appear increasingly thin.

At the same congressional subcommittee hearing, Cohen said: "What we want to do now is get the national conference back on track with the development of a transition government that will not be threatening to either side." He continued: "We

feel that the only way to break the impasse is to have a transition government led by someone acceptable to everybody who would be essentially neutral and would have no ability to run for president after the transition and this is what we hope to persuade everyone to accept," adding that Zaire cannot end the economic crisis without support from donor nations, the main ones being the U.S., France, and Belgium.

But impartiality of the kind envisaged as a way of allowing a neutral atmosphere to prevail at the conference no longer exists within the Zairian political arena. The appointment of the Bishop of Kisangani, Monsengwo Pasinya, as chairman of the conference during a brief resumption in January led to accusations from the pro-Mobutu grouping that he was biased in favor of the opposition. When the opposition demanded the sacking of the government officials responsible for accreditation to the conference and demanded the dismissal of the governor of Shaba province after he had been accused of preventing delegates from travelling to Kinshasa, Karl-I-Bond announced the conference was over.

The chaos surrounding the conference, in the way it reflects the crisis in the country, was clearly bound to

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grow once it became clear that nobody was able to take on the role of arbiter. U.S. claims that Mobutu should stay on to keep the army under control suggest that Washington still has faith in its former ally, and does not believe as many do that Mobutu would actually be prepared to see the army unleashed as a way of proving his own value.

Now the Catholic church has been accused of bias within the context of the conference, and is unlikely to overcome the prejudice against it. The church hierarchy, which claims the president among its congregation, has itself been guilty of silencing anti-Mobutu elements within its numbers, undermining its partiality in the eyes of both sides.

Within the political arena itself, there is no such thing as "someone acceptable to everybody." The proof of this lies in the events of the past year, which have seen five prime ministers appointed and replaced or sacked by Mobutu. The political establishment in its entirety lacks cohesion due to the enormous pressures on all politicians, and the legacy of 27 years of Mobutu's rule. With all leading members of the opposition having suffered at the hands of the dictator at some point—having been isolated, imprisoned, tortured or humiliated—the grounds for cohesion even within the opposition are almost nonexistent. The older opposition leaders, who created the post-independence political elite, have swung from being in opposition to Mobutu to being in his government. The chameleon nature of many of these elder statesmen lies at the heart of their mutual distrust of each other, and has contributed to the fragility of the opposition Sacred Union coalition.

This fragility burst into the open when Karl-I-Bond accepted the prime ministership last November. Karl-I-Bond, whose autobiography, *Mobutu, Or the Incarnation of Sickness*, gives an account of his ill-treatment at Mobutu's hands, has variously held the posts of leading opponent to the regime, foreign minister, ambassador to Washington, and prime minister. Despite his position as a founding member of the Sacred Union, Karl-I-Bond's motives were always questioned by other members of the coalition. This contributed to serious divisions and distrust between himself and the Sacred Union leader, Etienne Tshisekedi.

Karl-I-Bond's acceptance of the prime ministership, after months of saying that he would only accept the presidency, was a positive step only if the process of discussion and the reconvening of the national conference were to be his main intentions. His role had to be one of bringing the different sides together in a way which his predecessor, Bernardin Mungul Diaka, and the latter's predecessor, Mulumba Lukoji, had never stood a chance of achieving. But having scrapped the national conference, and suggesting the convening of round-table discussions between the political groupings (a suggestion quickly rejected by the Sacred Union), Karl-I-Bond's ability to break the impasse looks as weak as all those who have taken on the poisoned chalice of the prime ministership.

Karl-I-Bond's own motivation is still largely unclear.

But one theory suggests that there are moves by the all-important foreign powers to scrap the idea of the national conference altogether, discredit the already divided opposition, increase the credibility of Karl-I-Bond by resuming foreign aid, and thereby create in Karl-I-Bond a dauphin for Mobutu to cede power to.

A February 6 World Bank decision to release \$30 million to the Zairian government to support social services is the first hole in the armor the West has exposed, and it is highly likely that a more conciliatory tone will be adopted in the U.S. The West, and particularly the U.S., will realize that, instead of forcing the government to adopt measures approved of by donors, strangling Zaire will actually leave the country dead.

Suggestions that some opposition leaders may have been involved in the attempted coup by soldiers demanding the overthrow of Mobutu during an occupation of the national broadcasting station on January 23 have already undermined the opposition's reputation. Chief among those leveling the accusation of opposition complicity is Karl-I-Bond himself, who now has no choice but to establish an identity and power base which totally excludes his former coalition allies. This, however, undermines the entire *raison d'être* of a period of unifying transition overseen by somebody who is not Mobutu, as it leaves the transition in the hands of somebody who personally despises Mobutu and is not trusted by the Sacred Union.

Few if any of the political maneuvers which have created the storm within government have had any convincing reference to the continued plight of Zaire's 33 million people. Runaway inflation, unemployment, and bank liquidity problems which led to banks in Kinshasa closing on February 5 on the pretext of a sparsely supported national strike, have pushed the potentially rich country into an abyss of poverty worse than that which most people have been forced to endure under Mobutu's catastrophic rule.

The economic crisis has heightened the potential for more violent action in demands for an end to the political stalemate. The January coup attempt by soldiers from the 31st Regiment (the same regiment which led the rioting and looting in September 1991) marked a desperate attempt at forcing change. It was bound to fail, and resulted in many more deaths than were acknowledged when elite Special Presidential Division troops were sent in to crush the rebellion. Karl-I-Bond instructed that the recapture of the broadcasting station be carried out with minimum casualties, but his instructions appear to have been ignored by DSP troops, according to later reports.

Dissidents outside Zaire have long been planning the overthrow of the Mobutu regime, and the current crisis within the country is providing an ever more fertile battlefield. However, it is not clear along what political lines military action would really be fought. But as the potential for a political settlement fades, with the exhaustion of most of the available combinations of parties, politicians, and foreign-imposed initiatives, there will soon be nobody left to contain growing popular misery and military discontent. ○



*Cyril Ramaphosa,  
secretary-general of the  
African National Congress*

# COMING TO A COMPROMISE

As the government of President F.W. de Klerk and the African National Congress hammer out a blueprint for a future democratic South Africa, it is clear that both sides broadly agree on the need for a provisional government. While they differ on how it should be constituted and how to arrive at a new constitution, there is, however, room for compromise.

**P**resident F.W. de Klerk and Nelson Mandela of the African National Congress agree: The present administration from which South Africa's black majority is excluded must be replaced by a provisional government by 1993.

But while they concur on the need for a more broadly based provisional government, they cannot even agree on a name for it. De Klerk's governing National Party (NP) refers to a transitional government, while Mandela's ANC prefers to talk of an interim government of national unity.

Their terminological differences reflect deeper divergences on the nature, purpose, and duration of the envisaged provisional government. Standing back, it is possible to delineate the key elements of their respective views of the immediate future.

As de Klerk made clear in a major speech to the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (Codesa) on December 20, and again in his opening address to Parliament on January 24, the ruling NP wants to amend the present constitution to provide for a transitional constitution and, through it, a transitional Parliament and government.

The proposed transitional constitution will provide for "equitable representation" of blacks in the legislative and executive arms of government, meaning that blacks will be free to elect black representatives to Parliament for the first time since the Act of Union in 1910.

But de Klerk's NP goes further than that: It wants the transitional government, and the new, more representative Parliament, to serve as forums for debate on a "final" constitution for a non-racial South Africa.

In large measure, the NP's new plan—representing a major shift from de Klerk's original proposals—preempts the ANC's demand that a constituent assembly, elected

on a one-person, one-vote basis, should be mandated to draft a new constitution. As de Klerk has remarked of his own proposals: "[They] could produce an entirely new dimension in the debate over a constituent assembly."

One way or another, the de Klerk administration is determined to avoid the transfer of unfettered constitution-making powers to a popularly elected constituent assembly, mainly, one suspects, because it fears that the ANC will dominate the assembly.

De Klerk, who has yet to spell out his proposals in detail, insists that they should be first approved in a referendum and then submitted to the present Parliament for adoption and legal enactment.

The problem, however, is that he is committed by his own pledges to white voters to seek the approval of the white electorate separately. Thus, he proposes that white votes should be counted separately to establish whether they endorse his plan.

The ANC differs with de Klerk on several key points of his plan, not least his determination—as the ANC sees it—to hold "racial referenda" and give white voters a veto over progress to a new non-racial order.

The ANC proposals, as spelled out in its message commemorating its 80th anniversary on January 8, are a model of simplicity: The present government should be replaced by an interim government of national unity by the end of July and elections for a constituent assembly should be held before the end of the year.

The ANC demands that the present Parliament and constitution should be abolished as a prelude to setting up an interim government as the "supreme and sovereign governing authority" until the adoption of a new constitution by the constituent assembly.

The ANC's reaction so far to de Klerk's proposals is two-dimensional: At one level it is skeptical, fearing that de Klerk is devising a stratagem to gain a tactical advantage in the negotiations; at another, it believes that de Klerk, under pressure by the inexorable logic of the situation, is gradually shifting to fulfillment of ANC demands. There may be an element of truth in both views: De Klerk, driven by forces out of his control, may be edging

Margaret Heinlein



*Patrick Laurence is a specialist writer on the Johannesburg Star, South African correspondent of The Economist, and a contributor to The Guardian of London and The Irish Times.*

closer to the ANC's central demands, while at the same time twisting desperately to regain the initiative.

In its skeptical mode, the ANC perceives a possible maneuver by de Klerk to restructure the present tricameral Parliament for whites, Coloureds, and Indians by adding a fourth chamber for blacks. Denouncing in advance any attempt to move in that direction, the ANC says: "Legitimizing the tricameral Parliament through co-optation is totally unacceptable...An interim government which finds its form in a glorified tricameral Parliament with an indefinite time span is equally unacceptable."

As the ANC puts it in its 80th birthday statement, the "illegitimate and illegal [de Klerk] regime" has been forced to retreat to "new lines of defense" and, in so doing, it is deliberately complicating and delaying what should be a "simple and manageable transition."

The ANC secretary-general, Cyril Ramaphosa, offers a different—but not necessarily contradictory—perspective on government thinking. He sees a "fundamental shift" in the NP's approach and interprets it as evidence that the NP is moving closer to the ANC's position.

Ramaphosa observes that until late last year, President de Klerk talked about making "transitional arrangements" to accommodate the black majority until the drafting of a new constitution. But now, he adds, de Klerk is talking about a democratically elected "transitional government."

"He is talking about an interim government which will be elected and which will derive its legitimacy and authority from an elected legislature."

Ramaphosa reckons that de Klerk has effectively conceded another key ANC demand: that the task of drafting a new constitution should be assigned to a democratically elected constituent assembly.

Until recently, Ramaphosa says, de Klerk's position was that the new constitution should be drafted by a multi-party conference. The multi-party conference became a reality last year in the form of Codesa, but the government now wants the final constitution to be drafted by a provisional but popularly elected Parliament.

Ramaphosa sums up: "We have always said that the constitution must be drafted by elected people. De Klerk now agrees that the constitution should be drafted by elected people. We have always said that there must be an interim government. He now agrees that we should have an interim government."

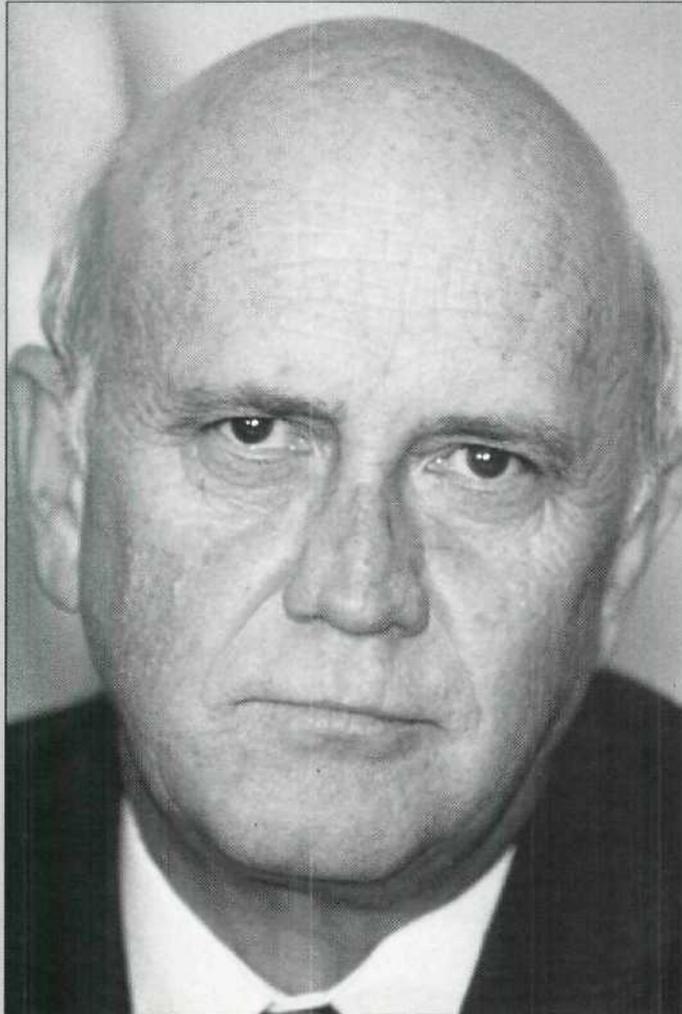
Gerrit Viljoen, de Klerk's minister of constitutional affairs, offers a different interpretation. He does not dispute that there has been a change in the NP's approach, but he projects it as an "important initiative" and an alternative to—rather than a duplication of—the ANC's approach.

Stressing that the formation of a transitional government is a vital pre-condition for the establishment of stability and investor confidence, Viljoen says: "The way to success is going to be urgency and speed."

Noting that the NP talks of a transitional government while the ANC refers to an interim government, Viljoen argues that the two terms are not merely different phrases for the same concept.

"The word interim government is the buzzword that is being used by the ANC and its supporters for a system where the present constitution is suspended, the government is an undefined entity, to which there is a total transfer to power, and Parliament is no longer functional..."

"You have an uncontrolled executive, the governmental system is no longer in terms of a constitution because the constitution is suspended. There is a constitutional and political vacuum and that, of course, is entirely



Patrick Durand/Sygma

unacceptable.

"The moment you use the word interim government, it inevitably brings with it all the implications of the ANC definition. That is why we prefer the term transitional government."

Viljoen, a former university professor with a taste for intellectual argument, does not shy away from trying to define the NP's alternative notion of transitional government.

"Firstly, the government accepts that it will imply a meaningful change bringing about a change in [rather than a suspension or abolition of] the constitution.

"Secondly, the shift would involve not only the executive, the government, but also the legislature, namely Parliament.

"Thirdly, the existing constitution would apply the method of introducing such a transitional government with a transitional constitution; that means it will have to be brought about by a decision made by [the present] Parliament.

"These aspects are new and, in a sense, have put the whole question of arrangements between the present situation and an eventual new constitution in a somewhat different light.

"[Our] proposal that there should be urgent negotiations at Codesa aiming at an agreement on a first phase in constitutional change through a transitional government is, we believe, a very important initiative.

"We believe that government is providing an alternative...to the concepts of constituent assembly and an interim government, as defined by the ANC.

"We believe that a transitional government involving the fundamental changes to which I have referred would be an acceptable [forum] to argue and negotiate a better alternative to a constituent assembly...

"While a constituent assembly as generally defined is supposed to be elected on a one-man, one-vote majoritarian basis—where the majority, once elected, will simply finalize the constitution—the approach of the government is to ensure proper representation of minorities in the decision-making...especially in regard to further constitutional change."

To achieve that end, Viljoen and de Klerk have stated, the principles underlying the NP's draft constitutional plan should be considered at Codesa as a basis for the transitional government.

Published in September last year, the NP plan contains an elaborate system of checks and balances, including a collective presidency and a regionally based upper parliamentary chamber where representation will be weighted in favor of smaller parties.

Mandela has castigated it as a "recipe for chaos" and a scheme to guarantee that the "accumulated privileges of white minority rule remain inviolate."

The question that observers are asking is whether a compromise can be devised which reconciles the ANC and NP plans. The answer is almost certainly positive.

Both parties are anxious to forge ahead to a provisional government: The ANC, which realizes that time is running out for Mandela, now age 73, wants to finally end apartheid as soon as possible through the enfranchisement of the black majority; the NP wants to establish a new constitution before September 1994, the date at which it will have to face the increasingly rampant right-

wing Conservative Party in a white-only election under the present constitution.

Several compromises have been talked about: The ANC may accept a modified form of the NP's transitional government, one in which its duration will be limited to, say, 18 months and in which there will be no place for a regionally based upper house weighted in favor of smaller parties. The NP may accept a constituent assembly, provided that it drafts a final constitution within parameters agreed on at Codesa and provided that no one party will be able to foist its constitution on the nation unless it wins two-thirds of the seats at Codesa.

The ANC and the NP are already talking to one another in a bid to agree on a route forward. Ramaphosa remains confident that a compromise will emerge in which the NP will have been forced to make most of the concessions.

"You cannot have a transitional government that operates in the way that de Klerk wants it to operate," he says.

"Of course, de Klerk has to say he wants to base [the transitional government] on his constitutional proposals. But those proposals have not found acceptance from a broad spectrum of political parties.

"The key issue is the fundamental shift that the [ruling National Party] has effected. The fundamental shift in their thinking now is that the constitution must be drafted by people who have been elected.

"How we are going to make that possible is an issue that will have to be negotiated at Codesa."

Ramaphosa is confident that the ANC's view that the process must be kept as simple as possible will prevail at Codesa and that Codesa will reject

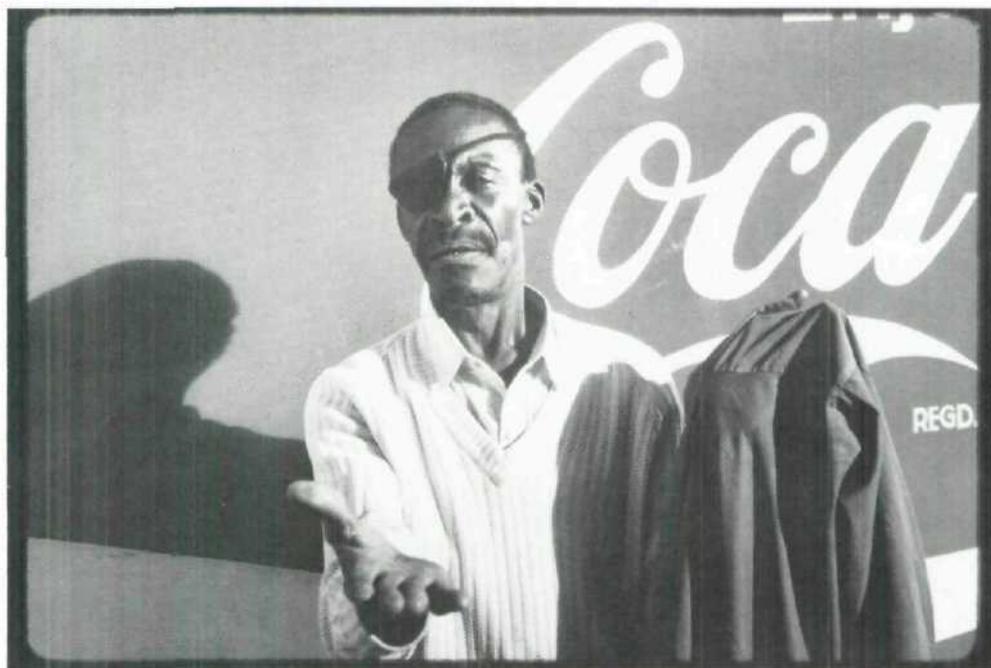
the NP's complicated proposals. Underlying his thinking is a calculation that the balance of power at Codesa lies with ANC-aligned forces rather than with the de Klerk administration and its allies.

The two sides, however, remain fundamentally opposed on the question of a referendum as a pre-condition to the next step. De Klerk and Viljoen are adamant that the NP must fulfil its promise to the white electorate and seek its approval for the proposed provisional government. Mandela and Ramaphosa are equally adamant against the proposal to hold "racial referenda" as it effectively gives the white minority a veto.

"If anyone should have a veto, it should be the people of South Africa, black and white," Ramaphosa says.

The ANC's opposition to a white veto is based on realpolitik as well as principle: It does not share de Klerk's confidence that he will win a referendum in the white community and fears that by taking that route, the NP is going into an impasse from which there is no easy escape. ○

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Catherine Allport

*The ANC wants sanctions to remain in place for now, but does not want to scare away potential future investors*

## IRONING OUT INEQUITIES

**A**

s political reforms gather steam in South Africa, the daunting economic challenges facing this deeply divided nation are coming more sharply into focus.

Although by no means guaranteed to succeed, the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (Codesa), inaugurated in December, has raised hopes that transitional arrangements leading to democratic elections may finally be on their way in Pretoria.

Yet, as Dr. Ronnie Bethlehem, group economic consultant to the Johannesburg Consolidated Investment Company, points out: "Developments in the economy are key to the success of the negotiations. All that has happened so far will be meaningless unless there is delivery."

The problems are both immediate and long-term.

Trade and banking sanctions have taken a heavy toll on the South African economy—perhaps \$40 billion lost in the last five years—as has the cost of administering the apartheid system, an estimated \$8 billion annually. But a future non-racial government, which must restructure the economy to eliminate its built-in inequities, will at the same time have to instill confidence in the business and foreign investor communities.

Despite the lifting of most sanctions, the continued existence of others and reticence by business to invest in the present uncertain climate leave little hope of a sustained recovery from the current recession. Further down the

road, the African National Congress, now almost undoubtedly the government-in-waiting, must perform one of its trickiest balancing acts as it seeks to respond to the pent-up demands of the country's black majority on the one hand, while assuaging the fears of the largely white private sector and foreign investors on the other.

On one point there is little disagreement. Despite boasting the highest per capita income in Africa, and the only African country to be ranked by the UN as "developed," South Africa's economy is in deep trouble.

Bearing the other distinction of being an economy with one of the most inequitable distributions of income in the world, South Africa began the 1980s with relatively rapid growth in GDP, based mainly on the rise in the price of gold, which accounts for about a third of export earnings. GDP growth slowed to an average of 1.5 percent for the decade as a whole, minus 1 percent in 1990, and minus 0.5 percent in 1991, against a population growth rate of some 3 percent per annum. Unemployment has been running at 40 percent, or some 2.5 million people, while inflation has soared to 15 percent, despite harsh monetary measures to curb it.

Even South African Breweries—which in the past has thrived on hardship, reporting consistent profits since 1977—recorded a slump last year. "Mass consumer spending has finally succumbed under the impact of the most protracted down-swing experienced in South Africa since the second World War," the company said in its annual report.

This has partly been accounted for by the deepening world recession, decline in gold prices, and drought. But it is also a reflection of the inherent limitations of a system that restricts the buying power of the largest segment of the population, the huge cost of administering apartheid, and the effects of sanctions.

Although the jury is still out on the real impact of sanctions, even the conservative, London-based *Economist* magazine estimates that South Africa lost \$8 billion through trade sanctions, and another \$32 billion as a result of banking sanctions over the last five years.

Forced repayment of debts and lack of access to credit from the International Monetary Fund has resulted in a huge suppression of imports. The independent, Washington-based Investor Responsibility Research Center (IRRC) estimates that South Africa's economy is 20 to 35 percent smaller today than it would have been without the expensive import substitution strategies that Pretoria has adopted since the 1960s.

According to data compiled by IRRC, which carries out research on a variety of business and public policy related issues, 403 companies, 215 of them from the U.S., have disinvested from South Africa over the last decade.

The last few months have brought slightly better fortunes. Uncertainties in the former Soviet Union have resulted in brighter prospects for South Africa's mining sector, which supplies 46 percent of the world's gold, as

well as significant quantities of strategic minerals like platinum, manganese, and chrome.

Since February 1990 when President F. W. de Klerk announced his intention to scrap apartheid, most Western countries have considerably eased sanctions pressure.

The EEC lifted its ban on new investment in December 1990 and—after Denmark relented in December 1991—has lifted trade sanctions as well. President Bush rescinded the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act, which covered a broad range of U.S. trade and investment with South Africa, in July 1991. A few months later, Japan lifted all its economic sanctions against South Africa, except those covering computer technology.

The UN and the Commonwealth have gone along with the ANC's call for a phased lifting of sanctions, leaving trade and financial sanctions in place until South Africa is securely on the road to democratic elections, and retaining the arms embargo until a new government is installed. But these restrictions have little bearing on South Africa's key business partners, which have already passed their own legislation easing sanctions.

South African fruit and wine, once pariahs in Western grocery stores, are finding their way back onto the shelves. Recent trade figures show that exports rose by 11.9 percent between January and October 1991, compared to the corresponding period in 1990.

Commercial financial markets have also started opening up again, with the Deutsche Bank putting together a \$124 million bond issue for the South African government in September 1991, followed in January by a \$318 million five-year bond issue lead-managed by the French bank Paribas and the Swiss Banking Corporation.

The result is that South Africa has been able to borrow to cover its international debt obligations, contributing to a build-up in foreign reserves and predictions that South Africa will experience a positive growth rate this year.

**B**ut, warns economist Ronnie Bethlehem, currently a visiting scholar at Oxford University, the country is far from being out of the woods. "It is easy to kick-start an economy, especially if it has been in a recession," he says. "The question is, how sustainable is that growth?"

One indicator is business confidence—or the lack of it. Recent surveys carried out by the South African Chamber of Business show local enthusiasm still at a low ebb. Foreign investors, reports the IRRC, are not jumping up and down either.

The 1991 edition of IRRC's *International Business in South Africa* shows that 454 non-U.S. companies have direct investment or employees in South Africa, a net increase of 21 companies on the count made a year before. But the report also shows that 171 companies—a net increase of 37 on 1990—have non-equity links with companies in South Africa, such as licensing and distribution agreements which do not involve new investment.

With 104 U.S. companies retaining direct investments

*Anne Shepherd is a London-based journalist who has travelled widely in and written extensively on African economic and political issues.*

or employees in South Africa, the report finds that the number of disinvestments by American companies has dropped since 1987. But, according to the IRRC, "the number of U.S. companies with direct investment or employees in South Africa is the lowest it has ever been," and there has been no new U.S. investment in the last year.

A major problem specific to U.S. companies, according to IRRC researcher Jennifer Kibbe, who recently authored the report, *U.S. Business in South Africa: The Road Ahead*, is the continued existence, despite the lifting of the federal government's sanctions, of local sanctions laws in five states, 42 cities, and 11 counties.

The lifting of U.S. sanctions also leaves in place the Gramm Amendment, through which the U.S. maintains its veto on IMF lending to South Africa. Access to these resources is crucial to reversing the current import depression policy, and would boost business confidence. But the amendment can only be rescinded by the U.S. Congress, which is likely to hold onto this card until democracy is guaranteed.

The ANC, treading a difficult tightrope between wanting economic sanctions to remain in place for the moment, but not wishing to scare away potential future investors, has been urging businessmen to make inquiries now, but to refrain from investing until transitional arrangements are in place.

Some companies—whether for moral reasons or out of self-interest—have endorsed this argument. According to Kibbe's report, at least two U.S. companies, Nike and Reebok, have publicly stated that they will not go back to South Africa, including by way of non-equity ties, until there is universal suffrage.

Mounting township violence, despite the commencement of all-party political talks in December, has also dampened business enthusiasm. "Even if parties and leaders are negotiating in good faith, there is a huge question mark over whether people on the ground will abide by the rules on which they agree," Kibbe noted.

In the longer term, the all-important issue for both local and foreign investors is how the ANC plans to achieve the delicate balance between achieving growth and equity.

Despite the lifting of most apartheid legislation, the richest 5 percent of the population own 88 percent of the wealth, while over 50 percent live below the poverty level. The government spends five times more on whites than on blacks, with Indians and "Coloureds" falling somewhere in between.

Econometrix, a South African think tank, estimates that the mere ending of the inefficient apartheid administrative machinery will save \$8 billion annually. But Econometrix calculates that just to start closing the gap

**THE NUMBER OF U.S. COMPANIES WITH DIRECT INVESTMENT OR EMPLOYEES IN SOUTH AFRICA IS THE LOWEST IT HAS EVER BEEN, AND THERE HAS BEEN NO NEW AMERICAN INVESTMENT IN THE LAST YEAR.**

between black and white living standards will cost \$20 to \$30 billion annually. "The role of the state," says Vella Pillay, economic adviser to the ANC, "will be fundamental in restructuring the economy."

The ANC has fallen far short of advocating wholesale nationalization, but a number of gestures, construed as being anti-free enterprise, have caused rumblings in the business community. For starters, the ANC has taken a firm stand against the government's reverse policy of privatization, being taken to reduce state subsidies, on the grounds that this is a ploy to put as much of the economy into

white hands as possible before a black government takes over.

The ANC is also studying U.S.-style anti-trust laws as a way of breaking up the 10 corporate conglomerates that control 90 percent of the Johannesburg stock market. While big business argues that such monopolies are the only way for local business to compete successfully overseas, the ANC says black entrepreneurs stand no chance of entering the business sector under such conditions.

Another bone of contention is the ANC proposal to raise taxes. At present, South African taxes constitute 27 percent of GDP, compared with 42 percent in Britain. The ANC argues that if tax revenues were raised to 35 percent of GDP, and assuming a 3 percent growth, state revenue would be boosted by an additional \$40 billion per annum, which would go a long way in redressing the inequities of the past. Businessmen argue, on the other hand, that the proportion of tax to GDP simply reflects South Africa's narrow tax base. Increasing company tax, which stands at 48 percent of profits, will be a disincentive to investment, they warn.

The recent ANC-led strike against the switch from a general sales tax to a VAT system of taxation—which extended taxes to a number of previously exempt basic consumer items, while benefitting business by offering new rebates on capital and intermediary goods—also put the two sides on a collision course.

However, the strike—the largest of its kind in South Africa, costing business \$775 million in lost revenues—also sent home the powerful message to the private sector that in the interests of its own survival, there will have to be some give and take. As the Chamber of Business recently commented: "If business is to save itself, social programs may, in the near and middle term, become even more important to survival than profit."

Informal discussions between the ANC and the Chamber are leading to talk of a "social accord" between business and a future government. Credit for the idea goes to Bethlehem, who argues that since "no one in South Africa wants to inherit a wasteland," compromise is everyone's best option. ○

# UNITING THE OPPOSITION?

The return to Zimbabwe after seven years' exile in the United States of veteran nationalist Ndabaningi Sithole might be the spark that galvanizes the political opposition to President Robert Mugabe's de facto one-party government. Although Sithole was written off years ago as a spent force, his return into a rapidly opening up political climate could spawn an alliance of tiny minority parties determined to end Zanu-PF rule.

mismanagement. I want to see the right principles pursued. The people of Zimbabwe don't want any form of communism any more."

As Sithole was driven away from the airport, more members of his Zimbabwe African National Union-Ndonga (Zanu-Ndonga) party held up banners greeting his return. Members of Zimbabwe's other tiny minority parties, the Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM) and the United African National Congress (UANC), also waved signs welcoming Sithole.

Sithole then held a press conference and addressed a rally at Highfield Grounds, the township field where African nationalists held mass rallies in the 1960s and 1970s to challenge the Rhodesian government. Although Sithole's crowds were small, the events were reminiscent of the old days of African nationalism. Yet Sithole's return marked a new phase of Zimbabwean politics, an upsurge in opposition party politics.

On paper, Zimbabwe has been a multi-party democracy since its independence in 1980. Opposition parties have always held parliamentary seats. Joshua Nkomo's Zimbabwe African People's Union (Zapu) held 17 seats until that opposition party merged with Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (Zanu-PF) in 1987. Since the 1990 elections, there have been three opposition members of Parliament out of a total of 150 seats. Sithole's Zanu-Ndonga has one seat and Edgar Tekere's ZUM has two seats.

In practice, however, Zimbabwe has operated very much as a de facto one-party state which victimizes the opposition and tightly controls the news media. Robert

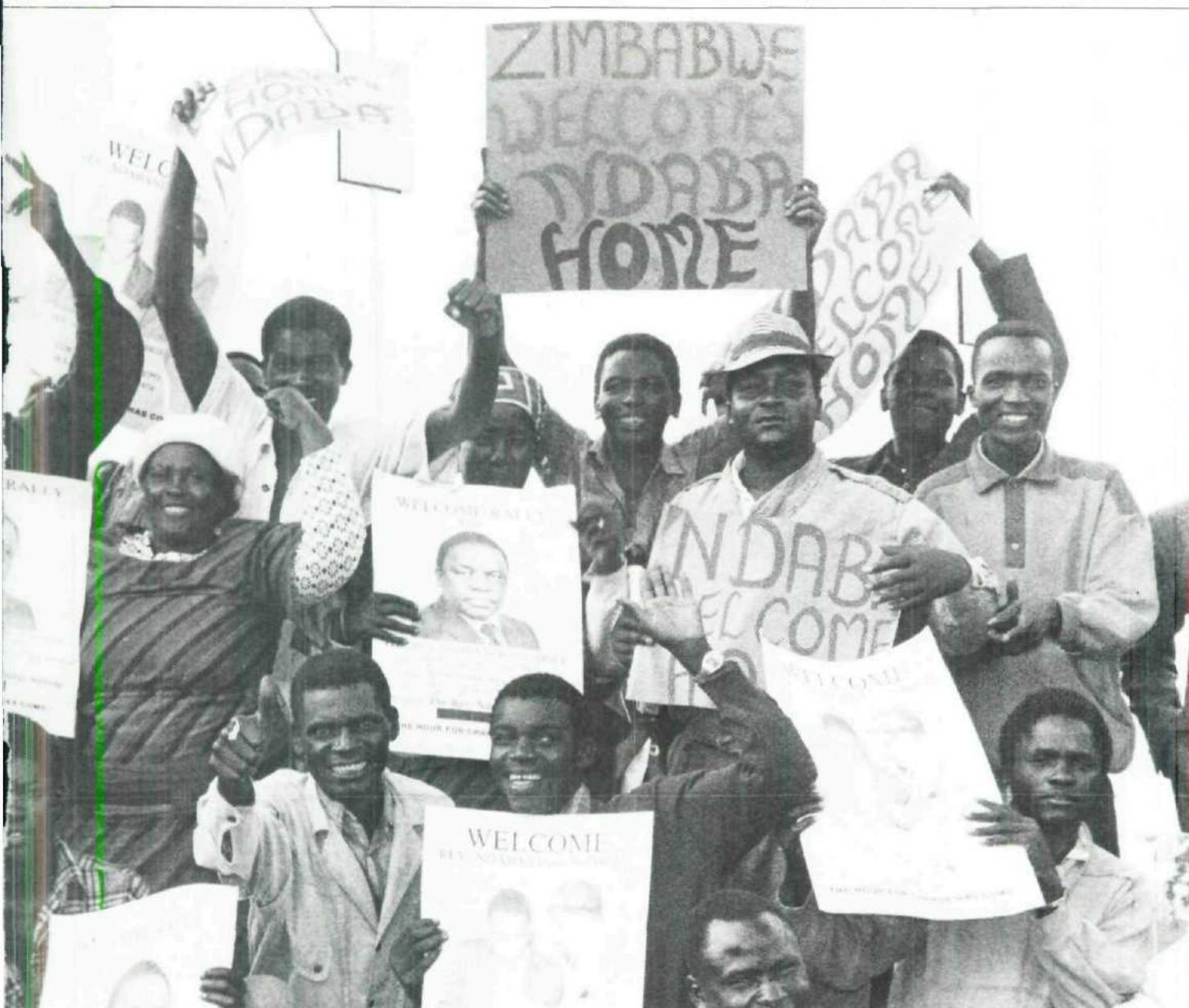


Sarah-Jane Poole

Smiling broadly and holding his arms aloft, veteran Zimbabwean politician Ndabaningi Sithole greeted singing supporters at Harare airport as he ended seven years of self-imposed exile in the United States.

The short, rotund Sithole was quickly engulfed by several hundred followers as he shook their hands, hugged them, and thanked them for coming to welcome him.

"I came back to get people organized politically so we can get rid of the source of the problems that face our country," said Sithole on the steps of the airport. "Zimbabwe has economic and political problems as a result of



Sarah-Jane Poole

Mugabe's ruling Zanu-PF has made it very difficult for opposition parties to hold meetings and campaign. During the 1990 elections, opposition ZUM meetings were broken up by police and those attending were arrested and held for 24 hours without charges. One of ZUM's top officials, Patrick Kombayi, was shot by men identified as members of the government's Central Intelligence Organization (CIO), but two years later police have still not made arrests in connection with the shooting.

The CIO appears to operate as a law unto itself and routinely harasses Zimbabweans who criticize the government, particularly if their attack is aimed at Robert Mugabe. Recently, young playwright Denford Magora was detained by the CIO after his work, *Dr. Government*, was performed in Harare. The CIO officers quizzed Magora about whether he had based his satirical play on

Mugabe. CIO officers are currently awaiting trial for the abduction and possible murder of Rashiwe Guzha, a young woman who was taken into custody by CIO officers 18 months ago and never seen again. In court testimony, police stated they did not actively investigate the Guzha case because they were afraid of the CIO.

The Zimbabwean government owns the country's only radio and television broadcasting network, its daily newspapers, and news agency. Over the years, Zimbabweans have become inured to news coverage that leaves out any hint of criticism of the government.

Just one year ago, Robert Mugabe was campaigning for a legislated one-party state. But by then, Africa's new wind of change had swept into Zimbabwe, bringing popular support for multi-party democracy. Facing opposition to a legislated one-party state even within his own Zanu-

*Sithole supporters awaiting his arrival in Harare after seven years of exile*

*Andrew Meldrum, a contributing editor to Africa Report, is an American journalist who is frontline editor of the Johannesburg Weekly Mail. Based in Harare, he also writes for The Guardian of London.*

## DEATH OF AN AFRICAN FIRST LADY

**A**lthough it was well known that Zimbabwe's First Lady had suffered from critical kidney failure for years, the news of Sally Mugabe's death still came as a shock.

Mrs. Mugabe had endured regular dialysis for 11 years, suffered collapses, and had undergone operations in both Zimbabwe and London. She had always managed to fight her way back in order to welcome heads of state, vigorously campaign for her husband, make grueling overseas visits, and carry out impressive charity work for Zimbabwe's disadvantaged children and disabled.

In 1991, Mrs. Mugabe suffered a serious relapse after which she was not seen in public for months, but she slowly recovered in time to preside over the glittering Commonwealth heads of government meeting in October, where Zimbabwe hosted Britain's Queen Elizabeth II and 43 Commonwealth leaders. That two-week event took its toll and toward the end, the usually vivacious Mrs. Mugabe could barely shuffle in and out of appearances.

Her health continued to fail and the dialysis stopped working. A kidney transplant had long ago been ruled out as not feasible. Instead, an emergency procedure was carried out to stave off looming death, but after a brief recovery, Sally Mugabe's condition deteriorated rapidly and she died January 27 at 7:30 am.

Sally Mugabe's death at 59 left Robert Mugabe without his closest political adviser and confidante just as he is being confronted by some of the most

serious economic and political challenges of his 11 years in office.

Despite her illness, she had been an active force within her husband's party, the Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (Zanu-PF). In October 1989, she became secretary of the party's Women's League, as well as a member of its executive bodies, the Central Committee and the Politburo. Sally Mugabe also founded the Child Survival Foundation, which channeled international aid to local child welfare projects. Within the party, she became known as

Unicef/Douglas Chinamo

"Amai," Shona for mother, a title that was particularly poignant as the Mugabes' only child died at age two of malaria.

Yet Sally Mugabe was never fully accepted by the wider Zimbabwean public because she was a foreigner, from Ghana. She was also viewed suspiciously because she had made the Women's League the strongest supporter of Mugabe's failed drive to establish a one-party state. In recent years, her name was frequently mentioned in connection with high-level corrup-

tion, but no hard evidence was ever uncovered.

It is an indication of the current unpopularity of Mugabe's government that the public reaction to his wife's death was muted and practical. Upon hearing of her death, the first thing workers wanted to know was if there would be a public holiday. (There was not.)

While the government may be unpopular, Robert Mugabe himself is not. Most Zimbabweans took the



PF, Mugabe backed down from that goal and also renounced Marxism and socialism as the basis of the country's economy.

Mugabe and other top Zanu-PF officials thought they could settle back into their unchallenged ways where there was single-party rule in all but name. But events had moved too fast for that. Zimbabweans pressed for real pluralism and demanded more than just lip service to multi-party democracy. Significantly, Western donors to Zimbabwe's new economic structural adjustment plan also demanded to see signs of real multi-party politics.

Zimbabwe's independent press became more lively and exposed government misdoings, in both high and low places. The independent monthly magazines, *Hori-*

*zon* and *Parade*, have won widespread readership for their combination of scandal, investigative reporting, and music and sports reviews. Eager readers are lining up on the sidewalks to purchase the independent weekly newspapers—the *Financial Gazette*, the *Weekend Gazette*, and the new *Sunday Times*—which publicize big and small misdoings and feature columnists who outspokenly attack government economic and political policies. All these publications have roundly slammed the repressive influence of the CIO, making the Magora and Guzha cases causes-célèbres throughout Zimbabwe.

It is into this rapidly opening political climate that Ndbanangi Sithole returned to Harare in late January. Sithole was widely discredited for collaborating with white

death seriously because they knew it would badly affect their president.

Mrs. Mugabe was born Sarah Hayfron in Accra, Ghana, to a well-educated family of lawyers and newspaper editors. She and her twin sister, Esther, were studious schoolgirls who avidly followed the charismatic Ghanaian nationalist, Kwame Nkrumah, in the late 1940s. Sally became a schoolteacher and in 1959 met Robert Mugabe, who had come to teach in newly independent Ghana. Those early years of Ghanaian independence were heady, exciting times. Robert and Sally talked about the changes in Ghana and the independence sweeping through all of Africa. They also discussed how white-ruled Rhodesia would eventually give way to majority-ruled Zimbabwe.

The two married in 1961 in Salisbury, Rhodesia, where Sally bridled under the racial discrimination. The couple had to live in a matchbox township house in harsh contrast to the spacious homes to which Sally was accustomed in Ghana. As Robert Mugabe made his way in nationalist politics, Sally quickly threw herself into the struggle as well. She organized the first women's protests that were broken up by police. In 1962, she was imprisoned with her husband and then went into exile while Robert remained in jail.

In 1963, the couple had their only child, Nhamodzenyika, Shona for "our country has problems." The child died two years later of malaria in Ghana, while Robert Mugabe, in jail without charges in Rhodesia, was refused permission to attend the funeral.

After 10 years of exile and separation, Robert and Sally Mugabe reunited in Mozambique. Once Zimbabwe became independent and Robert Mugabe became president, Sally Mugabe became an activist First Lady in the political arena and also set a new fashion for wearing long African-print dresses with turban-like

headdresses. Sally Mugabe was the first female to be declared a national hero and she was buried alongside 16 leading Zimbabwean patriots at Heroes Acre.

Sally Mugabe's Ghanaian heritage came to the fore during her funeral. According to Ghanaian custom, she lay in state on a golden bed, flown in especially from Ghana, in an elaborate white lace dress. Her hands and neck were adorned with traditional Ghanaian gold jewelry and trade beads.

Ghanaian drumming and music alternated with a group of Catholic Zimbabwean nuns who sat around the bed and sang traditional Zimbabwean hymns. It was a spellbinding mix of Ghanaian and Roman Catholic traditions, as well as Zimbabwean and Western customs.

Thousands of Zimbabweans filed by the bed and Robert Mugabe shook hands with each one. During his wife's final illness, Mugabe appeared increasingly twitchy and out of sorts. He is a guarded, fastidious man who does not relax easily and who will sorely miss his wife's counsel now.

"She was a great support and help to me," said Robert Mugabe during the six-day mourning period. "I don't know if I can carry on without her."

There have been rumors that the beleaguered Mugabe will step down from the presidency. Most Zimbabweans hope he will carry on, because despite the unpopularity of his government, they see Mugabe himself as the country's most able leader. Robert Mugabe must muster the confidence and will to drastically reshape his government, to curb rampant corruption, and revitalize the stagnant economy. They are the crucial tasks for his political survival and they will be difficult indeed for the grieving president to carry out without his dedicated ally, his wife. ■

—A.M.

Rhodesian leader Ian Smith when he left the country in 1984. During his seven years of self-imposed exile, Sithole was based at the right-wing Heritage Foundation in Washington, D.C.

The new growth of political opposition as a result of widespread dissatisfaction with the Mugabe government meant that Sithole's return generated considerable excitement. "Sithole returning to challenge Zanu-PF" blazoned a banner headline in Zimbabwe's independent *Financial Gazette*. "Sithole breaks his exile and comes out fighting" proclaimed *Horizon* magazine.

"His timing has been superb. People are fed up and are just thinking they can build a grand political alliance to change the government," said retired Chief Justice

Enoch Dumbutshena. "The trend in Africa seems to favor democratic change. I think Zimbabweans are realizing they can work together, not as single little parties, to change things." As Dumbutshena suggested, Sithole's return has been heralded by political analysts here as a spark to form a united opposition to President Mugabe's rule.

At 71, Sithole may be too old to lead such a coalition, but even after his lengthy flight from the United States, he gave quick, concise answers to the press and went on to address a rally of a few thousand supporters. A Methodist minister, Sithole sermonized to his supporters about the dangers of communism and praised the new democratic trends in Angola and Zambia.

While in the U.S. and under the wing of the Heritage Foundation, Sithole had made several statements in support of Mozambique's Renamo rebels, which also had close relations with the Heritage group. The Mugabe government had charged Sithole's relations with Renamo were treasonous, as Zimbabwe has some 7,000 troops battling the rebels in central Mozambique. The government had warned that it might arrest Sithole upon his return because of his contacts with Renamo, but government officials privately admitted they did not believe charges against him would hold up in court. Sithole has since moved about Harare freely without any problems or interference from the CIO.

Certainly, Sithole made no bones about his support for Renamo. "I support Renamo because they are fighting for multi-party democracy in Mozambique and an end to the one-party Marxist dictatorship in that country," said Sithole. "I support that fight just as I support the fight of Unita in Angola and of the MMD in Zambia."

The sensation that Sithole's return created is remarkable, considering that his departure in 1984 caused barely a murmur and his subsequent statements in support of Renamo have been broadly unpopular. Yet now, many Zimbabweans are looking to Sithole to shake up the country's stultified political status quo.

So far, Sithole and his backers have flawlessly stage-managed the return of a liberating hero. But the question is whether Sithole, who was written off as a spent force years ago, will be able to sustain the interest generated by his well-publicized return.

Sithole has a long and checkered political career. An early nationalist, he was a founder of Joshua Nkomo's Zanu and then in 1963 he led the breakaway that became Zanu, of which Mugabe was also a founder. Sithole was jailed by the Smith government in 1969 and then released in 1974. Charges that Sithole had secret talks with Smith brought his ouster as Zanu's chairman. He renounced the armed struggle against minority rule and was a key member of the internal settlement in 1978 which saw Abel Muzorewa as a window-dressing leader of the short-lived Zimbabwe-Rhodesia government.

As a result of his collaboration with Smith, Sithole's new party did not win a single seat in the 1980 elections. Sithole left Zimbabwe in 1984, charging there had been an assassination attempt against him.

Yet, Sithole retained an avid following in his home area of Chipinge in southeastern Zimbabwe, the center of the small group of Shona people who speak the Ndau dialect. In both the 1985 and 1990 elections, Sithole's party won a parliamentary seat for Chipinge, despite the continued self-imposed exile of their leader.

The core of Sithole's support is undeniably small, but it appears that he is being welcomed by other minority parties that hope he will be a key member of a new opposition coalition.

"The Zimbabwe Unity Movement welcomes Nda-banangi Sithole to the United Front," stated a professionally lettered banner outside Sithole's home on the day of his return.

Zimbabwe's economic malaise has spawned a growing political opposition. Three new parties have been launched in recent months. The Democratic Party, led by Emmanuel Magoche, is a breakaway from Edgar Tekere's ill-fated ZUM. Little is known about the Monomatapa People's Alliance, which sends anti-government mailings to thousands in Zimbabwe from the United States. The National Progressive Alliance, was formed in January by its president, Canciwell Nziramasanga. Also, the almost moribund UANC, which was previously led by Muzorewa, is now being revived by Edward Mazaiwana.

All these minority parties have stated they are ready to form a broad alliance with Sithole to oppose the Mugabe government, as different interests united to form the Movement for Multi-party Democracy (MMD) in Zambia to oust Kenneth Kaunda.

The most threatening political challenge to Mugabe, however, may be yet to come. A group of successful Shona businessmen, who have so far avoided politics, are intending to launch a new party soon. These businessmen are led by James Chikerema and include George Nyandoro and Henry Munangatire. They have financial acumen and muscle and they have not been sullied by associations with Ian Smith or other unsavory political bedfellows.

"Zimbabwe's opposition parties? I wish we had a real one," sighed University of Zimbabwe political scientist

Jonathan Moyo. "There are lots of these little parties cropping up, but most are the worn-out old parties from the Zimbabwe-Rhodesia days. As yet, I just don't think we've seen an opposition party that can gel the general dissatisfaction that is among the people."

Moyo admits that the changed political situation in Zimbabwe is allowing new political groups to form and to air their views in the assertive independent press.

"We must see Zimbabwe's new political climate as a step forward," said Moyo. "Just a year ago we were worried that a one-party state would be imposed. Now that has been shelved and new parties are coming up. Even though I don't believe any of the new parties has the leadership or the platform to really challenge the government, in time they may develop into credible alternatives. Zimbabwe is moving into multi-party politics." ○

**THE MOST THREAT-  
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Andrew Meldrum

It is difficult to imagine Malawi without Life President Ngwazi Dr. H. Kamuzu Banda, who has ruled with an iron grip for 30 years. He controls virtually every aspect of society and Malawians have been reduced to a tranquilized, unthinking state. But Banda is now a frail nonagenarian and Malawians are waiting to see what the future will bring.

A black and white photograph of a river scene. In the foreground, a man in a light-colored shirt and shorts is standing in a dugout canoe, using a long pole to navigate. Behind him, another canoe is visible with a person inside. The river is surrounded by tall, dense reeds or grasses. The water is calm, reflecting the surrounding environment.

# IN BANDA'S IMAGE

**H**astings Banda is said to be dying. His excellency the Life President, Ngwazi Dr. H. Kamuzu Banda, is well into his 90s and not even the longest-surviving dictator on the African continent can escape the clutches of mortality.

Diplomats who met the diminutive president of Malawi at the Commonwealth heads of government meeting in Harare, Zimbabwe, last October said the frail little man could barely move. One photograph taken at the meeting—a picture which would never be published in Malawi—caught Banda as he was being helped to his feet after falling down. It is probably the only picture in the world to show Banda on his knees: As a rule, people kneel to him.

Hastings Kamuzu Banda is one of the last of Africa's Big Men, and arguably the most bizarre. His political career spans the rise of African independence in the early 1960s, when self-appointed presidents created Marxist, military one-party states, to today's difficult dawning of multi-party democracy. As paramount leader of the country's sole political party, the Malawi Congress Party, Banda rules his tiny agricultural enclave in central Africa with an iron whim, and it is his dubious achievement that time has effectively passed Malawi by. How the country will handle the pent-up decades of change that are sure to sweep in after him is the central question of his succession.

When the Commonwealth summit ended on October 26, Banda went to Britain, where he remained for a month with an entourage that included Malawi's "Official Hostess," Cecilia Tamanda Kadzamira, and her uncle, John Tembo. "Mama" Kadzamira controls access to the ailing Banda while Tembo, a highly unpopular strongman-in-waiting, currently holds the position of party treasurer. Together they have established a formidable base from which to launch their takeover of Malawi after Banda's death. Until that apocalyptic moment arrives, however, they are sheltering, like so many others in Malawi's elite, under the umbrella of Banda's absolute power.

Banda returned from Britain to Malawi on November 22 to the usual hero's welcome: traditional dancers, choirs, flowers, official delegations, speeches. The road to Kamuzu International Airport in Lilongwe, the capital city, was closed two days before Banda's arrival for a rehearsal of the joyous welcome. The day the president arrived from Britain, the airport was shut to all other air traffic until the protracted ceremonies were concluded.

When Banda flew to Blantyre, where his preferred presidential palace is located, three days later, the *Malawi Times*, the country's one daily newspaper, devoted its front page to his voyage: "Before leaving Lilongwe, the Life President inspected a guard of honor mounted by the Second Battalion of the Malawi Rifles at his Mtunthame Residence. He then drove to Kamuzu International Airport, past thousands of jubilant people waving on both sides of Kamuzu Highway..."

*Heather Hill is a Canadian journalist working in Harare as an editor of Africa South magazine.*

"Before boarding the Boeing 737-300 aircraft, the Life President bade farewell to his people, who included cabinet ministers, party, civic, and government officials.

"The presidential plane started taxiing at 12:20 as thousands and thousands of people waved and Mbumba sang, "Akupita apo eeh! a Ngwazi Banda" [there goes Ngwazi Banda].

"The plane finally took off at 12:25."

Meanwhile, Malawi's rumor mill went into overdrive. Banda, it was whispered, went to Britain for medical tests. He had major surgery there. He was called to Westminster because Britain is worried about the lack of succession. "Something is going on," said a businessman who lives in Blantyre. "We just don't know what it is."

Banda, however, was not so feeble that he was unable to exercise his dictatorial powers. Less than a week after returning to Malawi, he fired his top civil servant, J.C. Malewezi, "with immediate effect." The departure was announced in the *Malawi Times* on December 2: "A spokesman for the party's national headquarters in Lilongwe said that as secretary to the president and cabinet and the topmost civil servant, Malewezi's behavior had not been exemplary, he had not been loyal and honest in carrying out his duties.

"The government will not tolerate any civil servant with similar behavior and attitude," the spokesman concluded."

Shortly after Malewezi's dismissal, a Malawi specialist with Amnesty International, Richard Carver, pointed out in a BBC interview that government (and thus party) officials are often fired for blowing the whistle on corrupt practices. Carver cited the case of Aleke Banda, a former managing director of Press Holdings, a large group of companies of whose 5,000 shares the president holds 4,999. In 1980, Aleke Banda questioned Banda's withdrawal of 6 million Malawi kwacha (\$3.3 million) from the Press Holdings bank account. A week later he was arrested and detained; Aleke Banda remains in jail to this day.

**I**n a more recent and equally draconian measure, Banda fired his entire cabinet in December. The dismissals were announced in a terse news bulletin issued by the government news service. No reasons were given. As it was, of the 14 positions in the cabinet, Banda held the most important four portfolios himself—agriculture, public works, external affairs, and justice.

It's difficult to imagine Malawi without Dr. Hastings Banda, because the country is the president. Banda, born to humble parents of the dominant Chewa people around the turn of the century, left Malawi as a young man to work as a hospital orderly in Southern Rhodesia and a miner in South Africa, where he began night school courses in medicine. He emigrated and spent 40 years in the United States and Britain as a general practitioner.

In 1958, he was invited to return to the then Nyasaland, a British protectorate, to become president of the Nyasaland African Congress. He was jailed during a state

of emergency declared by the colonial authorities, and then taken to Britain for a constitutional conference. In an election held in 1961, Banda's Malawi Congress Party won by a landslide and Banda became president. In 1964, Malawi became an independent state, and in 1971, Banda declared himself president-for-life.

Banda spent the decade after independence consolidating his power through a series of ruthless and arbitrary dismissals of his lieutenants. In the first year of his presidency, he revealed his strategy toward recalcitrant cabinet ministers: "I tell them to be silent, and they are silent." A network of spies, incorporating the army, the police force, the Young Pioneers (an elite group whose members can't be arrested without the president's permission) and the Women's League of the Malawi Congress Party keeps the circle around Banda well-informed.

In the early 1970s, the repression reached its height, when Jehovah's Witnesses, journalists, and academics were imprisoned and sympathetic expatriates were deported. Today, there is not a single foreign journalist resident in Malawi.

Dissident groups have sprung up in exile but none has mounted more than token opposition. An attempted coup in 1967 resulted in the death of Yatuta Chiziza, the former minister of home affairs. Since then, there has been no further open opposition to Banda's rule.

Parallel with the president's system of political control is an elaborate code for social and cultural behavior. The most striking example for visitors to the country are the rules of dress: women must wear skirts that cover the knee including when they sit down. (Women who persist in wearing short skirts can be deported.) Long hair on men is forbidden. It is not unusual for male tourists to be shorn of their locks at the airport or to be told to tie the ponytail into a bun.

When the presidential motorcade passes, Malawians are obliged to go to the nearest window or sidewalk and wave to it. It is forbidden to mock or criticize the president. It is forbidden to make a photocopy of a newspaper photograph of the president. And any reference to him must employ the full title: His Excellency the Life President Ngwazi Dr. H. Kamuzu Banda.

The news media in Malawi is heavily censored, with a long list of publications under ban. The Malawi Broadcasting Corporation consists of a semi-commercial radio station which broadcasts in English and Chewa, the two official languages of the country. There is no television service; only a handful of hotels are allowed to have satellite dishes. Residents of Malawi who wish to follow world news tend to do so through short-wave radio as the *Malawi Times* is woefully inadequate for this purpose—the Gulf War, for example, was announced with a few paragraphs on its front page.

Through this system, the president has managed to shape every aspect of life in Malawi in his own image, which is that of a paternalistic, omnipotent, agrarian god. When he speaks to his people, it is in the language

of a father speaking to his multiple, slightly stupid children: Plant your maize seedlings, work hard, I'm proud of you.

"His Excellency, the Life President, Ngwazi Dr. H. Kamuzu Banda, has directed that as from yesterday all party public meetings should be held only during the weekends in the afternoon hours...to give the people enough time to prepare their gardens during this rainy season," is a typical directive issued through the *Malawi Times*.

"This is a police state," a development worker stated point blank—after shutting the door to his office. Certainly, in Malawi one observes the pervasive fear of people to do or say anything that may become public. "It's impossible to put together a management team in Malawi because nobody has an opinion," commented the Malawian head of a British-based company.

**T**he extent to which Banda has reduced his 7 million subjects to a tranquilized, unthinking state is one of the most unfortunate aspects of this country. The president's defenders would counter that Malawi has enjoyed a political stability unusual in a continent beset by wars and military coups. White residents of the country are happy with Banda because he has allowed them to continue running their profitable tobacco, tea, and sugar estates. Before free market economics swept sub-Saharan Africa in the late 1980s, Malawi was a capitalist oasis in the Marxist desert. "We do not suppress the acquisitive and possessive instinct here. Instead we encourage it," Banda said in his opening address to Parliament in 1977.

This economic philosophy, combined with his friendship with an apartheid-era South Africa, made Banda unpopular with other African heads of state. While other "frontline states" opposing South Africa officially refused to have dealings with Pretoria, South Africa has had an embassy in Malawi and openly traded with the country.

In these dying days of the Banda regime, uncertainty over his succession mounts in proportion with apprehension over John Tembo's accession. (A development worker in Blantyre observed that Malawians, timid and oppressed as they are, have told him that they despise John Tembo.) Tembo and Kadzamira are busy mending fences with neighboring Zimbabwe and Mozambique, and sending out friendly signals to the international community. The freeing of 87 political prisoners last year was, diplomats in Malawi were told, the work of a newly liberal John Tembo.

But the succession is by no means a certain thing. Kadzamira is a single woman—a taboo in Africa—and Tembo may not be able to surmount the accrued ill will that clings to him. Under the country's constitution, the secretary-general of the Malawi Congress Party succeeds the president—but at present, this position is unfilled. As for Banda himself, all he has said on the subject is that "the people" will choose his successor. He might as well have said: "*Après moi, le déluge.*" ○

# BROTHERS IN

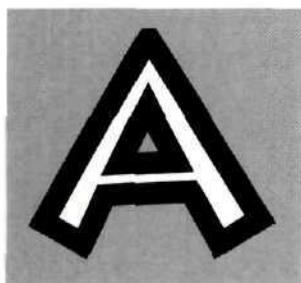


Karl Maier

With the war over, Angola is forging a new national army of 40,000 men out of the MPLA armed forces and the Unita guerrillas who were enemies for 16 years. Angolans in all

walks of life are very war-weary, and

peace has energized the rebuilding process as the two formerly warring sides fight it out not on the battlefield, but in politics.



After battling for half his life in Angola's defense against the Unita rebels, Alindo Ferreira has joined forces with his long-time enemies to restore peace to this war-torn southwest African nation.

"We are all Angolans and now have to learn to work together," said the 33-year-old government army

major based in Lubango, capital of the southern province of Huila. Alongside fighters from Jonas Savimbi's Unita, Ferreira now prepares for a joint battle—to unify the warring factions into a national army.

While latent tension has sporadically surfaced between the two sides since the end of the brutal conflict, palpable war fatigue among the Angolan people, as well as pressures by the international community, appear to be sufficient guarantees against a serious derailment of the peace process.

*Vicki R. Finkel is a freelance journalist based in Luanda, Angola.*

But as the euphoria over the long-negotiated peace agreement has faded, the country must work to overcome major obstacles to the realization of its provisions. The unification of the armed forces is of paramount concern.

"The process sounds simple, but it is very complex," said British Col. John Longman, one of a team of British, Portuguese, and French advisers assisting the Angolan government with the formation of the new army. "We are talking about two very different groups, a guerrilla army and a conventional one and the integration of the two."

Under the ceasefire signed on May 31 by President José Eduardo dos Santos and Savimbi, both sides and their weapons must be secured in 45 designated assembly points scattered throughout the country before the actual unification process can commence.

However, the assembly process has dragged behind the schedule drafted in the peace agreement, which also calls for internationally monitored elections to be held this year. That peace accord, ending the bitter 16-year

# ARMS

civil war which broke out shortly after Angola gained independence from Portugal in 1975, mandated the containment of all troops, verified by United Nations observers, by August 1, 1991. But so far, only an estimated 68 percent of the total forces have been counted in the assembly points.

While observers acknowledge the probable inflation of the figures, they blame acute food shortages at the assembly points for the low turnout, and a potential desertion from the camps.

"Now thousands of idle young men without food remain near arms in the assembly points," said Ramiro da Silva, the director of the United Nations World Food Programme office. "Without guaranteed food, they will form banditry groups," he added.

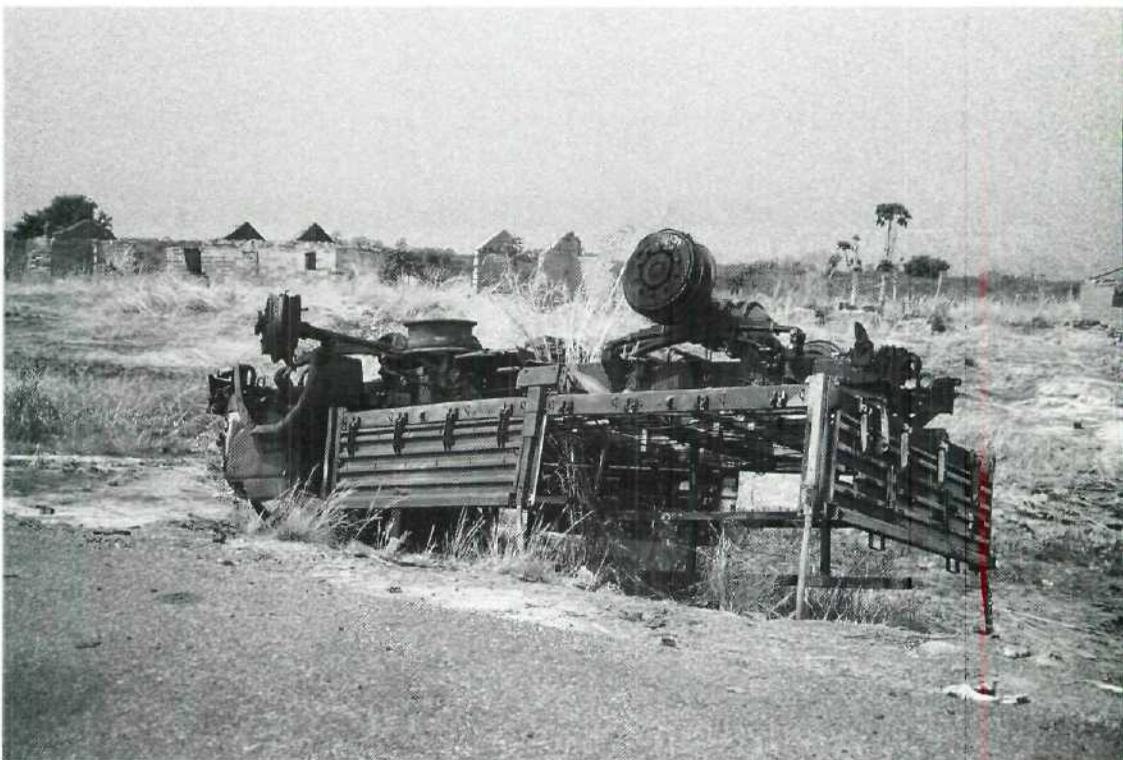
Citing "critical" food shortages as threatening the peace process, the United Nations launched a \$27.3 million emergency appeal in October targeting the demobilizing troops.

The United States has committed approximately one-third of this target figure, and has begun to deliver emergency relief supplies in a bid to safeguard the peace. "We want the peace process to succeed with free and multi-party elections held in the country," said Philip Davis, an air force captain who is one of six American military officers serving as monitors of the peace agreement and is administering the delivery of the relief supplies.

Unlike the years when Washington supplied covert aid and open assistance for Savimbi's Unita forces, the current assistance is going to both camps. However, in a continual show of support for Unita, Congress has earmarked \$30 million to help in its transformation from a



Vicki R. Finkel



Vicki R. Finkel

**War damage in Lunda Norte: Angola has suffered an estimated \$30 billion in destruction of its infrastructure**



Vicki R. Finkel

military movement into a political party vying for votes in the country's first democratic elections scheduled for September 1992.

But even when supplies are available, they do not always reach the assembly areas, many of which are inaccessible by road in the war-scarred country which suffered an estimated \$30 billion in damage to its infrastructure. A shortage of vehicles, a ravaged road system, the present rains, and residual landmines have spelled a logistical nightmare for the distribution of supplies.

Military activity, dating back to 1961, with the beginning of Angola's armed insurrection against the Portuguese colonialists, has riddled the country with deadly mines. And despite joint government and Unita efforts to sweep the country of unexploded devices, military experts say that undetected mines will pose a threat for decades.

Insufficient food has lowered morale in many areas, principally among the more numerous government forces, some of whom sleep on the damp ground. The highly disciplined Unita guerrilla fighters, who have tra-

ditionally lived in the bush, however, have demonstrated a higher degree of organization.

About 150 miles east of Lubango, roughly 900 Unita soldiers and their families have gathered in the assembly point of Mucuio. They live in impressively constructed grass thatched houses, retrieve water from a specially designed reservoir, and have built schools and health posts for their members.

Of the assembled soldiers, the government and Unita will contribute equally to the national scaled-down army of 40,000, while the existing national navy and air force will remain at the present 10,000.

But in the selection of individuals to train for the unified force, there will be no room for an estimated 150,000 soldiers who will join the rising ranks of the unemployed. Local authorities fear the flood of demobilized soldiers will foster a heightened crime rate.

"Many of these soldiers have little education, and now with the absence of the war-time curfew, it is very likely that the level of crime will greatly increase here," said an Angolan police officer who spoke on condition of

## THE LOST GENERATION

**I**sabel Cassindo never dreamed she would see any of her family again. But recently, the unimaginable became a reality, when she was reunited with her cousin through the efforts of the Family Tracing Project.

"I could not believe it was him," said Cassindo of her cousin, Luiz Alfredo, separated from her for 12 years during the bloody civil war. "After all these years, I thought he was dead," she added, sporting a "Miss Liberty Centennial" tee-shirt outside her home in the central Angolan city of Huambo.

The euphoric reunion is just one of many throughout the country indebted to the national Family Tracing Project, striving to locate families of some of the estimated 50,000 orphaned and abandoned children in the wake of Angola's devastating 16-year war.

"We feel that it is very important for children to be in a stable family environment, to re-establish a normal life and alleviate the war trauma affecting many of them in institutions," said Julia Antonio, head of the national department of orphaned and abandoned children, and coordinator of the Family Tracing Project.

Like countless youngsters dumped into Angola's 28 children's institutions, government troops discovered Luiz Alfredo fleeing for safety from a siege by Unita in its fierce guerrilla campaign against the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) government.

"At 4 am one morning, Unita encircled our village," recounted 21-year-old Luiz. "I hid in the grass for the

entire day of the attack, and then returned to our house where I found my mother dead on the floor."

Having already lost his father, Luiz was transported aboard an MPLA military convoy to an orphanage in the capital, Luanda, where he remained until the ceasefire paved the way for the tracing project to escort him on a search for surviving family in Huambo, his original home and one of the hardest hit areas during the fighting, which claimed about half a million lives.

The peace agreement signed on May 31, 1991, by President José Eduardo dos Santos and Unita leader Jonas Savimbi, and the subsequent reopening of the roads, has greatly facilitated tracing efforts, including Luiz's successful reunion with his cousin.

Parents of many of the youths who live in orphanages dotting the country are still alive. But they have been separated for so long that the missing children's funerals have already been held.

Project leaders relate the situation to kids getting lost in a department store. "Only here no one has done anything about it, and people give them up for dead," said Maggie Brown, a social worker with Save The Children UK which is spearheading the Family Tracing Project.

In a bid to track down families, the coordinated initiative linking government and roughly 10 private voluntary organizations has installed a special tracing team in each of Angola's provinces.

anonymity. Luanda police authorities already cite a dramatic jump of about 600 percent in the crime rate from 1990 to 1991.

Recent devaluations and the lifting of state subsidies have decreased Angolan shoppers' purchasing power. Sprawling black markets in the capital, where an estimated 70 percent of Luandans work, breed criminality. On an average day, the largest of these congested venues, Roque Santeiro, named after a Brazilian soap opera, holds a staggering 80,000 people, and was the site of a recent necklacing of a thief by market vendors.

Violent outbreaks, however, are not limited to urban areas. In early January, four British tourists driving in Land Rovers were killed in an ambush near a Unita assembly point 80 miles north of Lubango. Unita has denied responsibility for the murders, which occurred at night on a reportedly inadvisable driving route. Yet the incident proves that Angola, with its coastal capital once dubbed the "Rio of Africa," is still a far cry from a tourist haven.

If the realization of the peace process—including the

sweeping of the land mine-riddled provinces and the unification of the two armies—is going slower than scheduled, observers say that it is not necessarily due to lack of will or distrust on the part of the former belligerent forces. "If a similar process was occurring in the U.S., I would question whether the two sides were being duplicitous," says Davis. "But here if the process is slowed down, it is usually because a truck has broken down or there is no radio communication."

But the real test of trust, some believe, will come with the as-yet unscheduled demobilization, when each side will no longer retain control of weapons in their respective camps.

"Demobilization and the relinquishing of arms to a national storage center will only happen when both sides no longer feel they face a security threat," said Davis. "And politically they have not been ready to make that decision."

Years of fighting have taken a brutal toll on the country's 10 million people, who have no desire for war which claimed about half a million lives and denied almost 7

**"We photograph and interview all of the children at the orphanages to find out as much as possible about their histories," said 28-year-old Alinda Chelombo, a Huambo tracing team member. Project staff work through village networks, talking to village chiefs, as well as placing newspaper, radio, and television advertisements.**

**A training video on effective tracing strategies is in production, as approximately half a million returning refugees and the liberation of thousands of war prisoners from both sides compound tracing service demands throughout the country, which is almost three times the size of California.**

**But the team's work does not end with the successful location of a child's family. An evaluation of the family's emotional and material state is vital to the placement of the child.**

**"People in the war-ravaged villages suffer from hunger and lack of health and education services," said Abilio Chivala, a Huambo team participant. "We have to make sure the children do not leave the orphanage only to live in even worse conditions."**

**The project's objective, therefore, is to provide a complete reintegration package, supplying vital food and non-food assistance to complement a family's nurturing capacity in an effort to counteract the debilitating impact of the war on families.**

**Many children in institutions, however, have lost all trace of their past identities. A large number of them**

**entered orphanage doors too young to walk, with some infants found still strapped to the backs of mothers lying dead in the bush.**

**Project organizers are confident that many young children can be placed with substitute families. But for older ones, especially boys who are harder to place, the project has a different strategy to encourage them to initiate independent lives outside the cramped, isolated, ill-equipped institutions.**

**Amid the banana trees in the hills of Ekunha village, about 15 miles outside Huambo, war orphans, aided by the project, have begun to construct their own homes.**

**After six years of living in the Ekunha orphanage, 18-year-old Antonio Sitila proudly resides in his recently self-constructed adobe home. "I wanted to start my own life," said Sitila, whose empty pants leg is a bitter testimony to the hostilities which maimed an estimated 80,000 people.**

**Despite limited funds and inexperienced staff, the ambitious project has united about 650 children with their families since its inception last year.**

**"We are working with many people who have only a fourth-grade education and a week's seminar, but the project works because it makes sense to them," said Maggie Brown. "I see this as a positive move toward reconstruction of the country by investing in individual lives."**

**—V.R.F.**

million access to basic health services and clean water supplies.

Exhausted by military battles, it is not surprising that moments after the implementation of the long-negotiated ceasefire, soldiers from both camps were trading food and cigarettes instead of gunfire.

Moreover, many Angolans retained little interest in a war viewed not as their own, but rather as a costly superpower rivalry fought on Angolan soil. However, as the curtain closed on the Cold War, the U.S. and Soviet Union took their places around the negotiating table with their respective Angolan allies and a Portuguese mediator. Now U.S., Russian, and Portuguese monitors sit on key local commissions to implement the peace accords providing for multi-party elections scheduled for the end of the year.

Perhaps an additional assurance of the war's end rests with the shifting winds directing Southern Air Transport. The Florida-based air transport company employed by the Central Intelligence Agency to funnel clandestine military assistance to Unita through neighboring Zaire is now contracted to train government pilots.

While the U.S. reserves full diplomatic relations with the long-time Marxist government until after the holding of democratic elections, dos Santos made his White House debut in September, espousing aims to transform the centralized state into a democracy fueled by a free market economy. As a result of the president's unprecedented U.S. visit, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce sponsored a delegation of roughly 20 businessmen to the oil-rich country in November.

The fourth largest diamond and coffee producer at independence, a stable Angola represents a wealth of mineral and agricultural potential to avid investors, eager to profit from the reconstruction of the devastated country. Many Portuguese businesses are answering the Angolan government's pleas in the Portuguese press to return in their former tropical home. And almost daily personal and business aircrafts jet in from the regional superpower and long-time Unita ally, South Africa, to scout out possibilities.

Sapped of skilled workers, largely by the mass flight at independence of about 300,000 Portuguese, or 90 percent of the community, the war-impooverished country is largely dependent on foreign investment to finance its rehabilitation. As the two former warring factions have converged around peace, Unita and the government are also both rallying around the call for a market economy, heralding price liberalization and privatization in a bid to meet the demands of foreign capital.

Inside the country, as battlefield rivals prepare to fight it out at the ballot box with a flurry of emergent political parties, the post-war capital has been quickly draped in campaign banners. "Sixteen years of hunger, misery,

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chains, and political persecution" is one message suspended over Luanda's congested traffic. The accusation is levelled by the Democratic Renewal Party, drawing its support from members of the failed coup attempt by Nito Alves in 1977.

But while about 30 political parties have mushroomed in the new climate of political freedom, the low-budgeted groups' efforts to promote their ideas among a largely illiterate population are blocked by uncleared land mines, residual occupation by former warring factions, and inequitable access

to the state media.

In the traditional MPLA stronghold of Luanda, Savimbi is commonly held responsible for years of suffering and insecurity. Yet, the rebel leader retains strong backing in the south and central highlands, but not blind support. At the end of the year, Unita members who occupied a hotel in Savimbi's home province of Bie were met with hurled stones and angry shouts in the city. The assembled group chanted: "Dos Santos, our friend. The people are with you."

However, while dos Santos is often revered as a hero who delivered peace, the MPLA's reputation has been tainted by harsh accusations of corrupt and inefficient practices of the Soviet-modelled state.

New parties have about six more months to present cogent political platforms in a bid to transform widespread disenchantment with both Unita and the MPLA into a competitive race which now largely remains a two-party struggle.

But Angolans refuse to wait for a new government before they begin to rebuild their lives. Peace has had profound effects on families separated in the rush to safety from rural attacks, and now reunited in emotional scenes repeated throughout the sparsely populated country. Tens of thousands of the approximately 1.2 million Angolans who fled their homes for refuge in remote areas of the vast country or crossed borders in search of sanctuary have returned to tend their rural fields. Villagers are no longer forced to flee their huts at nightfall and sleep in urban centers or the bush to avoid rebel attacks ravaging the countryside and forcing the one-time food exporter to rely on imports to sustain its population.

A liberating energy has also pervaded the capital where many homes sport fresh paint and long-overdue repairs. New restaurants, bookstores, and shops, including video rentals and a self-service laundry, line the streets and waterfront, while older establishments have restocked their shelves.

"On May 31, I felt free for the first time," said a middle-aged man who works for the state telephone company. "Before that, it was as if we were caged, but now the cage is open and we are out." ○

# WAITING FOR THE GIANT



A dozen years after its birth, the Southern African Development Coordination Conference has achieved some of its goals, mainly in transport, energy, communications, and agricultural research. But regional economic integration remains elusive, and the 10 member-states are waiting to see whether a post-apartheid South Africa will revitalize the union, or dominate it.



Margaret A. Novicki

**M**ost news about Africa focuses on hunger or underdevelopment, while little is said about its economic potential. Southern Africa has fertile soils and abundant mineral resources, but three decades of war, destabilization, drought, and economic mismanagement have prevented most of its resources from being tapped.

A spark of hope was struck for the region with the birth of the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC), launched in 1980 to reduce dependence on apartheid South Africa and to promote equity, interdependence, and mutual benefit in the region. Money poured in from the donors, happy to find a way of indirectly making a stand against apartheid South Africa.

Twelve years later, the 10 SADCC member-states—Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe—and two South African liberation movements, the African National Congress (ANC) and the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), held possibly the most critical

*Simba Makoni,  
executive secretary  
of SADCC*

on January 30-31 in Mozambique's capital, Maputo.

The keynote document for the conference, *SADCC: Toward Economic Integration*, may hold the answer to the very survival of the organization. But a difficult road lies ahead.

While in the past, SADCC has helped to hold the region together and has scored some successes, notably in agricultural research, energy, transport, and communications, it has failed in some of its key goals. "Perhaps the greatest failure of the organization has been its inability to mobilize the region's own resources for development," said the document. SADCC's progress toward reducing economic dependence has been "modest" and "regional cooperation is yet to become a factor in the strategies of member-states for national development."

Intra-SADCC trade has been insignificant and has even gone down in the mid-1980s. In 1981, intra-SADCC trade accounted for just 4.7 percent of the trade of the member-states. This fell to 3.8 percent in 1985, recovering marginally to 4.7 percent in 1986.

SADCC's performance to date does not augur well for the future, particularly now that the relatively strong industrialized countries, like those in Western Europe, are flexing their muscles even more by organizing themselves into economic trading blocs. For example, this year the world will witness the advantages of a common market in Western Europe, and, in North and Central America plans are under way to create a free trade area.

But the SADCC member-states appear not to be intimidated, and took a radical step toward creating a similar bloc in southern Africa, looking forward to when South Africa is its eleventh member. The challenge will be how to continue to attract donor support for programs once apartheid has been dismantled, and while Eastern Europe also makes huge demands for donor assistance.

The U.S. delegate at the conference, Ted Morse, head of the regional office of the Agency for International Development (U.S.AID), warned that while the U.S. was providing \$430 million in aid to southern Africa this year, along with its contributions through such multilateral bodies as the World Bank and the African Development Bank, the justification for donor assistance to SADCC in the past had much to do with the struggle against apartheid. "What is the donor justification for continuing to support SADCC under a new mandate?"

"It's hard to sell that [the \$430 million] to the American public in a recession without a firm understanding of why we should maintain that level of aid to the southern African region," he said.

**T**he other major problem for the long term is how to relate to South Africa once it becomes a SADCC member. Although it was decided that South Africa will only be allowed to join when a democratic government is installed, plans for regional

future member.

The keynote document at the conference warned the organization's member-states, however, to take the initiative toward economic integration by creating a workable program and effective institutions before South Africa comes on board. How well the members manage to achieve this will be decisive in determining whether it will be South Africa that joins SADCC or SADCC that joins South Africa, says the document.

Some analysts believe that a democratic South Africa would continue to dominate rather than integrate into the region. The fact that the South African economy accounts for about three-quarters of the region's total gross domestic product and has some 35 million people, a third of its population, is a reality that will not change with the dismantling of apartheid.

Yet, the deputy president of the ANC, Walter Sisulu, a featured speaker at the conference, promised that a future democratic government "would renounce all hegemonic ambitions associated with the white minority government, and would not seek any role as the self-appointed custodian of the region's interests in external relations."

He pointed out that integration into the region would be in the interests of South Africa too. The South African economy, he said, needs to shift from its present "excessive dependence on exports of mineral products and become a more significant exporter of manufactured goods," and "the countries of Africa will be potentially important trade partners."

Apart from trade advantages, Sisulu also said South Africa had an obligation to cooperate with its neighbors "both in overcoming the imbalances which characterize the existing regional economy and redressing the consequences of apartheid destabilization."

The estimated economic losses from South African aggression cost the region \$60 billion between 1980 and 1988, according to a study by the UN Economic Commission for Africa.

Sisulu, however, warned against SADCC forging links with South Africa before majority rule, and was cautious about how much the nation could contribute to the economic life of the sub-region initially because the task of redressing inequalities within its borders would be overwhelming.

It is too early to predict how a future South African government will cope with the pressures from SADCC and its own people. South Africa faces rising unemployment, a fall in gold prices, and a heavy national debt.

Plans for economic integration will indeed make big demands on member-states—especially on South Africa and to a lesser extent Zimbabwe—not to shoot ahead with national plans, leaving the poorer neighbors out in the cold.

The first practical step toward integration would be the adoption of a treaty formalizing SADCC, said Simba Makoni, SADCC's executive secretary. Such a treaty, which is expected to be signed at the next SADCC heads

of state summit scheduled for August in Namibia's capital, Windhoek, would require member-states "to engage in serious consultation and negotiations on integration in various areas."

The type of regional integration envisaged is similar to that of the EEC, including a single regional market, free movement of goods and services, and the removal of barriers to allow for the free movement of people and investment capital. There are also plans to have a single currency and a regional parliament.

**R**eactions to this ambitious plan were a mixture of optimism, cynicism, and cautiousness. Speaking on behalf of the donor community, Edward Jaycox, the World Bank's vice president for Africa, pledged donor support for SADCC's regional integration plans, but stressed that the private sector must play a key role. "Hence, barriers to market integration should be removed, and instead market-friendly policies should be pursued. That is, more emphasis must be placed on efficient investment, production, and trade."

Some analysts were skeptical of how the diverse countries of SADCC could come together under a treaty with binding economic and political goals. Investors might be more attracted to post-apartheid South Africa where profits are more certain, than to a country like Mozambique, whose infrastructure has been wracked by war and is one of the world's poorest nations.

The other controversial issue will be the free movement of labor. If visa restrictions are lifted within southern Africa, there is the danger of a labor migration from the current SADCC member-states to South Africa which could spark angry protests from South African trade unions.

Skepticism also surrounded the fact that Swaziland and Malawi, two countries that have made little progress toward multi-party democracy, will be members of a regional parliament.

On those lines, the U.S.AID delegate, Ted Morse, queried whether all SADCC members were ready for "the good governance, transparency, accountability, and rule of law that has to be present for economic integration to take place."

Steering away from looking just at economic gain, Mozambican President Joaquim Chissano said in his opening address that although "investment in the productive area is recognized to be of greater importance, we should not fail to look at the social sectors such as education and health so severely affected by the economic recovery program and also by the war."

Mozambique has one of the highest infant mortality rates in the world. It is estimated that between 170 and 200 of every 1,000 children die before their first birthday. Education is another problem in Mozambique. The rebels of the Mozambique National Resistance (Renamo) have destroyed over 3,000 schools, according to official figures, and it is estimated that 50 percent of the children are no longer able to attend school.

On a cheerier note, Chissano pointed to the fact that for the first time a SADCC conference was being held when there is the possibility of lasting peace in the region after more than three decades of violence, war, and destabilization. If the region does manage to have a period of stability, this should attract the foreign investment so desperately needed.

In Mozambique's case, Chissano hoped that the current round of peace negotiations in Rome between his government and Renamo will move on from political issues to military ones, which would include the signing of a general ceasefire ending 16 years of war.

The conflict in Mozambique has had a disastrous effect on the country and the region as a whole. Half the population of 15.7 million is dependent on food aid for its survival. Mozambique is now one of the world's poorest nations with an annual per capita income of only \$100.

The country's three key transport routes, the Nacala line in the north, the Beira Corridor in the central region, and the southern Limpopo line have to some extent been revitalized with the help of hundreds of millions of dollars channelled through SADCC projects, but continue to function miserably below capacity because of poor security, losing crucial foreign exchange earnings for

Mozambique and costing landlocked Zimbabwe and Malawi dearly.

But the end of the war is in sight. And now post-war plans in Mozambique are already under way. Another sign of hope has been the changes in South African policy toward the region from that of destabilization to fostering positive relations with its neighbors.

And the early cooperation and pledges of the ANC—a probable future government of South Africa—is heartening for SADCC. Sisulu summed up his commitment to the vision of regional integration by pointing out it was the only way to true survival. "Unless we begin to work together to chart a course which can give practical effect to our shared principles, events will overtake us and we will find ourselves in a region largely shaped by others to our disadvantage."

Margaret A. Novicki



*Maputo port: Mozambique's transport routes have been revitalized with SADCC's help*

When the government of Equatorial Guinea decided late last year to join Africa's democracy movement, it did so in a style typical of the rule of President Obiang—dissidents were rounded up and imprisoned. Nudged to-



Paul Lashmar

ward democracy by international donor nations and agencies whose aid comprises 70 percent of the country's economy, Obiang outlined reforms that ensure

his government retains control, while dividing the opposition.

**A**fter 23 years of dictatorship, Equatorial Guinea, one of Africa's smallest and

most isolated countries, has suddenly begun to totter unsteadily toward democracy. If reforms announced by President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo were to be implemented, an embryonic multi-party democracy would be in place in a year or two. But is President Obiang loading the dice to retain control?

Equatorial Guinea is an obscure destination, frequently confused with the other Guineas and only appreciated by those interested in venal dictators, tarantulas, the giant turtle, and a sinister voodoo-like magic called Kong. From 1968, when Spain granted independence, until 1979, Equatorial Guinea was subjected to one of the most brutal dictatorships in Africa, comparable to Amin's or Bokassa's. Under President Macias Nguema, one-third of the population was killed or fled. But even this period was virtually unreported by the international media.

During the late 1970s, Macias' rule became increasingly unstable. In August 1979, Macias was overthrown in a coup led by his nephew and military commander, Lt.-Col. Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo. Macias and five of his

## LURCHING TOWARD

closest allies were tried in Malabo's main cinema and executed by firing squad. Hopes that President Obiang would liberalize the regime were misplaced. Although political killings became much rarer, arrests, imprisonment, and torture of political opponents remained commonplace.

The capital, Malabo, on Bioko Island is extremely difficult to visit, with only a few regular flights to the mainland and a visa at one of the handful of EG embassies costing \$60 and a three-day wait. I arrived at a time of great political change in Equatorial Guinea. Since 1979, Obiang has often stated that Western democracy is not right for Africa. "Better unjust order than unjust disorder," he was fond of saying.

But now, under increased international pressure, Obiang has taken a series of sudden lurches toward multi-party democracy. The main steps have occurred since the new year and have taken observers by surprise. The most remarkable came on January 18, when Obiang, in a blaze of publicity, dismissed his government "as a prelude to the introduction of a multi-party system." He had just promulgated a bill to allow the formation of new parties, when his own party has only been in existence for five years.

*Paul Lashmar is a reporter for the British television current affairs program, "World in Action."*

A few days before, Obiang had passed a general amnesty for all political crimes up to December 1991. He said this would allow political exiles to return. Most political opponents live in exile in Gabon, Madrid, or Paris.

But Obiang's actions are not as benign as they at first might appear. Equatorial Guinea's economy is in a desperate state. Seventy percent of state finances come through aid, with Spain, France, and China the principal donors. The country relies on loans from the international aid agencies. In the last year, the IMF and World Bank have brought unprecedented behind-the-scenes pressure on Obiang to stop human rights violations and move discernibly toward democracy. For political and economic reasons, the IMF delayed the second stage of a major restructuring loan.

Driving around the country, it is obvious that life for most Guineans is one of trudging poverty. They are a reserved and cautious people, polite but distant with foreigners. "Everyone here over the age of 25 is traumatized. They have lost at least one brother, sister, parent, or relative under Macias," one senior diplomatic source in Malabo told me.

They are anxious not to upset the current regime. In Basupo, a village 10 miles outside Malabo, I witnessed a government official insisting that the local choir tackle a



*The country is covered with tropical rainforest and the main export is timber, exploited since the early 1900s*

president of Parliament who was arrested for demanding multi-party elections.

Also in November, a mandatory referendum was held on a new "liberalizing" constitution. The result was a remarkable 98 percent in favor. However, few of the voters knew what the new constitution contained, as it had been released only a day or so before the referendum. In a pre-vote television speech, Obiang made it clear that he would frown on anyone who voted "no." Rumors abounded that dissenters would be prevented from travelling freely. A diplomatic source said that at the voting booths, it could be easily seen who cast a black vote for no rather than red for yes. One unpublicized clause of the new constitution exempts Obiang personally from prosecution for any crime "before, during, or after his presidency."

Similarly, Obiang's general amnesty law, presented as a magnanimous gesture toward his opponents, also covered civil servants "accused of human rights violations"—in other words, an amnesty for Obiang and his torturers. Few of the leading political exiles trust Obiang sufficiently to return. Severo Moto Nsa, president of the most viable opposition party, the Progress Party of Equatorial Guinea, said in Madrid, "I am ready to return, but will not do so for the present for fear of being arrested."

Under the terms of the new bill, launching a new political party involves overcoming some high hurdles. Members must deposit 30 million CFA (over \$150,000) in a local bank. The money must not be raised "externally." This is no small order in a country where the average annual income is around \$350. It has also been reported that eligibility for election requires residency for the last 10 years. Holders of foreign passports are ineligible. This conveniently rules out most of the major opposition figures. Banned from political activity are members of the armed forces, security services, judiciary, religious orders, and foreigners. No party can be formed on a

## DEMOCRACY

song praising Obiang with more gusto. Their faces remained impassive, but their eyes burned with resentment.

They know that Obiang has not had a miraculous conversion to democracy and his motives are entirely pragmatic and self-interested. He has realized that pluralism is inevitable and that his country is not immune from the changes in the rest of Africa. He and his government are known to have been alarmed by the speed of transition to full democracy in neighboring São Tomé and Príncipe and fear a loss of political control.

Obiang's recent reforms have been skillfully stage-managed, but on closer examination, each reveals caveats designed to benefit Obiang and his political cronies. Obiang first announced that democracy was on the agenda last year. But this was followed by several waves of arrests of those known or believed to support pluralism. "We regard arrest like having a cold, it is just a fact of life," said one local dissident. Amnesty International reported that dozens of individuals were arrested during such a purge in November. Amnesty has adopted as one of their prisoners of conscience Antonio Ebang Mbele Abang, a former vice



*It is obvious that life for most Guineans is one of trudging poverty; they are a reserved and cautious people*

to trust the new government team to facilitate a smooth political transition.

Certainly, some important posts were given to individuals close to the opposition, but no members of the opposition were given posts. Despite their highly publicized dismissal, most of the former government were given new jobs in an expanded government (the dismissed government consisted of 19 posts), and Obiang's elite power group, the Esangui clan from the town of Mongomo, has strengthened its grip.

One hardliner known to be critical of Obiang's reforms, the former deputy prime minister, Isadora Eyi Monsuy Andeme, has been left out. The political significance of this move is not yet clear. Other hardliners have remained in the government: Alejandro Envoro Ovono remains minister of public works, Juan Olo Mba Nzeng at mines and hydrocarbons, and Antonio Nve Ngu has become minister-spokesman for the government.

Obiang's strategy has succeeded in throwing the divided opposition into further chaos. While many exiles remain outside the country, others are discreetly negotiating with Obiang to get a head start over their rivals. The most popular group to negotiate with the government is the Popular Alliance, whose leader, Carmel Mdo Aguse, is known as a sharp political operator. A controversial figure, he left Equatorial Guinea in a hurry in 1982 after he was charged with corruption.

Obiang has not publicly stated his timetable for democracy. One top aid official reported that the president said there might be multi-party elections at a local level in 1993

regional, ethnic, or provincial basis.

On January 24, President Obiang swore in the 33 new members of the "transitional government" at a ceremony at the People's Palace. He emphasized the need for the people of Equatorial Guinea

comes from within the government and not outside."

Shortly before going to press, reports emerged from Libreville, Gabon that 30 Equatorial Guinean political exiles had suddenly been arrested and deported by the authorities. This appears to be a dramatic change in policy as the Gabonese government had previously been tolerant, even sympathetic toward Obiang's opponents.

According to a February 4 communiqué issued in Libreville by the Union for Democracy and Social Development (UDDS), an umbrella opposition group, and signed by its secretary-general, Antonio Sibacha Bucicheku, these dissidents were "secretly transferred to Malabo and assigned to several prisons, where they are being subjected to atrocious torture by Moroccan soldiers." The communiqué also says that there have been arrests in Malabo and Bata. The UDDS has "denounced and condemned" these arrests.

Nonetheless, all the evidence suggests that Obiang has decided that multi-party elections are inevitable and the best way to keep power is to appear to be the "father of democracy" while carefully making sure that his Democratic Party of Equatorial Guinea (PDGE) keeps control of the process. He is engaged in a difficult balancing act—appeasing the foreigners who hold the purse strings while delaying democracy for as long as possible.

Real political pressure has finally come from Spain and France, which have traditionally been the major aid donors with large contingents of aid workers in the country. There were, at last count, 144 aid projects in Equatorial Guinea, and Spain is the main trading partner. Long-standing rivalry between donor countries until recently had weakened their resolve to force Obiang to stop human rights abuses and move toward democracy. But during a recent visit to Equatorial Guinea, the Spanish president, Felipe Gonzalez, is believed to have expressed some strong words on these issues. By last December, the IMF was sufficiently happy with Obiang's reforms to release \$7.66 million, the second stage of the restructuring loan.

With one of the few embassies in the country, the Unit-

ed States has recently taken a much greater interest in Equatorial Guinea. Since 1988, the Peace Corps has been very active and the American ambassador, John Ernest Bennett, has undertaken a number of philanthropic endeavors. Equatorial Guineans place great importance on education. Until late at night, students can be seen around the streets of Malabo grouped under the few streetlights reading their notebooks. Bennett has opened up the embassy at night to the students, providing seats, tables, and drinking water in a well-lit, mosquito-free part of the compound, and up to 100 students take advantage of the facility nightly.

The embassy has also found a small American company prepared to exploit the country's gas and petroleum reserves. Before Christmas, the night sky to the east of Malabo was bathed in bright red light as flaring tests were carried out at a new gas separation plant. The gas is brought on shore from the Alba field 18 miles to the north of Malabo. Built and operated by the Houston-based Walter International, the plant is expected to refine 2,000 barrels a day of light petroleum, rising to 4,000 bpd by 1994.

Petroleum is now a major factor in the Equatorial Guinean economy. It is expected to increase GDP by 15 percent alone in the first year according to the IMF. Further exploration is taking place on other concessions including one by the French company, ELF.

The economy has improved slightly since Equatorial Guinea joined the CFA franc zone in 1986. Until independence, cocoa was the major crop with exports of 40,000

tons a year. After the colonial plantation owners were persecuted and left during the Macias years, production dropped to 5,000 tons per year. Although production is back up to 7,500 tons, conditions remain poor.

The World Bank is encouraging a diversification of crops. The country is covered with tropical rainforest and the main export is timber, which has been exploited since the beginning of the century. Substantial logging is taking place both on Bioko Island and on the coastal areas of the mainland. At Luba, a port on the south of the island, hundreds of trees are awaiting shipment. The companies involved are Spanish, Israeli, Lebanese, and Italian, and most of the wood reportedly ends up in the Mediterranean basin countries. Although the government charges reforestation and road taxes, the roads are in poor condition and there is no evidence of sustainable timber schemes.

The other major earner of the economy is "re-exportation," accounting for 10 to 12 percent of GDP and involving the importation of alcohol, tobacco, and used clothing and re-exportation to neighboring countries.

Equatorial Guinea's poverty is such that Obiang has not been able to take many funds out of the country. But he and his family have financial interests in the country, owning hotels, businesses, and buildings, and he is hence unlikely to go into exile. It is hard to believe, though, that real multi-party democracy will operate in this country in the foreseeable future, and that when Obiang's seven-year term of office ends in 1996, he will allow free and fair elections. ○

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