

ADJUSTMENT, CIVIL SOCIETY, AND DEMOCRATIZATION IN AFRICA: THE CASE OF NIGERIA

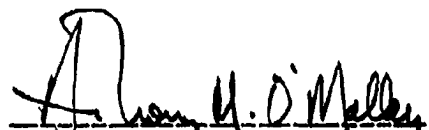
IFEANYICHUKWU S.J. NWACHUKWU

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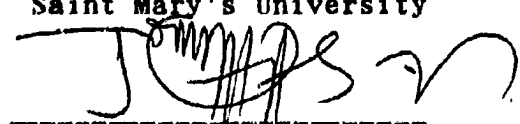
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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AAF-SAP	African Alternative Programme to Structural Adjustment Programmes for Socio-Economic Recovery and Transformation
ABN	Association for a Better Nigeria
African Charter	African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation -- UNECA (1990)
AFRC	Armed Forces Ruling Council
ANC	African National Congress
APPER	African Priority Programme for African Recovery, 1986
ASUU	Academic Staff of Universities Union
Bank	World Bank
Berg Report	Accelerated Development in Sub-Saharan Africa
BLRD	Better Life for Rural Dwellers
CA	Constituent Assembly
CBN	Central Bank of Nigeria
CD	Campaign for Democracy
CDAs	Community Development Associations
CDHR	Committee for the Defence of Human Rights
CFA	Communaute Financiere Africaine
CLP	Civil Liberties Organization
COWAD	Community Women and Development
COWAN	Country Women Association of Nigeria
CRC	Constitutional Review Committee
CRP	Constitutional Rights Project
DFRRI	Directorate for Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure
EFF	Extended Fund Facility
ESAF	Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facilities
FAVDO	Forum of African Voluntary Development Organizations
Forex	Foreign Exchange
FOS	Federal Office of Statistics
GCA	Global Coalition for Africa
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
IDA	International Development Association
IFAA	Institute for African Alternatives
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IFEM	Inter-Bank Foreign Exchange Market
IFIs	International Finance Institutions
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ING	Interim National Government
INGO	International NGOs
ISIs	Import substitution industrialization
LPA	Lagos Plan of Action

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

LTPS	Sub-Saharan Africa: From Crisis to Sustainable Growth: A Long-Term Perspective Study -- World Bank (1989)
MAMSER	Mass Mobilization for Social and Economic Recovery
MAN	Manufacturing Association of Nigeria
MOSOP	Movement of the Survival of Ogoni People
NADECO	National Democratic Coalition
NADL	National Association of Democratic Lawyers
NANS	National Association of Nigerian Students
NARD	National Association of Resident Doctors
NAVDO	Nigerian Association of Voluntary Development Organizations
NBA	Nigerian Bar Association
NCNC	National Council of Nigerian Citizens
NCW	National Commission for Women
NCWS	National Council of Women Societies
NDE	National Directorate for Employment
NDLEA	National Drug Law Enforcement Agency
NDSC	National Defence and Security Council
NEC	National Electoral Commission
NEEP	National Economic Emergency Powers Decree No.22
NEPD	Nigerian Enterprise Promotion Decree
NEST	Nigerian Environmental Study/Action Team
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NICs	Newly Industrializing Countries
NISER	Nigerian Institute for Social and Economic Research
NLC	Nigerian Labour Congress
NLCWW	Nigerian Labour Congress Women's Wing
NLP	Nigerian Labour Party
NMA	Nigerian Medical Association
NNPC	Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation
NPN	National Party of Nigeria
NRC	National Republican Convention
NUJ	Nigerian Union of Journalists
NUPENG	National Union of Petroleum and Natural Gas Workers
OAU	Organization of African Unity
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PAMSCAD	Program of Action to Mitigate the Social Cost of Adjustment
PRC	Provisional Ruling Council
PTP	Political Transition Programme
ROAPE	Review of African Political Economy
SAF	Structural Adjustment Facilities

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

SAL	Structural Adjustment Loan
SAP	Structural Adjustment programme
SDP	Social Democratic Party
SDRs	Special Drawing Rights
SFEM	Second-tier Foreign Exchange Market
SMC	Supreme Military Council
SNC	Sovereign National Conference
SSEs	Small-Scale Enterprises
SSIs	Small-Scale Industries
SSS	State Security Service
TANGO	Tanzanian Association of Nongovernmental Organizations
TCPC	Technical Committee on Privatization and Commercialization
TNC	Transnational Corporations
TUC	Trade Union Congress of Nigeria
UDF	United Democratic Front
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNNADAF	United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s
UNPAAERD	United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development -- UN 1986-1990.
VDO	Voluntary Development Organizations
WAI	War Against Indiscipline
WIN	Women-in-Nigeria
WORDOC	Women's Research and Documentation Centre

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DEDICATIONS

THIS THESIS IS DEDICATED TO THE LEADERSHIP AND
RANK AND FILE OF THE CAMPAIGN FOR DEMOCRACY (CD) IN NIGERIA

ABSTRACT

This thesis is a contribution to the on-going development debates on adjustment, state-civil society relations and democratization in Africa. In recent years, with the proliferation of a myriad of civic associations and the intensification of pro-democracy struggles on the continent, occurring in a dramatically changed global political economy with the end of the 'cold war', there has been a growing intellectual renaissance with non-state actors and the potentialities which Africa's nascent civic terrain holds for democratic development. Neo-liberal and radical analysts alike now see a strong and independent civil society, capable of playing a 'watchdog function' by delimiting the state as the necessary pre-condition for economic recovery and development in Africa in the 1990s.

In the increasing departure from state-centric and economistic interpretations of Africa's development problems, analysts have employed the concept of civil society in an attempt to capture the dynamics of these processes and to identify the potential for democratic development in Africa. However, the concept of civil society is often used uncritically, according the civic terrain with romantic libertarian attributes, rather than employing the concept as a rigorous analytic tool to identify the possible sources of democratic renewal in Africa. While there is a need to shift analysis to the dynamics of civil society in order to recognize the subjective factors of African development, the conceptualization of state-civil society relations in much of the new literature fails to illuminate the concrete dynamics of African social realities or the direction of socio-economic and political change.

This thesis is therefore an attempt to go beyond the current orthodoxy which posits a positive and mechanistic relationship between neo-liberal market reforms, informalization, civil society and democracy in Africa to critically examine and relate the complexities of the current processes to the prospects of democratic development without reaching deterministic conclusions. It also seeks to transcend the limitations of existing schools of thought on African development which hitherto negated the subjective factors of development, and the current proclivity in analysis to romanticize the civic terrain. By giving particular attention to the contradictions, conflicts and challenges within and between popular groups in civil society, I hope to further the understanding of the concrete dynamics of the processes of change in Africa today and the potentialities of democratic initiatives from below to resolve the unabated African crisis.

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INTRODUCTION

ADJUSTMENT, CIVIL SOCIETY AND DEMOCRATIZATION IN AFRICA: THE CASE OF NIGERIA

The irruption of democracy, which may be considered one of the major events of the past few years, in African terms, confirms...[that] it has become impossible to overlook the fact that the priority issues with which the Third World is attempting to come to grips are of a political nature. Until recently they were held to be technical problems...calling for an increase in financial or material aid. It has become apparent that a financial, economic or technical approach to these problems addresses only the consequences of the handicaps besetting the Third World and fails to tackle their true causes... the type of government running the country and the nature of the authority responsible for taking the final decisions, which are necessarily politically oriented.¹

The recent political ferment has focused attention on a newly invigorated 'civil society' in Africa. The proliferation of autonomous associations and social networks has been regarded as a dynamic catalyst for the advent of democracy and a crucial bulwark for the maintenance of democratic governance. Consequently, many have interpreted the decline and collapse of the ancien regime as an opening for the assertion of civil society in Africa. Civil society, in turn, is seen as the crucial agency for creating public accountability and participatory government.²

Although democracy has not been a prominent feature of Africa's post-colonial political economies, the 1990s parallels the 1950s for the vibrancy in the civic terrain and may emerge as the decade of African democratization, if not substantively, at least in the development of certain formal institutional structures. The reinvigoration of pro-democracy movements in Africa, occurring in a dramatically changed global political economy since the collapse of socialist regimes in Eastern Europe, has opened up new opportunities for the democratization of state and polity in Africa. Comprised of trade unions, student and women's organizations, civil

¹ Jacques-Mariel Nzouankeu, "The African Attitude to Democracy" in International Social Science Journal, no.128, 1991, p.373.

² Peter M. Lewis, "Political Transition and the Dilemma of Civil Society in Africa" in Journal of International Affairs, vol.46, no.1, Summer 1992, p.31-32.

liberty and human right's associations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and voluntary development organizations (VDOs), social movements throughout the continent have increasingly linked the unabated socio-economic and political crises under neo-liberal market reforms to demands for greater state accountability, popular representation in national politics and a departure from three decades of development strategies which marginalized the majority of people. These developments have renewed academic and policy interest in non-state actors and the potential which a nascent civil society holds for economic, social and democratic development in Africa.

Scholarly attention of both liberal and radical analysts has switched from an exclusively statist perspective on Africa's political economy, typified by the 1980s critiques of the African state, characterizing it as; 'soft', 'over-developed', 'underdeveloped' 'compradorial' 'captured' 'suspended', 'non-autonomous' 'delinked' 'neo-patrimonial' 'over-extended' etc.³ to an increasing focus on democracy and the strengthening of civil society. There has been a growing academic and policy consensus that the opening of democratic space, popular participation and the strengthening of civil society are all necessary pre-conditions for economic recovery

³ For a literature review of the post-colonial state in Africa see Bjorn Beckman, "The Post-Colonial State: Crisis and Reconstruction" in African Futures, (25th Anniversary Conference of the Centre of African Studies, University of Edinburgh, Seminar Proceedings #28, December 1987). Martin Doornbos, "The African State in Academic Debate: Retrospect and Prospect" in The Journal of Modern African Studies, vol.28, no.2, 1990.

and development in Africa. Moving beyond the critique of the post-colonial state, analysts have begun to adopt a society-centred approach, particularly employing the concept of civil society in an attempt to capture the dynamics of these processes and to identify the potential for democratic development in Africa.

Broadly, civil society refers to the "sphere of social interaction between the economy and state, composed above all of the intimate sphere (especially the family), the sphere of associations (especially voluntary associations), social movements, and forms of public communication."⁴ The proliferation of voluntary associations in Africa has led liberal and radical analysts to view a strong and independent civil society, capable of playing a 'watchdog function' as the 'new panacea' for Africa's democratic and developmental woes. Whether attributable to the general disillusionment with the state and state-centric perspectives; the developmental record of one-party states in Africa; the emboldening of pro-democracy movements in Africa; and/or theoretical reflections on the anti-democratic ills of the collapsed socialist regimes of Eastern Europe, the term civil society is now in vogue. However, the concept of civil society is often used uncritically, according the civic terrain with romantic libertarian attributes, rather than employing the concept as

⁴ Anthony W. Pereira, "Economic Underdevelopment, Democracy and Civil Society: The North-East Brazilian Case" in Third World Quarterly, vol.14, no.2, 1993, p.371.

a rigorous analytic tool to identify the possible sources of democratic renewal in Africa.⁵ While there is a need to shift analysis to the dynamics of civil society in order to recognize the subjective factors of African development, the conceptualization of state-civil society relations in much of the new literature fails to illuminate the concrete dynamics of African realities or the direction of socio-economic and political change.

This thesis is a contribution to the on-going development debates on adjustment, state-civil society relations and democratization in Africa. It attempts to go beyond the current orthodoxy which posits a positive and mechanistic relationship between neo-liberal market reforms, informalization, civil society and democracy in Africa to critically examine and relate the complexities of the current processes to the prospects of democratic development without reaching deterministic conclusions. Such a critical examination of the dynamics of civil society could not be more relevant to the current crisis in Africa. It seeks to transcend the limitations of existing schools of thought on African development which hitherto negated the subjective factors of development and the current proclivity in analysis to romanticize the civic terrain. By giving particular attention to the contradictions, conflicts and challenges

⁵ Gerald J. Schmitz and Eboe Hutchful, Democratization and Popular Participation in Africa, (Ottawa: North-South Institute, 1992).

within and between popular groups in civil society, I hope to further the understanding of the concrete dynamic of the processes of change in Africa today and the potentialities of democratic initiatives from below to resolve the unabated and multifarious continental crisis. The objective of this thesis are twofold. I first critically examine the impact of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund inspired structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) on the African economy, state and civil society. My second objective is to analyze and relate the political responses of various social forces in the civic terrain to the prospects of democratic development. With specific reference to Nigeria, I attempt to identify the possible sources of democratic renewal and the factors and forces which frustrate and/or facilitate the strengthening of civil society.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The analysis of the problematic of democracy in Africa must take cognizance of the interconnection of the objective and subjective factors and forces in development. The objective considerations recognize Africa's historical experience, the unequal integration into the periphery of the global capital economy, the internal patterns of accumulation, the social relations of production and similar international factors and forces. The objective factors establish the parameters of what is possible at a particular historical juncture. The subjective factors pay attention to the nature

of the state and the dynamics of civil society. They recognize the dialectical unity of these spheres and focus on the nature of social forces, the level of organization of the people, the internal character and contestation within organized groups and the multiple struggles on the basis of class, gender, ethnicity, religion, national minorities and ecology. Without romanticizing and celebrating *a priori* the libertarian character of civic terrain, an examination of the often neglected subjective factors of African development illuminates how various social force struggle to change constricting objective parameters while considering the prospects for democratic and developmental alternatives to the current crisis from 'below'.

THESIS

The principal proposition of this thesis is that democratic consolidation in Nigeria and periphery social formations in Africa, is simple not a question of strengthening the autonomy of the civic realm. Though crucial, the level of organization and autonomy of civil society and the manner in which the popular forces are able to restructure the state (from local to national levels) and change the balance of power, politics, production and exchange, is critical for democratic renewal and consolidation in Nigeria and Africa. While popular struggles for democracy in Africa are currently manifest in demands for multiparties and civil liberties and the rule of law they are inextricably linked to

the improvement of material conditions and the betterment of life chances. In this process popular forces must be instrumental in defining and creating the institutions that will ensure their participation, while maintaining the autonomy of civil society.

Three arguments are put forth in support of this thesis. First, I argue that while the current project of free-market reforms has led to the reinvigorated civic terrain in Nigeria and Africa, this was a consequence of continuing popular response to the failure of post-colonial development, the deepening economic crisis exacerbated by SAP and the seething authoritarianism the programme has engendered. Therefore, the emergence of democratic struggles in Africa has very little to do with the age-long mechanistic association between economic and political liberalization widely held by neo-liberal analysts. Secondly, I maintain that the Nigerian civil society still remains fragmented and weak, divided by economic, social, ethnic and religious contradictions and conflicts and subject to manipulation, cooptation and repression by the state. Thirdly, I further argue that no meaningful democracy can be sustained if conditions of poverty and underdevelopment persists.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Primary sources include statistical studies and a questionnaire interview conducted by the authors. In addition, documents from the Nigerian government and international

development agencies have been referred to. Position papers and policy statements from various non-governmental and popular organizations in Nigeria on national issues have been examined in order to assess the alternative social projects articulated by these movements. Direct interviews and discussions with human rights organizations, trade unions, student and women's organizations and academics associations, non-governmental organizations were conducted to discern their democratic character and to further gauge the various responses of social forces in civil society to the structural adjustment programme and Nigeria's recently aborted political transition programme. With specific reference to NGOs in Nigeria, a questionnaire interview was conducted with 14 NGOs between December 10, 1993 and January 31, 1994. Following Akin Aina's typology of NGOs in the country, (see below) the interviews were fairly balanced between the three tiers (I:5, II:5, III, 4.). The constraints of time and financial resources limited the investigation to NGOs operating in Southern Nigeria. Tier one and two interviews were conducted exclusively in Lagos, Ibadan and Port Harcourt. The major urban centres were chosen because of the predominance of NGO activities in these cities. Outside these locales, interviews of tier-three NGOs were administered in Nsukka and Owerri because of their proximity to the author. Secondary sources consist of library materials, Nigerian newspapers and periodicals, consultation with African and International

Development research centres and organizations, and correspondence with specialists on Africa.

STRUCTURE OF SUBSEQUENT CHAPTERS

Taking the form of a literature review, **Chapter One** attempts to clarify theoretical issues on the question of democracy by first examining the classical treatment of state-civil society relations before discussing the contemporary debates on civil society and democracy in Africa. The predominance of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund guided structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) in Africa during the 1980s is the focus of **Chapter Two**. The evolution of the neo-liberal market reforms are examined in **Part One**, from the interpretation of the crisis, impact of market-driven recovery programmes on the Nigerian economy, the continuing policy debates to the new democratic agenda of the Bretton Woods institutions. In **Part Two** of the chapter, the socio-economic impact of adjustment on various social forces in Nigeria is examined with the individualized survival strategies to the crisis also explored. In **Chapter Three**, an empirical study of Nigeria is conducted. I analyze the collective and political responses of social forces in the civic terrain to structural adjustment and the democratization process (the programmatic transition was recently aborted) with specific attention given to the role of NGOs in the democratization process. In **Chapter Four**, the concluding chapter of this exposition, I relate my empirical findings to competing explanations of the

problematic of civil society and democracy in Africa and make some general conclusions. In examining the Nigerian experience, I draw on the experience of other African countries. The concluding chapter also offers alternative policy recommendation and investigates the challenges ahead for democratic development in Africa in the last decade of the millennium.

CHAPTER ONE

AN INTRODUCTION TO SOME THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL ISSUES ON THE PROBLEMATIC OF CIVIL SOCIETY AND DEMOCRACY IN AFRICA: A LITERATURE REVIEW

...the problems of the 'overdevelopment' of the post-colonial state in Africa and its gross violations of human rights have generated a new interest in the efficacy of civil society, as opposed to the state, as an agent of democratization, transformation, and development. Given the particular international context of this renewed interest in civil society, it may easily become the ideological plank on which to strengthen even further unrestrained free market policies on the continent.¹

However constructive its uses in defending human liberties against state oppression, or in marking out a terrain of social practices, institutions and relations neglected by the 'old' Marxist left, 'civil society' is now in danger of becoming an alibi for capitalism.²

The move towards re-democratization in Africa is widely welcomed by both liberal and radical analysts, in recognition that the constriction of political space has retarded development in Africa for the past three decades. While radical analysts have paid particular attention to democratic struggles in Africa for some time, linking them to issues of class, human rights, gender and democratic development, mainstream/liberal discourses on democracy in Africa now recognize that free market reform alone will not set Africa on the path to recovery and development. Consequently, the new political dimension of the international finance institutions (IFIs) and bilateral donors' policy prescriptions concentrate on questions of good governance, political accountability, the rule of law, liberal institutions and

¹ Akoto Ampaw, "Empowerment and the Limits of Political Liberalism" in Richard Sandbrook and Mohamed Halfani eds., Empowering People: Building Community, Civil Associations and Legality in Africa, (Toronto: Centre for Urban and Community Studies University of Toronto, 1993, Seminar Proceeding of the International Conference on Empowering People and Civil Associations held in Arusha, Tanzania, August 1991) p.37,38.

² Ellen Meiksins Wood, "The Uses and Abuses of 'Civil Society'" in Socialist Register 1990, (London: Merlin Press, 1990) p.60.

multiparty democracy as the *sin qua non* for the achievement of economic recovery and sustainable development in Africa in the 1990s.

From this perspective, democracy is conceptualized as a political system divorced from economic and social systems. It denotes a structure of governance, which places primacy on the multiparty system, the regularization of free and fair elections, participation of all adult social groups, and the protection of civil and political liberties and the rule of law. In contrast, radical democrats conceptualize democracy from a class and national perspective; the question of democracy must take cognizance of the historical context and social character of the social formation. Herein lies the distinction between democracy and democratization. The former, though important, is associated with the formal institutional arrangements of democracy, while the latter emphasizes the substantive aspect of the concept to include the democratization of socio-economic as well as political life. This entails not only the civil and political rights historically associated with liberal democracy, but must include the right to economic livelihood, welfare, security, health, education, proper utilization of the environment, etc. I accept Lumumba-Kasongo's radical conceptualization of democracy, viewed as

...a social and historical creation through which people and states organize their social relations of production and their society at large. Without economic equality and justice, the political dimension of democracy is meaningless. As long as the means of production and systems of distribution in a society are

controlled by a few people, that society will always suffer from an imbalance of power and social injustices.³

The struggle for democracy is not a one-time phenomena, culminating in multiparty elections or the institutionalization of civil liberties. Although important, democracy must correspond to the objective and concrete socio-economic interest of the popular social base whose democratic participation is most at stake in Africa today. While it is clear that the prevailing conditions of poverty and underdevelopment militate against democratization, it does not constitute a fundamental immutable obstacle.

On the question of democracy in Africa, civil society has become the bedrock on which democratic renewal rests in both liberal and radical discourses; analysts have placed emphasis on the independence and strengthening of civil society. This, it is widely argued, enables non-state actors to play the necessary 'watchdog' function which checks the abuses of the state and buttresses democratic accountability. One manifestation of Africa's reinvigorated civil society is the proliferation of NGOs and VDOs. In recent years they have gained unprecedented visibility in the debates on Africa's recovery and development. The crisis of the state and its tenuous relationship with civil society has led many scholars, students of development and international agencies to focus on

³ Tukumbi Lumumba-Kasongo, Nationalistic Ideologies, Their Policy Implications and the Struggle for Democracy in African Politics, (Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1992).

these organizations as agents of democratization and as an alternative means to mobilize people in the process of development. This chapter attempts to clarify some of the theoretical and conceptual issues on the problems of African democracy. The first section traces how democracy has featured in post-colonial development policies. A historical sketch of the concept of civil society is conducted in section two focusing on both liberal democratic theory and classical Marxism as a basis for theoretical clarity, before returning to the contemporary debates on civil society in Africa in the third section. The growing role of non-governmental organizations in African democratization is treated in the concluding section of the chapter.

SECTION ONE: POST-COLONIAL DEVELOPMENT POLICIES AND THE QUESTION OF DEMOCRACY

Throughout much of Africa today, we are witnessing what might be called the 'second moment' of civil society. The emboldening of Africa's nascent civil society began in the period of decolonization and perhaps even earlier. The struggle for national independence witnessed the rise of mass based social movements comprising students, women, workers and peasants demanding the democratic transformation of colonial state, economy and civil society. The weakness of mass groups, however enabled the better organized petit-bourgeoisie to play a leading role in determining the direction of decolonization.

While initially mobilizing popular groups to challenge colonial political domination, petit bourgeois constituencies soon distanced themselves from the subaltern social forces and the popular democratic demands to transform the polity economically and politically. The leadership of the nationalist movement readily accepted to contest foreign hold on political power, but were largely unwilling to challenge the domination of the domestic economy by transnational capital. At independence, the petit-bourgeoisie faced the contradiction of having political power but little or no control over the economy. Marginalized in the process of production and exchange in the colonial period, the domestic bourgeoisie were too fragment and economic weak, having as an incipient ruling class a negligible capital base. Therefore the task for the new political class which presided over the politically independent African states was to enhance its accumulation and become 'modern'.

The idea of Africa's modernization carried out by the state and modernizing elite gained intellectual credence from the post-independence ideology of developmentalism.⁴ The *raison d'être* for the post-colonial state was the exclusive concentration on the national development project. The move towards one-party or non-party states and the relegation of democracy to a negligible role within the imperative of

⁴ Peter Anyang' Nyong'o, "Political Instability and Prospects for Democracy in Africa" in Africa Development, vol. XIII, no.1, 1988, p.73.

development was influenced by the academic and political consensus of the time. The beguiling song of the ideology of developmentalism subscribed to by those involved in the development enterprise, rejected the democratization of the polity at two inter-related levels. First, the concept of development was state-centric, relegating civil society to the status of objects in this process; while at another level democratization was viewed as inimical to economic development. There was a shared belief among development agencies, government officials, and development economists that the state was to be the main agent in the development process. This was in part due to the weakness of the domestic bourgeoisie and its low level of capital accumulation, and thus led to an uncritical⁵ focus on the role of the state in this process. International development institutions, like the World Bank "expected the state to act as a trustee of a budding capitalism" and encouraged "state sponsored development schemes...treated as nurseries."⁶ The state was expected to build schools, roads, industries, universities, and to create employment, while also providing other social amenities. Nonetheless, the legitimacy of the state became increasingly tenuous due to its inability to meet the demands

⁵ The uncritical view of the state refers not to the role of the state in economic development, but rather the liberal assumption of a benevolent state, devoid of contestation.

⁶ Bjorn Beckman, "The Liberation of Civil Society: Neo-Liberal Ideology and Political Theory" in Review of African Political Economy (ROAPE) no.58, 1993, p.21-22.

of contending social forces.

Mkandawire highlights such contradictions in the state-centric development model. He takes exception with,

the state-centrism of development economics, not in as much as the states role in economic development but because of the assumption of a benevolent state, and a passive role for civil society which was to be the object and not the subject of the development process.(sic)⁷

In so doing, development economist accepted the legitimacy of the new African states without questioning its representativeness or the legitimacy of decision makers. In essence, liberal analysts dismissed the state as a locus of social contestation and accepted instead a neutral state, in which consensual national development plans to meet 'national objectives' could be articulated with a scientific and technical edge⁸ contributed by those involved in the development enterprise. Radical critiques focused on how the state increasingly became the locus of primitive accumulation and a vehicle for the dominant class to create an economic base. An inability to provide for the social base which thrust this class into power, and the subsequent expectation of the democratic transformation of colonial structures, brought popular disillusionment and plummeted the state into a crisis of legitimacy. The fledgling liberal democratic institutions and enshrined civic and constitutional rights were consistently trampled by the state and the ruling classes

⁷ Thandika Mkandawire, "The Crisis in Economic Development Theory" in Africa Development, vol XV, no.3/4, 1990, p 215-216.

⁸ Ibid., p.216.

in the fierce struggle for power. When electoral defeat meant the erosion of the economic base of ruling class factions, "the stakes became too high to be placed on the risky alter of democracy."⁹ To mitigate these contradictions the African ruling class moved towards one-party systems, depoliticizing society, imposing a common political creed, banning political organizations, curtailing political expression, and imposing severe sanctions.¹⁰

A host of theories from the advocates of one-party systems emerged, as many argued that a single party reflected an 'appropriate and authentic' form of African democracy, which would promote national unity, dissipate fruitless politicking, and facilitate popular consensus to enable the government to concentrate on development.¹¹ The one-party system served to assuage both intra-bourgeois and inter-class struggles. It was established to regularize access to the state and enabled the private accumulation of the dominant classes. While dismissing the substantive aspects of democracy, the retention of a formal democratic appearance by the one-party state allowed it to maintain a veneer of legitimacy. Dispensing with this facade, military regimes in

⁹ Jibrin Ibrahim, "The Political Debate and the Struggle for Democracy in Nigeria" in ROAPE, no.37, 1986, p.40.

¹⁰ Claude Ake, A Political Economy of Africa, (New York: Longman, 1981), p.180-182.

¹¹ Peter Anyang' Nyong'o, "Africa: The Failure of One-Party Rule" in Journal of Democracy, vol.3, no.1, January 1992, p.91.

post-colonial Africa have intensified depoliticization by the direct limitation of political space.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND DEMOCRACY DEBATE

From the mid-1960s when authoritarianism became prevalent in Africa, modernization analysts tended to be supportive of these regimes. In fact, some modernization theorists, as part of the debate on the relationship between democracy and economic development, argued that an authoritarian regime was a necessary and inevitable outgrowth of the process of development. Chief amongst these proponents was Samuel Huntington who argued, that in the state's attempt to meet developmental goals, it could not afford to be both stable and democratic.¹² In developing countries, an 'open door policy' towards contending social forces in the context of a scarcity of public resources would produce chronic political instability. Popular demands were viewed as unrealistic, being both atavistic (particularistic and tribal) and post-industrial (minimum wage and welfarist demands). In a political economy that was conceptualized as pre-industrial, a crystallization of these rising expectations, and attempts by the state to address popular demands were viewed as hostile

¹² Samuel Huntington, Political Order in Changing Societies, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), p.39-44. Similar arguments were advanced by D.E. Apter, The Politics of Modernization. (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1965), D.C. O'Brien, "Modernization, Order and the Erosion of a Democratic Ideal" in D. Lehmann ed., Development Theory, Four Critical Studies, (London: Frank Cass, 1979). In a recent articulation of the Huntingtonian position see Meddi Mugenyi, "Development First, Democracy Second" in Walter O. Oyugi, et al. eds., Democratic Theory and Practice in Africa, (London: James Currey, 1988).

to development.¹³ Instead, Huntington maintained that to ensure order in lieu of certain political decay, it was necessary to strengthen the state vis-a-vis civil society.¹⁴ It was incumbent on the state to depoliticize civil society by inhibiting the entrance of popular forces into politics, curtailing public dissent, and the expression of the mass media, reducing access to education, and also an outright suppression popular forces.¹⁵ While more subtle than Huntington, liberal analysts tended to reject even liberal democracy to the developmental imperatives of order, stability, efficiency, and growth.¹⁶

The liberal analysts' case for democratization of polity as antithetical to economic development was challenged by radical analysts in the 1960s and 1970s. While, *prima facie* evidence tended to support the concept of bureaucratic authoritarianism for some Asian and Latin America countries, this model in Africa led to increased corruption and consumption by fractions of the bourgeoisie, rather than increased savings, capital accumulation and economic growth and development. Shivji, writing on Tanzania argued that state

¹³ M. Mamdani, T. Mkandawire, E. Wamba-dia-Wamba, Social Movements, Social Transformation and The Struggle for Democracy in Africa, CODESRIA, Working Paper no.1, 1988, p.4.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.4.

¹⁵ Mamdani et al., Social Movements, p.38.

¹⁶ Bjorn Beckman, "Whose Democracy? Bourgeois versus Popular Democracy" in ROAPE, no.45/46, 1989.

bureaucracy grows, not in the interest of the state to use public resource rationally, but rather to facilitate the primitive accumulation of a bureaucratic bourgeoisie which uses the state for its own self-enrichment.¹⁷ Anyang Nyong'o supports this position arguing that, in practise, models of authoritarianism attempting to achieve high levels of growth and internal capital accumulation have alienated the national fraction of the bourgeoisie necessary to sustain this model.¹⁸ State socialist development experiments in Africa have also tended to submerge the imperative of democratization to that of development. It was argued that the redressing of conditions of dependency and underdevelopment required strong statist control. The attainment of rapid economic growth required the curtailment of individual and collective freedoms in the short-term in order for eventual material achievement in favour of popular classes.

Despite the material improvement anticipated by academic and policy subscribers of the ideology of developmentalism, the vulnerability of African countries to shocks in the global political economy was evident in late 1970s. Deepening socio-economic crisis in the 1980s made it abundantly clear that the promise of developmentalism from both left and right -- socialist and capitalist, both of which contended, that the

¹⁷ Shivji cited in Nyong'o, "Democratization Processes in Africa" in CODESRIA Bulletin, no. 2, 1991, p.3.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.3,4.

achievement of material development in African would be accomplished, if only the state was strengthened while autonomous or semi-autonomous organizations in civil society were suppressed and/or co-opted -- failed miserably.¹⁹ By the end of the 1980s as the Africa crisis deepened, democracy appeared to be a focal point of the debates on Africa's recovery and development. In the current conjuncture, the term civil society has become fashionable. Denoting the space between the public realm and the individual, civil society has become the 'new panacea' for the woes of underdevelopment. In the next section, a brief historical review of the liberal democratic theory and the classical Marxism on the concept of civil society is instructive as a basis to clarify some of the contemporary democracy and civil society debates, which I return to in the subsequent section.

SECTION TWO: LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC THEORY AND THE CLASSICS OF MARXISM ON THE CONCEPT OF CIVIL SOCIETY

While the term civil society can be traced to European classical and medieval thought, its current usage dates back to modern political thought of the 17th and 18th century. In contrast to its antecedent which conflated the state and civil

¹⁹ Michaela von Freyhold, "Labour Movements or Popular Struggles in Africa" in ROAPE, no.39, 1987, p.30.

society,²⁰ the major pre-occupation of liberal political thought in this period was the separation of private property from community property or the state. The distinction between the state and civil society occurred in a particular historical context. Inextricably linked to the emergence of the bourgeoisie and to imperatives of capitalist development, which required a pool of formal and free, but property-less labourers, the commodification of all factors of production, and the concentration of capital in the hands of the bourgeoisie, the concept of civil society was used by this class in its struggle to supplant monarchical and feudal institutions, while entrenching property relations in the civic sphere and also delimiting state power.

Liberal democratic discourse on the distinction between the state and civil society has three principle variants: *contract theorist*, *Hegelian*, and *associationalist*. Contract theorists are best represented by the work of Hobbes, Locke, and Paine. For Hobbes, the delineation between the state and civic realm is blurred. In order to escape the natural condition of violence, competition and confusion, a strong state is required to radically negate the vicissitudes of the

²⁰ John Keane, "Despotism and Democracy: The Origins and Development of the Distinction between Civil Society and the State, 1750-1850" in J Keane ed., Civil Society and the State, (London: Verso, 1988).

state of nature.²¹ Hobbes seems to enthrone the state with unlimited powers. Attributed to the contractual agreement in which individuals relinquish a certain degree of autonomy for the imperatives of order, peace and sociability, the state is thus viewed as legitimate. While Hobbes does not place absolute limits on the exercise of state power, and dispels any challenge to the improprieties of state, the use of state power must be exercised in accordance with natural laws, which protects individual life and private property.²²

In contrast, Locke challenges the unlimited powers accorded the state by Hobbes, and attempts to limit state prerogatives in favour of the civic realm. The state is not viewed as a mechanism to eradicate the state of nature, but rather the medium to rectify imperfect sociabilities.²³ The state and civil society for Locke must be subject to the rule of law. The state governs in trust, a contractual arrangement where state decrees require consent by the enfranchised (male property-owners). Civil society is devoid of conflict, as the natural inclination of individuals to live in larger collectivities and adhere to the laws of nature ensures the preservation of life and the respect for the private property

²¹ Norberto Bobbio, "Gramsci and the Concept of Civil Society" in J. Keane ed., Civil Society and the State (London: Verso 1988), p.74.

²² John Keane, Democracy and Civil Society, (London: Verso, 1988), p.38.

²³ Bobbio, "Gramsci", p.74.

of individuals. Similarly, Paine's conceptualization of civil society is devoid of conflict and antagonisms. Accorded with libertarian attributes and self-regulating capacities the civic realm requires minimal state intervention. Thus the state, is guided by the rule of law and active consent from civil society. Bound by a common interest in political stability, individual's establish amicable relations based on reciprocal self-interest and mutual aid.²⁴ The second variant of the state-civil society distinction is represented in the works of Hegel. Unlike Locke and Paine, he presents civil society as a long historical transformation and not a natural condition of freedom. Civil society, the sphere between the patriarchal family and the state, includes the economy, social classes, corporations and the institutions concerned with the functioning of the market and protection of its members.²⁵ Differing again from the aforementioned theorist, the civic terrain in Hegel is conflictual, a "restless battlefield where private (male) interest meets private (male) interest."²⁶ Unable to regulate its own conflicts, as argued by Paine, civil society for Hegel requires a state -- an incarnation of reason -- which represents the universal interest of the populace and intervenes in the civic realm to protect this

²⁴ Keane, Democracy and Civil Society, p.45.

²⁵ Edward Shils, "The Virtue of Civil Society" in Government and Opposition, vol.26, no.1, Winter 1991, p.5-6.

²⁶ Keane, "Despotism and Democracy", p.47.

interest which it defines.²⁷

This state-centred view of civil society is oppositional to the associationalist variant. Best articulated in the works of de Tocqueville, the delineation of state and civil society boundaries is not simply ensured by reciprocal contractual agreements (Locke, Paine) or a universalist state (Hegel). The democratic mechanisms to ensure accountability and formal rights are insufficient to prevent the advent of an elected despotic state. De Tocqueville, argues that the delimitation of state power requires a vibrant associational life which operates beyond the control of the state and its institutions. A civil society comprised of "scientific and literary circles, schools, publishers, inns, manufacturing enterprises, religious organizations, municipal associations are crucial bulwark against both political despotism and social unfreedoms and inequality."²⁸ This emphasis on the associational life in civil society, is the cornerstone of contemporary democratic discourses.

On the relationship between the state and civil society in classical Marxism, two variants derived from a critique of Hegel can be identified and are represented by Marx and Gramsci. The continuities and discontinuities in their texts have been the subject of considerable debate. While new revisionist interpretations view Gramscian civil society as

²⁷ Keane, "Despotism and Democracy", p.48.

²⁸ Keane, "Despotism and Democracy", p.61.

constituting a rupture with its antecedent, others on the Left, maintain the writings are consistent and merely a question of the author's emphasis.²⁹ The contradictory explanations of their works is attributed to conflicting analysis of the base/superstructure distinction, the corollary of which identifies the sphere that constitutes the 'motor' of social-economic and political change. The conclusions drawn from the competing interpretations is in part attributed to Marx's inconsistency on this question. In the preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, Marx argues that

in the social production of life, men enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will, relations of production which correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive forces. The sum total of these relations of production constitute the economic structure of society, the real foundation, of which rises a juridical and political superstructure and to which correspond determinate forms of social consciousness.³⁰

From the above it may be inferred that Marx posited a mechanistic causality between the base and superstructure in which the latter is determined by the economic structure. Therefore, it is argued that Marx reduced politics and ideas to economic phenomenon. However, it is clear that Marx was aware that the determination by the base could be interpreted as a form of economic reductionism. In his other texts, civil

²⁹ Marx focused on mode of production and property relations in capitalist societies (the material or economic base of civil society), while Gramsci emphasized the superstructure of civil society and the operation of hegemony.

³⁰ Karl Marx Preface to "A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy" in Robert Tucker ed., The Marx-Engels Reader, (New York: W.W. Norton, 1978), p.4.

society is not merely a passive manifestation of structural factors and forces, as human subjectivity is present as the motor of history and an active and creative element.³¹

In fact, Marx's concept of civil society rejects the universality of the Hegelian state, and the maintenance of liberal theorists distinction between the state and civil society. He argued that the state is not the embodiment of the people, as posited by Hegel, but rather it constitutes the class relations and particularities within civil society.³² In so stating, Marx viewed civil society, not the state (Hegel) as the real 'theatre of history'. Marx historicizes the distinction between the state and civil society in the transition from feudalism to capitalism which was a necessary pre-condition for the consolidation of capital accumulation. The separation of the two spheres, Marx argued, is more apparent than real. The demarcation facilitated the birth of civil liberties, but these liberties did not constitute freedom and human emancipation since inequalities based on property relations were solidified in civil society.³³ Therefore, the distinction between the state and civil society is ideological, serving to mask class inequalities. While

³¹ Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, "Socialist Strategy: Where Next?" in Marxist Today, 1981.

³² Meiksins Wood, "Abuses of 'Civil Society'", p.63.

³³ Blade Nzimande and Mpume Sikhosana, "Civil Society and Democracy" in The African Communist, The Journal of the South African Communist Party, 1st Quarter 1992. See Also "Civil Society and Democracy: A Rejoinder" in The African Communist, 3rd Quarter 1992.

civil society remains a contested terrain in capitalist economies, this realm is mainly in the service of the bourgeoisie. The critique of the autonomy which conventional thinking accorded the civic terrain, where people are unencumbered to pursue their own interests without hinderance, led him to explore the anatomy of civil society in political economy.³⁴ Critics of this conceptualization of civil society argue that Marx and Marxism erred when the civic terrain was reduced to the realm of commodity production. Marx failed to appreciate the complexities of the institutions and organizations in the civic realm. In so doing, Keane writes that "the importance of other institutions of civil society - such as households, churches, scientific and literary associations, prisons and hospitals - is devalued."³⁵ Such charges of reductionism and economic determinism has led to an reinvigorated interest in the work of Gramsci.

It is generally agreed by radical analysts that civil society in both Marx and Gramsci represents the active stage of historical development. However, revisionist interpretations posit that Marx's civil society is a structural phenomenon, conditioned and determined by the logic and contradictions in the capitalist mode of production. In contrast, Gramscian civil society is superstructural, the conditioning and active moment of history. From an often cited

³⁴ Nzimande and Sikhosana, "Civil Society and Democracy", p.4.

³⁵ Keane "Despotism and Democracy", p.32.

passage in Gramsci's *Prison Notebooks*;

What we can do, for the moment is to fix two major superstructural levels: the one that can be called civil society, that is the ensemble of organisms commonly called private and that of political society or the state. These two levels correspond on the one hand to the function of hegemony which the dominant group exercises throughout society and on the other hand to that of direct domination or rules exercised through the state and the judicial government.³⁶

analysts such as Keane, maintain that Gramsci interpreted civil society as only a superstructural phenomenon which was also independent of the state. Consistent with the age long attempt to delimit state power in liberal democratic discourse, revisionist interpretations argue that Gramsci on this point broke with Marx and economic reductionism. Does this mean that Gramscian civil society is devoid of class antagonism and struggles? Is Gramsci's work in the continuum of dualistic interpretations of the state and civil society, where the former is characterized as repressive and the latter autonomous, resilient and free?

On the first problematic, it would seem contradictory that Gramsci would view civil society as a theatre of historical development, yet devoid of the class relations fundamental in capitalist social formations. While civil society was not identified exclusively with the base, it is clear from his writings that its dynamics are in dialectical unity with the economic structure. Commenting on the relationship between the base and superstructure Gramsci

³⁶ Q. Hoare and G.N. Smith eds., Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci, (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1971), p.12.

notes:

1. that no society sets itself tasks for whose accomplishment the necessary and sufficient condition do not either already exist or are not at least beginning to emerge and develop; 2. that no society breaks down and can be replaced until it has first developed all the forms of life which are implicit in its internal relations...a crisis occurs, sometimes lasting for decades. This exceptional duration means that incurable structural contradictions have revealed themselves, and that, despite this, the political forces which are struggling to conserve and defend the existing structure itself are making every effort to cure them, within certain limits, and to overcome them. These incessant and persistent efforts form the terrain of the 'conjunctural', and it is upon this terrain that forces of opposition organize."

On this point Gramscian civil society is consistent with that of Marx. For both, the base is determining. But this does not suggest a passive superstructure, a mechanistic cause and effect relationship with the economic structure, for it is at the level of civil society where 'men and women become conscious of the conflict which emanate from the economic structure and fight it out.'

On the second problematic, it would appear at first glance that Gramsci maintains an abstract duality between the state and civil society. The state characterized as repressive is juxtaposed by an autonomous and libertarian civil society. It is, however, clear that for Gramsci the distinction is not organic but methodological in order to facilitate the analysis of hegemony in capitalist social formations. Hegemony, in the Gramscian sense refers to the forms of social regulation, which include both coercion and consent. While the state has a monopoly on the means of coercion, the use of force to

³⁷ Hoare and Smith eds., Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci, p.177-178.

reproduce the dominant classes', hegemony is inherently tenuous. Thus ruling fractions opt for hegemony by consent, 'moral and intellectual leadership' such that the state and dominant classes disseminate their world view through social institutions of civil society in an attempt to persuade the subordinate classes that their values and norms are legitimate. This internalization by subordinate classes represents a more sophisticated version of the maintenance of the existing social order. However, a weaker yet equally effective method of retaining ruling class hegemony delegitimizes the viability of visions and social project contrary to the status quo and the capacity of subordinate classes to achieve such an alternative order, by arguing that in spite of perceived injustice in the existing order, no other alternative exists.³⁸ Hegemony by consent is further consolidated by ruling class concessions to popular struggle for material needs. However, the disjuncture which exists between the pronouncements of dominant classes and that of the concrete realities, provides opportunities for counter-hegemonic struggles by both fractions of the bourgeoisie and non-bourgeois forces.

The relevance of this brief historical review of the concept of civil society to the contemporary democratic discourse in Africa and for peripheral capitalist social

³⁸ Ralph Miliband, "Counter-Hegemonic Struggles" in Miliband et al., Socialist Register 1990, (London: Merlin Press, 1990).

formations in the Third World is this: First, it has highlighted the consistent theme in liberal democratic theory in which democratic consolidation requires the delimiting of state power not only with a formal constitutional arrangement but more importantly, through the establishment and maintenance of the autonomy of the civic realm as a buffer against state encroachment. While it might have been a central tenet of liberal democratic thought from Locke to de Tocqueville to curb the domination of despotic states, the distinction between the state and civil society was an imperative of capitalist development and its need to remove the state from the marketplace. Secondly, it illuminates the Marxist critique of the state-civil society distinction and the continuities in the writings of Marx and Gramsci, which are both emphatic on the dialectical unity of the base and superstructure and -- within the latter -- the interconnectedness of the state and civil society. In both liberal and radical debates on democracy in Africa today, there seems to be a convergence on the importance of delimiting state power through the strengthening of civil society and establishment of liberal democracy. This, it is argued by a wide spectrum of intellectuals and policy-makers, is a necessary pre-condition for recovery and development in Africa. However, the democratic project has often been presented simplistically, anchored uncritically on an autonomous civil society, celebrated with romantic democratic

and libertarian attributes.

SECTION THREE: CONTEMPORARY DEBATES ON CIVIL SOCIETY AND DEMOCRACY IN AFRICA

DEVELOPMENT AND DEMOCRACY

In the continuum of the earlier developmentalist debates, within the African Left, the exchange primarily between Peter Anyang Nyong'o and Thandika Mkandawire, with contributions from Bangura, Beckman, Gutto and Shivji, surrounds the question of the relationship between democracy and development.³⁹ In his catalyzing article, *Political Instability and Prospects for Democracy in Africa*, Anyang Nyong'o provides a critique of the misplaced optimism of modernization theory, which lent theoretical support to non-democratic regimes in Africa. He evaluates the development record of authoritarian and democratic regimes and argues that "at the centre of the failure of African states to chart viable paths for development (or industrialization) is the

³⁹ For the debates on the relationship between democracy and developments, see various issues of CODESRIA Bulletin, also Peter Anyang' Nyong'o, "Political Instability and Prospects for Democracy in Africa" in Africa Development, vol.XIII, no.1, 1988. T. Mkandawire, "Comments on Democracy and Political Instability" in Africa Development, vol.XIII, no.3, 1988. Anyang' Nyong'o, "A Rejoinder to the Comments on Democracy and Political Instability" in Africa Development, vol. XIII, no.3, 1988. Peter Anyang' Nyong'o, "Democratization Processes in Africa" in CODESRIA Bulletin, no.2. 1991. T. Mkandawire, "Further Comments on the 'Development and Democracy Debate" in CODESRIA Bulletin, no. 2, 1991. Anyang' Nyong'o, "'Development and Democracy': The Debate Continues, CODESRIA Bulletin, no.2, 1991. Contributions to the debates from Shadrack B.O. Gutto, "Social Revolution - The Preconditions for Sustainable Development and Peoples Democracies in Africa: A Contribution to the Anyang' Nyong'o/Mkandawire Debate" in Africa Development, vol.XIII, no.4, 1988, Bjorn Beckman, "Whose Democracy? Bourgeois versus Popular Democracy" in ROAPE, no. 45/46, 1989. Issa Shivji, "The Democracy Debate in Africa: Tanzania, ROAPE, no.50, 1991. and Yusef Bangura, *Authoritarian Rule and Democracy in Africa: A Theoretical Discourse*, (Geneva: UNRISD, 1991).

issue of the lack of accountability, hence of democracy as well."⁴⁰ Anyang' Nyong'o posits instead a "developmental democracy" as a more viable route for Africa. Mkandawire, takes exception with this instrumentalist and developmentalist view of democracy. He states:

...the question of democracy in Africa must be raised in its own right. Democracy should be on the agenda, not because of its instrumental, developmental impact, but because it is the recognition of the legitimate rights of the African people to democratically map the destinies of their countries, to determine the rates and types of development they want. It should be an objective of value in itself. It alone should provide the set of values against which to assess policies and economic performance and should not merely be judged by its facilitation of development policies and economic performance. If democracy can also accelerate accumulation so much the better, but that should not be its fundamental premise.⁴¹

Recognizing Anyang' Nyong'o's narrow definition of development, based simply on growth rates and models of accumulation, his critics challenge his study on empirical grounds, particularly the dubious nature of his correlations between participatory political systems (Kenya, Cote d'Ivoire, Malawi) and high growth rates and non-participatory political systems (Sudan, Zaire) and lower levels of economic growth. For Mkandawire and Gutto, this correlation is taken erroneously to infer causality. Furthermore, critics argue that Anyang' Nyong'o's comparative study is advanced in abstraction from social, economic and political factors that affect the growth rates and models of accumulation. Thus it is deemed politically dangerous, as these correlations can be

⁴⁰ Anyang' Nyong'o, "Political Instability" p.71,72.

⁴¹ Mkandawire, "Comments on Democracy", p.82.

used to legitimize authoritarian regimes.

While many radical democrats accept this critique of Anyang Nyong'o's 'developmental democracy', Mkandawire's position that 'democracy is good in and of itself' has also been widely criticized. Bangura and Shivji reject his presentation of democracy as an absolute moral and political value divorced from its historical context and social forces.⁴² Beckman supports this perspective when he emphatically asks 'Whose Democracy?'.⁴³ To be sure, Anyang' Nyong'o maintains that "we cannot just struggle for democracy because it is good in and of itself; Africans need to convince ourselves that it will lead to development"⁴⁴; he is cognizant of the historical context and social character of the question of democracy in Africa. Alarmed at the state of the debate among African scholars, which fails to maintain popular democratic approaches, Issa Shivji warns that democratic discourses are "*threatening to become an unabashed celebration of liberalism*"⁴⁵.

LIBERAL VS. POPULAR DEMOCRACY

Illuminating the pitfalls of the current debates in

⁴² Shivji, "The Democracy Debate", p.82.

⁴³ Beckman, "Whose Democracy", p.92.

⁴⁴ Anyang' Nyong'o "Development and Democracy", p.12. See also Anyang' Nyong'o ed., Popular Struggles for Democracy in Africa, (London: Zed Books, 1987).

⁴⁵ Shivji, "The Democracy Debate", p.80.

Africa, Shivji cautions against framing the question of democracy around individualism and the political framework of liberal democracy, rather than equality and the anti-imperialist and the anti-state compradorialist struggles of the majority of the people. To pose the question of democracy in an instrumentalist fashion (Anyang Nyong'o) or an abstract moral position (Mkandawire), he further notes, reproduces the liberal ideology of domination and minimizes the struggle of popular forces, in which democracy in the current historical context is also an ideology of resistance to decades of neo-colonial rule.

Jibrin Ibrahim's polemic, *History as Iconoclast: Left Stardom and the Debate on Democracy*⁴⁶, repudiates Shivji and rejects the long held view among African radical democrats in which liberal democracy has been perceived as something to be fought against at all cost. Indicative of the theoretical reflections on the Left in general, in the wake of the collapse of socialist regimes in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, Ibrahim maintains that sections of the African Left, particular its 'icons' (Ake, Amin, Mafeje, Shivji and Wamba-dia-Wamba), devalue civil liberties, political pluralism and the delimitation of state power, as they continue to wage their 'anti-liberal democracy war'. Subsequently, when mass

⁴⁶ Jibrin Ibrahim, "History as Iconoclast: Left Stardom and the Debate on Democracy" in CODESRIA Bulletin, no.1, 1993. Archie Mafeje, "On "Icons" and African Perspectives on Democracy: A Commentary on Jibrin Ibrahim's Views" in CODESRIA Bulletin, no.2, 1993. Samir Amin, "History as Iconoclast: A Short Comment" in CODESRIA Bulletin, no.2, 1993. Jibrin Ibrahim, "History as Iconoclast: A Rejoinder" in CODESRIA Bulletin, no.2. 1993.

social movements in Africa are waging a progressive struggle for multiparties, freedom of the press and association, and the rule of law, etc, African radical intellectuals sideline themselves because of their continued perception of political pluralism as bourgeois and elitist simply because of its historical association with capitalism.⁴⁷ This historical association, it is maintained, is in part fallacious since liberal democracy was not merely the historical product of the struggle between the nascent bourgeoisie and feudal landlords. Rather, its full consolidation was precipitated by the struggles of working people and their socialist and Marxist allies. Likewise, the extension of the franchise was intimately linked to the struggle for social democratic rights.⁴⁸

It is further asserted that the subordination of civil liberties and political pluralist by erstwhile regimes, whether 'Marxist-Leninist', 'socialist', 'peoples' or 'popular' democracies, to the statist pursuit, albeit for the general welfare of the popular classes, not only failed to improve the material standards of people, but in the process led to massive repression and the violation of human and democratic rights. Therefore, the collapse of these various

⁴⁷ Ibrahim, "Left Stardom". see also Daryl Glaser, "Liberating 'Liberal' Freedoms" in Work in Progress, no.61, 1989, p.10.

⁴⁸ Ken Post, "The State, Civil Society, and Democracy in Africa: Some Theoretical Issues" in Robin Cohen and Harry Goulbourne eds., Democracy and Socialism in Africa, (Boulder: Westview, 1991) p.42.

regimes should be enough to validate liberal democracy as a superior alternative to any of the aforementioned statist models, in spite of its shortcomings.⁴⁹ Thus the current struggle for liberal democracy and its historically associated freedoms is crucial for the expansion of the democratic space and a necessary progression in the struggle for any alternative social project.⁵⁰ While a liberal democratic political framework is deemed to facilitate the expansion of democratic space, its consolidation requires the strengthening of associations in civil society.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND DEMOCRACY

The current revival of the concept of civil society has apparently impressed upon the Left the dangers of state oppression, which have always been central to liberal democratic discourses. With this convergence in liberal and radical discourses on the importance of the autonomy of the civic realm, it has become difficult to identify schools of thought associated with a particular civil society perspective within genres. It remains a contested concept and some inter-related common themes are listed below. Within these conceptualizations of civil society, I am primarily concerned with their relationship to democracy:

⁴⁹ Ibrahim, "Left Stardom", see also Mkandawire, "Further Comments" and Anyang' Nyong'o, "Development and Democracy".

⁵⁰ Beckman, "Whose Democracy?" see also Gutto, "Social Revolution", Ibrahim, "Left Stardom".

1. Civil society -- The neo-liberal idea of private property unenumbered by the state.
2. Civil society -- The idea of building and strengthening 'voices' at the grassroots level.
3. Civil society -- The notion of 'watchdog' checking the abuses of the state and entrenching accountability.

The civic terrain in general delineates the arena of free association, between the state and the individual, in which a plurality of voluntary associations independent from the state pursue their interests. For neo-liberal analysts the hallmark of civil society is the market unhindered by the state. Larry Diamond, co-editor of the four volume study, Democracy in Developing Countries, funded by the U.S. Congress sponsored National Endowment for Democracy, argues that the movement away from 30 years of statist economic policies in Africa, by the adoption of free market reforms, bodes well for democracy.⁵¹ While the autonomy of private business associations and institutions of capital are the predominant features of the civic realm, these analysts also emphasize the vibrancy of associational life, which includes a wide range of organizations independent of the state. Commenting further on the process of economic and political reform in Africa Diamond claims that restructuring state-civil society relations will,

...most likely...come from below, outside the decrepit, authoritarian state, in civil society. Civil society is a crucially important factor at every stage of democratization. The greater the number, size, autonomy, resourcefulness, variety and democratic orientation of popular organizations in civil

⁵¹ Larry Diamond, "Roots of Failure, Seeds of Hope" in Larry Diamond, Juan Linz and Seymour Martin Lipset eds., Democracy in Developing Countries: Africa, (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1988), p.27.

society, the greater will be the prospects for some kind of movement from rigid authoritarianism, and for subsequent movement towards semi-democracy and democracy.⁵²

Therefore, Diamond assumed that the greater the autonomy and diversity of organizations in civil society the wider the democratic content of the polity. Democratic consolidation then requires a minimalist state which ensures the plurality of civil society and safeguards its liberties and is buttressed by an independent judiciary and mass media.⁵³

The second major theme highlighted in the civil society discourse posits that civil society requires a strengthening of the grassroots. This perspective emphasizes both civil society in opposition to a centralized state⁵⁴ and/or employs a 'straddling' concept to denote an 'engagement' and 'disengagement' movement between the state and civil society.⁵⁵ The central focus of the latter perspective is the survival strategies of ordinary people in civil society and the manner in which the crisis, structural adjustment and informalization change economic and political circumstances. Despite the crisis of the state and economy, informality

⁵² Larry Diamond, "Beyond Autocracy: Prospects for Democracy in Africa" in Beyond Autocracy in Africa, (Atlanta: Carter Centre, Emory University, 1989), p.25.

⁵³ Shils, "Virtues", p.9.

⁵⁴ Jean-Francois Bayart, "Civil Society in Africa" in Patrick Chabal ed., Political Domination in Africa, (Cambridge: Cambridge Press, 1986).

⁵⁵ Victor Azarya, "Reordering State-Society Relations: Incorporation and Disengagement" in Donald Rothchild and Naomi Chazan eds., The Precarious Balance: State and Society in Africa, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1988). see also Michael Bratton, "Beyond the State: Civil Society and Associational Life in Africa in World Politics, vol.XLI, no.3, 1989.

theorists maintain that ordinary people are challenging the seemingly insurmountable obstacles of daily survival. They further argue, that by taking matters into their own hands and organizing an unofficial economy and similar institutions, they compensate for the failures of the formal economy and attempt to evade the repressive and predatory character of the state.⁵⁶ These activities encompass a wide array of areas including, transportation, housing, production of goods and services, education and medical care. Placing emphasis on the decentralization of economic activities and the vitality of informal forms of production and participation at the grassroots levels, such analyses maintain that the alternative institutions and patterns of interaction, separate from those that have developed in the formal arena,⁵⁷ are restructuring state-society relations in a manner conducive to democratic renewal and consolidation. Whether conceptualized in opposition to the state and/or through the 'corrective' notion of 'straddling', this perspective asserts that the establishment and control of 'small collectives' by rural and urban groups, -- the reconstitution of democracy in smaller

⁵⁶ Janet MacGaffey, "Initiatives from Below: Zaire's Other Path to Social and Economic Restructuring" in Goran Hyden and Michael Bratton, eds., Governance and Politics in Africa, (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1992), see also Hernando de Soto, The Other Path: The Invisible Revolution in the Third World, (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, in collaboration with the Instituto Libertad y Democracia, 1989).

⁵⁷ Naomi Chazan, "Ghana: Problems of Governance and the Emergence of Civil Society" in Larry Diamond, Juan Linz and Seymour Martin Lipset eds., Democracy in Developing Countries: Africa, (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1988).

units -- are expressions of the democratic impetus in Africa.⁵⁸

In Left debates, in the social democratic middle ground, decentralization, particularly the empowerment of local communities is deemed to increase popular participation. Civil society is comprised of "ordinary everyday citizens, who do not control the levers of political and economic power, have access to locally-constituted voluntary associations...in a word civil society is about building 'voices' at grassroots levels."⁵⁹ This devolution to local governments, it is postulated, enables the consolidation of democracy from below. Relatedly, the third theme, the so-called 'watchdog function' of civil society is the bedrock for democratic renewal and consolidation shared by both liberal and radical analysts. The renewed concern for the autonomy of civil society emphasizes the quintessential liberal democratic concern on the need to place limits on state power. Consequently, the strengthening of associational movements in the civic realm is critical to preventing state encroachment and is a precondition for democratic consolidation. This anti-statism has also permeated radical discourses. The intense debate in South Africa on the

⁵⁸ Naomi Chazan, "Patterns of State-Society Incorporation and Disengagement in Africa" in Donald Rothchild and Naomi Chazan eds., The Precarious Balance: State and Society in Africa, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1988). See also Naomi Chazan, "Liberalization, Governance, and Political Space in Ghana" in Goran Hyden and Michael Bratton, eds., Governance and Politics in Africa, (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1992).

⁵⁹ Mark Swilling, "Socialism, Democracy and Civil Society: The Case of Associational Socialism" in Work in Progress, no.76, 1991, p.22.

relationship between civil society and democracy, since the early 1990s -- with the lifting of the ban on mass organizations (ANC, PAC, the SACP, etc), the lifting of the state of emergency, and opening of the constitutional process (CODESA) en route to non-racial multiparty elections -- is indicative of this current. The importance of safeguarding the independence and autonomy of civil society in a post-apartheid South Africa, has become an orthodoxy within the ANC and the Democratic Movement⁶⁰. Social movements in civil society which were crucial to liberation politics during the 1980s, are now simply tools to ensure good government and accountability in a democratic South Africa.

In the 1980s, hundreds of civic, cultural, youth, women's and other types of community associations, coalesced under the umbrella of the United Democratic Front (UDF), organizing around concrete social issues in the workplace, universities, schools, and conditions of housing and rents.⁶¹ Civil society for the Liberation Movement was the Gramscian terrain in which to build the hegemony of the UDF/ANC for the seizure of state power. The pressure generated by these social movements in addition to international factors, precipitated the dramatic changes in South Africa that hastened the setting of non-

⁶⁰ Steven Friedman, "An Unlikely Utopia: State and Civil Society in South Africa" in Politikon: South African Journal of Political Studies, vol.19, no.1, December 1991.

⁶¹ Zenebeworke Tadesse, "Summary Report of the Conference on Democratization Processes in Africa: Problems and Prospects in CODESRIA Bulletin, no.1/2, 1993.

racial elections of April 1994. Since February 1990, the ANC has been committed to the 'independence of civil society',⁶² and has begun to disengage from social movements. In order to guarantee democracy in a post-apartheid South Africa, Fitzpatrick and others argue that civil society must be "capable of levying irreverent criticism on whatever pretensions the new state may assume."⁶³ To check state encroachment and to function as an effective 'watchdog', civil society must be both independent of the state and political parties.⁶⁴

The civil society discourses and the democracy problematic are fraught with a number of weaknesses. First, there is a tendency to counterpose the state with civil society, assumed since the post-colonial state in Africa has proven inefficient, bloated, corrupt, authoritarian and unable to perform basic developmental tasks. However, to juxtapose an authoritarian state with an unproblematic civil society characterized as democratic, libertarian, the arena of choice and voluntary action, contributes to the inaccurate identification of power solely with the state and presents civil society as devoid of exploitation and domination on the

⁶² Mark Swilling, "Political Transition, Development and the Role of Civil Society" in African Insight, vol.20, no.3, 1990, p.156.

⁶³ Patrick Fitzgerald, "Democracy and the Concept of Civil Society: A Response to Daryl Glaser" in Review of African Political Economy, no.49, 1990, p.105.

⁶⁴ Shilling, "Role of Civil Society". see also Tim Shaw, "Civil Society, the State and African Development in the 1990s: NGOs under SAP conditionalities", mimeo: Dalhousie University, 1993.

basis of class, gender, ethnicity etc. To ignore that the state in capitalist social formations are political expressions of relations in civil society leads to the presentation of the civic realm in an undifferentiated manner. This leads to the talk of strengthening civic terrain without recognizing internal differentiation. It presents civil society as homogenous and assumes that civic associations, NGOs and social movements are united in the same democratic social project. It fails to question the democratic character of civil society, what interests are represented, how they relate to the state, their strengths and weaknesses, and thus the viability of democratic renewal.

Secondly, some analysts have included or excluded from civil society institutions or activities which do not conform to their particular social project. Swilling for instance argues that civil society is devoid of "profit-driven shareholder-owned enterprises, and the industrial-commercial sector,"⁶⁵ while Mayekiso, in a similar vein, talks of a 'working class civil society' composed of trade unions, women and youth groups, civic association, in contrast to a 'bourgeois civil society' comprised of chambers of businesses, and other institutions of capital.⁶⁶ However, capitalist

⁶⁵ Mark Swilling, "Socialism, Democracy and Civil Society: the Case of Associational Socialism" in Work in Progress, no.76, July/August 1991, p.21,22.

⁶⁶ Mzwanele Mayekiso, "Working Class Civil Society" in The African Communist, 3rd Quarter 1992, p.33.

institutions are part of civil society and cannot be simply analyzed away. Further, to present a dual civic realm assumes *a priori* homogeneity of interests in the respective spheres. Civil society is a realm of multiple social groupings, institutions, and struggles. Similarly, some neo-liberal analysts and policy-makers have a proclivity towards defining out of civil society actors and institutions unsupportive of market reforms, while including those assumed sympathetic to its social project. The World Bank, for example seems to view the civic terrain as comprised of actor and activities primarily in the non-wage economy, while those attached to the formal economy are seen as an adjunct to the parasitic state. In fact, civil society includes transnational corporations, chambers of commerce, trade unions, civil liberties organizations, student's and women's movements, ecological associations, political parties, the institutions of education and the media, the marketplace and is the arena of hegemonic, ideological and resistance struggles.⁶⁷

Third, there has been a proclivity to speak of the democratic project as solely the task of building the autonomy of social movement capable of playing a watchdog function devoid of any questions of state power. Maintaining autonomy from the state and political parties, enables these organizations to push for positive social change from below

⁶⁷ Monty Narsoo, "Civil Society - A Contested Terrain" in Work in Progress, no.76, July 1991, p.24-26.

while enhancing the prospect of democratic consolidation.⁶⁸ However, in calling for the autonomy of civil society, the state as a contested terrain has been abandoned to the inefficient and inept ruling class decried by both liberal and radical analysts. With this primary focus on the autonomy of social movements there is a tendency, particularly on the Left, to neglect the issue of political mediation, which in pluralist democracies means political parties are the principle means of channelling the interests in civil society to the state level. This may be attributable to the difficulty in reconciling the critique of the one-party state without celebrating Western multipartyism, the limitations of which are well known.⁶⁹ Lessons from Africa's 'first' democratic experience, -- the period of decolonization -- in which multiparties were formed in the struggles for national independence, reinforces the need to be critical of multiparty politics. The emergence of political parties, while hastening decolonization, domesticated the mass social movement which precipitated the colonial reforms. Political parties which were narrowly accountable to social movements, enabled the petty-bourgeois leadership of the nationalist movements --

⁶⁸ Blade Nzimande and Mpume Sikhosana, *Civics are part of the National Democratic Revolution in Mayibuye*, Journal of the African National Congress, June 1991, p.37.

⁶⁹ The limitations of multiparties are familiar and include the; 1. activities of isolated individual's and parties displace social classes as agents of politics; 2. the statification of political parties and consequent relegation of popular participation in public realm, and; 3. under representation of the subaltern classes in the formal political system

aspiring to preside over the independent state -- to 'delink' from its social base, leading to the creation of one-party and no-party states. While there is some debate as to whether political parties were a creation of social movements or colonial powers, generally multipartyism was both a vehicle for decolonization and, ideologically and institutionally, a manipulative tool of the colonial powers used to reproduce Western domination and exploitation. Betrayal of the African majority by the petty bourgeois leadership, however, does not diminish the importance of political parties. Social movements are multi-class and are always vying for hegemony within the movement. They can be reformist or radical and when they act politically they split into multiparties, and attempt to shape society in a manner consistent with their own class interest.⁷⁰

Contemporary African experiences further expose the limits of narrow multipartyism. The state-imposed political parties in Nigeria (now defunct), at one extreme, and the proliferation of political parties in Zaire -- 258 at last count of political parties -- at the other, makes a mockery of political parties. Any serious analysis of the democratic struggles in Africa must be critical of the narrow multipartyism now promoted by the West, after decades of

⁷⁰ Nzimande and Sikhosana, "A Rejoinder".

"indifference to the fate of democracy on the continent."⁷¹ In the current historical conjuncture, multiparties seem to be more conducive to the creation of an 'enabling environment' for the continuation of the structural adjustment project. Similarly, the class character of pro-democracy movements must also be critically examined. For the petty bourgeois leadership, this process may be more a strategy for power and privilege, than a commitment to democratization.⁷² Nevertheless, a concentration on the autonomy of the civic realm to the detriment of political mediation, disarms popular forces from having their interest articulated in the formal systems, thus inhibiting the democratization of both political parties and institutions. While I agree with the need for popular organizations to avoid colonization, co-optation and manipulation by the state and political parties, neglect of novel ways of linking the state to civil society prevents popular forces from shaping the political and socio-economic landscape and leads to what Robert Fine rightfully calls, 'anti-politics'⁷³ -- leaving politics as the preserve of a tiny minority of the population.

In this respect, Wamba-dia-Wamba's inquiry into an

⁷¹ Claude Ake, "Rethinking African Democracy" in Journal of Democracy, vol.2, no.1, 1991, p.32.

⁷² Claude Ake, "The Unique case of African Democracy" in International Affairs, vol.69, no.4, April 1993, p.239.

⁷³ Robert Fine, "Civil Society Theory and the Politics of Transition in South Africa" in ROAPE, no.55, 1992.

alternative mode of politics is insightful. From a critique of the historical modes of politics (ie. parliamentary and single vanguard Party based politics) which have reduced politics to the domain of the state, he examines the *Mbongi* and *Palaver*⁷⁴ as democratic institutions rooted in African tradition, and argues for their reactivation and extension as mechanisms for emancipative politics. Furthermore, the national conference, which has characterized democratic transitions in some Francophone African countries, is an innovative form of direct democracy which mobilizes broad sectors of civil society and links local discussions to conference debates. For Wamba-dia-Wamba, this represents a 'site' for alternative emancipative politics.⁷⁵ Certainly, these constitute unique institutional forms of popular politics, which do not romanticize African traditions and cultures as Ibrahim suggests,⁷⁶ but attempt to incorporate positive elements of African traditions into the democratic project. Clearly, a sustainable democracy must be rooted in those positive aspects of African traditions, yet this should not eliminate the need for political parties in any democratic country, as suggested by Wamba-dia-Wamba. Political parties must be an indispensable part of any

⁷⁴ The *Mbongi* and *Palaver* are pre-colonial forms of organizations, which mediated issues and differences between women, youth, adults and elderly and foster consensus and planned programs of action when necessary.

⁷⁵ Ernest Wamba-dia-Wamba, *Beyond Elite Politics of Democracy in Africa*, in *Quest*, African Journal of Philosophy, vol.1, no.1, June 1992.

⁷⁶ Ibrahim, "Left Stardom".

meaningful democratization. In spite of the unequal nature of organizations in civil society and the need to defend the autonomy of the civic terrain, some mechanism is required to mediate and articulate the particular interests of social groups at the state level and to transmit these ideas to the people. Political parties for all their limitations will continue to be a form of mediation between the state and civil society in Africa. The question then remains, will the state and political parties be the preserve of factions of the dominant classes, or will they be democratized from below?

In illuminating some of the limitations of the current civil society discourses, it has not been my intention to downplay the importance of the issue. Three decades of one-party or no-party states which conflate the state and civil society and deny civil and political rights in the name of 'national unity' and economic development have failed miserably. Democratic renewal and development in Africa cannot be sustained without popular participation, empowerment and a strong civil society; it is also an indispensable part of any alternative social project. Undoubtedly, liberal democracy in Africa would be a vast improvement to the dictatorships that have dominated the African political landscape over the last three decades. It certainly would be a monumental achievement to institutionalize civil liberties, the rule of law and principles of representative government, if only to force the ruling classes to respect human life and civil liberties.

Nonetheless, it is erroneous to equate liberal democracy with the maximization of the voluntary activity of civic association. This is the principle problem I have attempted to highlight. While it is crucial to increase the capacity in Africa to limit state oppression, we must not forget the unequal relations in civil society. The autonomy of civil society, and its diversity of organizations, may bode well for delimiting state power but do not necessarily of themselves alter the balance of power to the popular classes. Liberal democracy constitutes a limited form of democracy. The separation of the political and judicial spheres from the social and economic realms, while facilitating civil liberties and democratic rights, disguises the inequalities and relations of domination and exploitation in civil society. It is insufficient for Ibrahim, and others who call for the expansion of the democratic space, to downplay this association by arguing on the comparative record between socialist and liberal democracies. Eastern Europe's socialist failures do not dispose of the socio-economic problems of peripheral capitalism nor negate the limitations of liberal democracy. An autonomous and strengthened civil society with a liberal political framework may bode well for the democratization of the state, but it is not required of the civic terrain. As recent experience of liberal democracy in developed capitalist countries confirms, the political freedom and social democratic gains extended in an earlier period are

by no means irreversible.

The struggle for democracy while currently manifest in the calls for freedom of speech and association, a free press, the right to vote, and the rule of law, etc., is as much a fight for a means of livelihood, freedom from poverty and disease, the right to a properly utilized environment and freedom from conditions of underdevelopment. Such a critique of the limits of liberal democracy is by no means an apologia for dictatorship as Mkandawire would suggest nor does it devalue civil liberties. It makes the distinction between the principles of democracy and its institutional manifestations, which are not automatically safeguarded by Western liberal democracy. The critical question is how popular forces in Africa can play a role both inside and outside the state in order to have an impact in the decision-making that effects their daily lives. The challenge is how to build sustainable democratic institutions which insure widespread popular participation and political accountability, and still maintain the autonomy of civil society. The proliferation of NGOs which are widely deemed as expressions of the vitality of civil society and agents of democratization are increasingly highlighted as crucial mechanisms of mediation, linking popular movements and political institutions.

SECTION FOUR: NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS, CIVIL SOCIETY AND DEMOCRATIZATION IN AFRICA

As mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, NGOs have gained unprecedented visibility in the current processes

of political and socio-economic change. Integral in the process of decolonization, the activities of modern NGOs in the form of ethnic welfare groups, professional associations, separatist churches were first highlighted in their role in nationalist movements of the 1940s and 1950s.⁷⁷ In the post-colonial period the numbers and activities of NGOs have vastly increased. From an exclusive focus on relief and refugee work in the 1960s, the activities of NGOs have expanded to include such diverse developmental areas as primary health care, agriculture, non-formal education, rural and community development training, and women and environmental issues.⁷⁸

With the crisis of the 1980s, the retreat of the state -- precipitated also by adjustment demands for deregulation, desubsidization, privatization, and the imposition of user fees -- has stripped the poor of social amenities and forced the majority of the people to find creative ways to survive the deepening crisis. In this period, NGOs have become crucial in mitigating deteriorating social conditions. Increasingly dissatisfied with the hegemonic neo-liberal development project, NGOs have also expanded their operations to include advocacy work. In addition to conducting development education programmes and campaigning and lobbying governments in their

⁷⁷ Michael Bratton, "The Politics of Government-NGO Relations in Africa" in World Development, vol.17, no.4, 1989, p.571.

⁷⁸ U.N. Non-Governmental Liaison Service, Non-Governmental Organizations and Sub-Saharan Africa, (Geneva: United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service, 1988).

home countries, NGOs have become vocal in international forums. The establishment of various consortia provides a crucial network to facilitate NGO co-operation and an important mechanism to influence policy debates on international development. The formation in 1987 of the Senegal (Dakar) based, Forum of African Voluntary Development Organization (FAVDO) -- a major umbrella organization for African NGOs -- has been a significant mechanism in coordinating and articulating African positions.

At the final review of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Recovery and Development (UNPAAERD) held in September 1991, -- a five year development program adopted in 1986 -- the NGO committee of UNPAAERD was highly critical. Comprised of over a 100 NGOs and NGO networks globally, the committee condemned the World Bank and IMF-guided structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) for their negative repercussions on Africa's development. Highlighting the undemocratic process of its imposition and the effects of its policy prescriptions on popular empowerment and participation, the committee argued that;

SAPs, as they have been implemented, have diminished the role of the African people in charting their own future, something which is integral to the whole notion of popular participation. These programmes are contradictory to popular participation, are diminishing the freedom of African people and subjugating them to destitution.⁷⁹

⁷⁹ NGO Committee on UNPAAERD, Statement to the Ad-Hoc Committee of the Whole on the Final Review and Appraisal of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development, Delivered by Mr. Charles Karemano on Behalf of the NGO Committee on UNPAAERD, September 1991, p.22.

Beyond the condemnation of SAPs, the committee made strong recommendations which at the centrepiece called on NGOs and the international community to support African alternatives to the crisis. The committee particularly implored the international community to support the African Charter for Popular Participation, a human centred development programme which was adopted in early 1990 at the International Conference on Popular Participation in Africa, held in Arusha Tanzania.⁸⁰ International NGOs (INGOs) have been increasingly commended for their support of African alternatives to the crisis and their advocacy of these positions in global forums. The expansion of NGO activities has led many analysts to label the 1980s the 'development decade of non-governmental organizations.'⁸¹

The growth of NGOs can be directly attributable to the tremendous increase in their funding during the 1980s. A policy shift by bilateral donors in favour of funding channelled through NGOs has significantly increased their resources and leading to the expansion of this sector.⁸² Regarding their growth in size and operations, various reasons

⁸⁰ Both the 1989, African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment Programmes for Socio-Economic Recovery and Transformation (AAF-SAP) and the 1990, African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation adopted by the Economic Commission for Africa will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

⁸¹ Bratton, "Government-NGO Relations". Alan Fowler, Non-Governmental Organizations in Africa: Achieving Comparative Advantage in Relief and Micro-Development, Institute of Development Studies: Discussion Paper, no.24, 1989.

⁸² Alan Fowler, Distant Obligations: Speculation on NGO Funding and the Global Market in ROAPE, no.55, 1992, p.15.

have been cited in the literature on the importance of NGOs.

They include:

- 1) disillusionment with the dictatorial and predatory African state and with statecentric analysis of Africa's political economy, has led to a focus on NGOs, as an important part of the non-state sector which may provide solution to the political and socio-economic crisis,
- 2) NGO have a comparative advantage over governments in facilitating micro-development,
- 3) NGOs, are a strong manifestation of the vitality of the civic terrain, which encourage direct democracy at the grassroots, and have played a significant role in the current struggles for multiparty democracy. NGOs thus facilitate stable forms of state-civil society relations,
- 4) its autonomy from the state enables NGOs to facilitate the pluralization of the institutional environment, encouraging participation and promoting democracy.
- 5) NGOs encourage the autonomy of civil society and must play a 'watchdog function' to keep the state accountable,
- 6) given the popular responses against the adjustment exercise, NGOs should be encouraged to contain and divert possible radical alternatives to the crisis, and to ensure the sustainability of market reforms, and,
- 7) NGOs represent radical potentials in the civic terrain and may aid in the construction of alternative democratic forms.⁸³

Thus the contradictory nature of the role and importance of the NGOs. While these perspectives share a common disillusionment with the Africa state, NGO operations can conform to various social projects.

Advocates of radical development alternatives, in which

⁸³ Bratton, "Government-NGO Relations", Michael Bratton, "Non-Governmental Organizations in Africa: Can They Influence Public Policy" in Development and Change, vol.21, 1990. Alan Fowler, "The Role on NGOs in Changing State-Society Relations: Perspectives from Eastern and Southern Africa" in Development Policy Review, vol.9, 1991. Alan Fowler, "Non-Governmental Organizations as Agents of Democratization: An African Perspective" in Journal of International Development, vol.5, no.3, 1993. Shadrack B.O. Gutto, "Non-Governmental Organizations, Peoples Participation and The African Commission on Human and Peoples Rights: Emerging Challenges to Regional Protection of Human Rights" in Bard-Anders Andreassen and Theresa Swinehart eds., Human Rights in Developing Countries: Yearbook 1991, (Oslo: Scandinavian University Press, 1992). Tim Shaw, Civil Society, the State and Development in the 1990s: NGOs under SAP conditionalities, (mimeo: Dalhousie University, 1993). South Commission, The Challenge to the South, (London: Oxford University Press, 1990).

popular participation in the decision making of development is central, view NGOs as crucial in building conscientization and a historical force to alter the balance of power to popular forces. Conventional thinking views NGOs as an important part of Africa's nascent civil society, which are crucial to Africa's recovery and development in the 1990s. The World Bank/IMF and donor agencies, as part of 'humanizing' adjustment packages, have accepted a need for a minimalist welfare safety net in its policy prescriptions. Given the prevailing ideology of anti-statism, they are turning to NGOs to provide some social amenities in order to mitigate the negative impacts of its macro-economic policies on vulnerable groups.

In addition, NGOs are increasingly viewed as agents of democratization. The World Bank's 1989 Report Sub-Saharan Africa: From Crisis to Sustainable Growth: A Long-Term Perspective Study (LTPS), argues that NGOs have an important role to play in delimiting state power and are crucial institutions of mediation. The Bank's Report notes that NGOs as

...intermediaries have an important role to play; they can create links both upward and downward in society and voice local concerns more effectively than grassroots institutions. In doing so they can bring a broader spectrum of ideas and values to bear on policy-making.⁸⁴

Thus the formation of umbrella NGO bodies in many African countries, like the Tanzanian Association of Nongovernmental

⁸⁴ World Bank, Sub-Saharan Africa: From Crisis to Sustainable Growth (Washington: World Bank, 1989), p.61.

Organization (TANGO) and the Nigerian Association of Voluntary Development Organization (NAVDO) bodes well for mediating between the state and civil society. It is this latter emphasis, on the role of intermediate non-governmental organizations (both indigenous and international) in Africa's democratization that is of central importance in this thesis. In the case study on Nigeria, the role of NGOs in strengthening civil society and its capacity to mediate between popular movements and political institutions is critically examined.

DEFINING AND TYPOLOGIZING NGOs

The term non-governmental is somewhat of a misnomer, as many of the organizations defined as NGOs often have strong financial ties to governments, national and/or international. Since no generally agreed alternative term exists in the literature, the conventional definition of NGOs is taken broadly to mean non-profit development agencies which are neither initiated or controlled by the targeted constituency.⁸⁵ Embracing as they do a wide array of activities, orientations, and scope it is necessary to delineate between NGOs' various operations. John Clark provides a useful typology for NGO operations in the Third World:

1. Relief and Welfare agencies. 2. Technical Innovative Organizations.
3. Public Service Contractors. 4. Popular Development Agencies.
5. Grassroots Development Organizations.

⁸⁵ Alan Fowler, "Perspectives from Eastern and Southern Africa".

6. Advocacy Groups and Networks.⁸⁶

With specific reference to Nigeria, Tade Akin Aina, distinguishes between three tiers of overlapping NGO categories:

Tier One: normally highly formalized in operations and large scale and includes international agencies.

Tier Two: indigenous organizations which are formal in operations and national in scale and include foundations, civil associations, with a few professional staff. This second tier, overlaps with the national branches or offshoots of national branches of global groups such as the Red Cross, Rotary etc.

Tier Three: consists of Town and Regional Development Associations, voluntary groups, special interest groups such as women's organizations, occupational and trade guilds.⁸⁷

In this study, I am primarily concerned with intermediate NGOs self-defined as people-oriented. This correlates with categories four and six in Clark's typology, and overlaps the three tiers, highlighted by Aina, on Nigeria. Like any other association in civil society, the Non-government Organization, even the most democratic, is susceptible to manipulation, cooptation and colonization by the state, ruling classes and international factors and forces. Therefore, a critical assessment of the democratizing impact of NGOs must take

⁸⁶ John Clark, Democratizing Development: The Role of Voluntary Organizations (London: Earthscan, 1991), p.40,41.

⁸⁷ Tade Akin Aina, (1993) "Empowering Environmental NGOs: The Experience of the Nigerian Environmental Study/Action Team" in Richard Sandbrook and Mohamed Halfani eds., Empowering People: Building Community, Civil Associations and Legality in Africa (Toronto: Centre for Urban and Community Issues, University of Toronto, Seminar Proceeding of an International Conference on Empowering People and Civil Associations held in Arusha, Tanzania, August 1991), p.141.

cognizance of the internal structures of NGOs and relations between NGOs, particularly between international and indigenous NGOs. It must also examine the relationship of non-governmental organization with the state, social forces, and the donor community. The next chapter examines the impact of the structural adjustment programme on the Nigerian economy, state and civil society and illuminates the individualized responses of various social forces struggling to cope with the deepening socio-economic exigencies. In Chapter Three, I return to the assessment of the democratizing impact of NGOs in Nigeria as part of the broader investigation into the political and collective responses of various social groups and classes to the SAP and the democratization process in the country.

CHAPTER TWO

PART ONE

THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF AFRICA IN THE 1980s: CRISIS, ADJUSTMENT AND DEMOCRATIZATION

The African world has fallen apart. The countryside is ravaged by drought, locusts, and pestilence; there is an AIDS epidemic. People flock from the rural areas to cities which are unable to cope. Industry is either stagnant or in decline and unemployment grows. National economies are near bankruptcy; import bills far exceed export revenues. The balance of payment difficulty has been relegated to the future through borrowing but new loans are difficult to obtain and interest rates are onerous. Foreign exchange is virtually exhausted. Food is in short supply. Fuelwood is becoming depleted. Many areas are suffering from a lack of water. Governments are constantly changing through coups. If incompetent soldiers are not ruling, uncaring politicians and growing numbers of bureaucrats are ensconced in power. There is an aura of political and economic decay; nepotism, corruption, coercion and ineptitude hold sway. The bright hopes and expectations of political independence of a generation ago have been crushed.¹

Throughout the 1980s Africa experienced a vicious and unremitting socioeconomic crisis. All the major indicators point to significant and sometimes precipitous retrogression to the extent that Africans are worse off today than there were ten years ago. Output and income growth, capital formation and export growth have declined. Deficits in the balance of payments and inflation rates have accelerated, while the debt and debt servicing burdens have reached unmanageable levels. The productive and infrastructural facilities have crumbled, while the basic social services--especially education, health and housing--have been rapidly deteriorating. Piling on top of the recurrent drought and chronic food deficits phenomena, these problems have contributed to uninterrupted economic decline and falling standards of living of the Africa people. It is no wonder then that the number of African countries officially classified as Least Development Countries (LDCs) -- the wretched of the earth -- increased from 17 countries in 1978 to 28 countries in 1988, a total of 56 percent of all African countries. And more are knocking at the door. Thus the 1980s were indeed a lost decade for Africa in every sense. (emphasis mine)²

...the crisis currently engulfing Africa, is not only an economic crisis but also a human, legal, political and social crisis."³

It is generally agreed that the 1980s for Africa was a lost decade of development. It began with the majority of countries in the region being overwhelmed by deteriorating

¹ J. Barry Riddell, "The African Malaise: A Summary Review" in Canadian Journal of Development Studies, p.387.

² Adebayo Adedeji, "Economic Progress: What Africa Needs" in TransAfrica Forum, vol.7, no.2, Summer 1990, p.11-12.

³ UN-ECA, African Charter for Popular Participation in Development, (Addis Ababa: ECA, 1990) p.7.

material conditions. The economic crisis which engulfed the capitalist world economy in the late 1970s and deepened in the early 1980s had devastating impacts on Third World countries, but for Africa the consequences were disastrous. Tottering on weak structure of production, the oil shocks of 1973 and 1979 further propelled African countries into grave crisis. The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) declined from an annual average growth rate of 7.7% in 1976 to 0.1% by 1981.⁴ The increase in oil prices led to a huge rise in the cost of capital and consumer imports. Compounded by the contractionary policies adopted by the advanced capitalist countries to grapple with 'stagflation', the ensuing inordinate prices for imported goods from the West, drastically affected both agricultural and industrial production. The annual average growth rates in the agricultural and manufacturing sub-sector of industry declined from 8.5% and 1.4% in 1960-65 to 3.6% and 0.6% respectively in 1980-81 with both sectors averaging 0.4% growth in 1982-83.⁵ Food production also decreased dramatically, reflected in the continent's shift from a food exporter in the 1960s to a net-importer of food by the mid-1970s. Faced with declining export revenues, with the collapse of agricultural commodity prices and rising import demands to

⁴ World Bank, World Tables 1993 (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press for the World Bank, 1993), p.22.

⁵ Organization of African Unity (OAU) cited in Claude Ake, "The Political Economy of Development: Does It Have A Future?" in International Social Science Journal, no.118, 1988, p.488.

meet food requirements and to sustain domestic production processes, African countries experienced extreme balance of payment difficulties. Total external debt in sub-Saharan Africa increased from 10.1 billion in 1973 to 21.7 billion doubling again to 40.4 billion by 1981.⁶

Given these conditions the international finance institutions (IFIs) intervened to redress the socio-economic crisis in Africa. The 'counter-revolution' in development thinking inspired the 1981 World Bank publication, Accelerated Development in Sub-Saharan Africa (popularly called the Berg Report) which articulates the tenets of the neo-liberal development model. This predominant development policy works on the assumption that the statist capitalist development of the 1960s and 1970s precipitated the crisis of the early 1980s and must be abandoned to enable the development of liberated markets in order to catalyze economic recovery and development. Since 1982 over two-thirds of the countries in Sub-Saharan Africa have adopted the IFIs and/or African governments' guided structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) intended to redress the crisis of the state and economy.

In Part One of this chapter, I examine one of the salient features of Africa's political economies in the 1980s, mainly the neo-liberal economic reforms. It seeks to illuminate the evolution of the IMF and World Bank inspired SAP from its

⁶ World Bank, World Debt Tables, 1981 (Washington: World Bank Publication, 1981), p.2.

origins, content, impact on African economies, and shifting policy emphasis. Taking the case of Nigeria, I will critically assess the performance of the neo-liberal reforms on the country's economy. The examination of SAP will be limited to the period between its inception in 1986 and December 1993. The economic policy changes introduced in the 1994 Budget by Sani Abacha -- head of the current military junta -- which attempts to reverse the blanket liberalization of both trade and foreign exchange regimes, will be considered later in this exposition. In section one, competing theoretical explanations on the African crisis, its root(s) and dimensions are expounded. The limitations of the neo-liberal and dependency/underdevelopment perspectives in holistically treating the specificities of the crisis are highlighted. A brief examination of Nigeria's colonial and post-colonial political economy, in the second section, will show how the current crisis is embedded in the pattern of accumulation, which has propelled the state into a crisis of legitimacy. The pre-adjustment recovery programmes of the Nigerian state are also examined in this section. Section three assesses the impact of the predominant adjustment programme on the agricultural and industrial sectors of the Nigerian economy and argues that adjustment rather than catalyzing economic recovery and development has accentuated the crisis, deepening the conditions of poverty and underdevelopment. The fourth section traces the continuing policy debates on the adjustment

exercise, particularly between the World Bank and the Economic Commission for Africa, and the new 'global consensus' on Africa's developmental needs in the 1990s.

**SECTION ONE: INTERPRETING THE AFRICAN CRISIS OF THE 1980s:
COMPETING EXPLANATIONS OF ITS ROOTS AND DIMENSIONS**

The severity of the crisis in Africa during the 1980s is well documented. Equally familiar are the theoretical debates on the causes of the crisis, which have been the topic of intense discourse, filling the pages of several African newspapers and development journals, as well as leading to numerous conferences on the crisis from Addis Ababa to Arusha and from New York to London. Scholars within the neo-liberal and dependency/underdevelopment genres viewed the deepening malaise in this region as a vindication of their theoretical perspectives. Since the crisis is reflected most glaringly in its economic dimensions, interpretations of Africa's developmental failures tended to be economistic, negating the political causes of the crisis. Attempts to provide a political economy of the crisis in a neo-liberal framework, however, treat the concrete dynamics of politics in Africa simplistically.

An early neo-liberal contribution to the debates on the African crisis was therefore technocratic and economistic in approach. Reflected in the position of the IFIs, particularly the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) this perspective was articulated in the now infamous Berg Report.

The Report attributed the pattern of post-colonial state capitalist development as prohibitive to capital accumulation and economic growth. Focusing on domestic policy deficiencies, the report criticizes the import substitution industrialization (ISI) policies followed by African governments in the 1970s. The Berg Report, maintained that ISI led to inefficiency and a mis-allocation of resources. The import restrictions to protect 'infant industries' promoted a quasi-monopolistic position, barring foreign competition, reducing the incentive to become more efficient, while causing excessively high prices for consumers goods. The corollary to the ISI strategy was its anti-agrarian bias. Import restrictions created a disincentive against agricultural exports, forcing farmers to purchase high-cost local implements.⁷ The overvaluation of African currencies discriminated against agricultural and mining exports, making these products relatively more expensive in the world market. The Report noted that, though several African countries had enjoyed a 'comparative advantage' in their traditional exports, skewed trade and exchange rate policies caused high production costs and slower rates of economic growth.

The Berg Report laments over statist intervention in the economy during the 1960s and 1970s. Accordingly, the high level of state ownership in agriculture, industry, commerce

⁷ World Bank, Accelerated Development in Sub-Saharan Africa: an agenda for action, (Washington: World Bank Publication, 1981), p.25.

and transportation was condemned for spawning massive misuse of scarce resources. Public expenditure in the areas of education, health care, transportation, communication, irrigation, etc, in a period of economic contraction, they argue, constrained the productive sectors further, because of the tax measures necessary to subsidize these social programs and the inflationary effects induced by this expansion. Therefore, the 'over-extended African state,' reflected concretely in the inefficiency of government marketing boards and parastatals, "negates the benefits which privately organized markets bring to the development process."⁸ The totality of these policy failures of African governments are identified as prompting increasing levels of inflation, unemployment, balance of payment difficulties and the stagnating economic growth experienced by the 1980s.

Beyond this Report which would become the basis of IFI policy responses in the 1980s, a number of approaches emphasizing the politics of the crisis emerged in support of the World Bank's intervention. Within a neo-liberal political economy framework, the perspectives of the '**urban bias/coalition**' and the '**economy of affection**' schools on the crisis are noteworthy. The 'urban bias/coalition' school arose initially to explain the origins of rural poverty. It provided a useful political theory on the origins of the African crisis

⁸ John Toye, Dilemmas of Development, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd, 1987), p.63.

and a legitimization of the ongoing neo-liberal reforms. The works of this school's principal proponents Michael Lipton⁹ and Robert Bates¹⁰ sought to identify the underlying roots of rural deprivation. The failure of post-colonial development and rural neglect in particular, were attributed to the unequal distribution of power and resources between the rural and urban areas. Both Lipton and Bates for instance argue that post-colonial development policies were built on a fundamental 'urban bias'.

An 'urban coalition' constructed during the anti-colonial struggles and comprised of public and private capital, workers, professionals, intellectuals, radio producers and influential editors have controlled the pattern of post-colonial development and the distribution of resources such that the state intervenes in the marketplace and distorts prices in favour of this 'urban class'. In the pursuit of rapid industrialization, the state and the 'urban class' relegated rural areas to squalor while extracting cheap foods, mobilizing savings and earning foreign exchange in support of the 'modernizing' project. Sharing a common sectoral interest in directing the surplus value extracted from the rural areas towards urban localities, they manipulated public policies to

⁹ Michael Lipton, Why Poor People Stay Poor: A Study of Urban Bias in World Development, (London: Temple Smith, 1977).

¹⁰ Robert H. Bates, Markets and States in Tropical Africa: The Political Basis of Agricultural Policies (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981).

ensure the allocation of subsidies, credit, investment opportunities, health and educational facilities to the capitalist urban enclaves. Anti-agrarian government policies have combined to cause stagnating per-capita food production and declining agricultural exports. Therefore, recovery and development requires a policy shift, in which the market rather than state determines the structures of incentives. This would shift the balance of forces from the rapacious 'urban coalition' to the 'rural sector' which has been exploited in the process of post-colonial development.

In a similar emphasis on the internal roots of the African crisis, the 'economy of affection' school provided a sophisticated political theory on the dynamics of the failure of post-colonial development, supportive again of the neo-liberal reform. Goran Hyden and proponents of this thesis attribute the deteriorating conditions in Africa to the soft character of the state. Hyden's two major works Beyond Ujamaa in Tanzania and No Shortcuts to Progress expound this thesis.¹¹ It places the failure of development in Africa on

¹¹ Goran Hyden, Beyond Ujamaa in Tanzania: Underdevelopment and an Uncaptured Peasantry, (London: Hienemann, 1980); No Shortcuts to Progress: African Development Management in Perspective (London: Hienemann, 1983); "The Anomaly of the African Peasantry" in Development and Change, vol.17, 1986; "The Final Rejoinder" in Development and Change, vol.18, 1987; "State and Nation Under Stress" in Recovery in Africa: A Challenge for Development Cooperation in the 1990s, (Stockholm: GOTAB for Department for International Development and Co-operation, Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 1988). The economy of affection thesis is elaborated at length in Hyden's 1980 and 1983 publications. Truncated versions of this thesis are provided in his 1986, 1987 and 1988 articles. Critiques of Hyden's works by, Nelson Kasfir (1986), Lionel Cliffe (1987), Bjorn Beckman (1988) and Bjorn Hettne (1988) are featured also in these respective journals.

the persistence of relations of affection. African countries are characterized as pre-capitalist, dominated by a peasant mode of production which colonial capital failed to destroy. Because peasants still retain "rights to land, and the simple technology applied, and the reliance on family as opposed to wage labour, the predominant productive systems in Africa are still remarkably autonomous."¹² The economy of affection is then, the social and cultural relations that are produced by this mode of production. It denotes "a network of support, communication and interaction among structurally defined groups connected by blood, kin, community or other affinities, for example religion".¹³ The economy of affection functions in a co-operative and reciprocal manner at the level of basic survival, social maintenance and development.¹⁴ While most prevalent in the rural areas, the economy of affection penetrates all levels of society. The egalitarian and reciprocal exchange of affection provides social safety nets and plays a developmental roles when access to formal structures are blocked to the majority of the population. Small-scale community-based associations provide members with an avenue to greater employment opportunities and social advancement, access to credit, assistance with weddings and funerals and/or other personal and community emergencies.

¹² Goran Hyden, "State and Nation", p.151.

¹³ Hyden, No Shortcuts, p.8.

¹⁴ Hyden, No Shortcuts, p.11-15.

These organizations also contribute to community development in areas of infrastructure, health care, adult education, water supply etc.¹⁵

However, relations of affection spawn consequences detrimental to national development. Because the Africa state is a colonial creation and not a by-product of internal social processes, a disjuncture exists between the values pervading society and the African state. At the level of the state, the persistence of the economy of affection engenders nepotism, tribalism and corruption, which undermine bureaucratic rationality and renders the state incapable of directing development. For Hyden, the crisis of development is a product of the inability of the state and market to capture the peasantry and destroy these inhibiting relations of affection. The state is thus characterized as suspended in 'mid-air without any structural roots in society' and unable to penetrate the countryside. This consequently gives the peasantry the autonomy to 'exit' from the state and markets, preventing the state from extracting surplus value from rural areas to fund national development. The economy of affection also engendered the crisis of governance. It precipitated a lack of transparency and accountability, and fostered a climate of insecurity and instability that has caused military juntas and one-party or no-party states in post-colonial

¹⁵ Hyden, "State and Nation", p.153.

Africa. In prescribing a way out of the crisis, Goran Hyden shifts his policy emphasis from an initial support of state intervention in Beyond Ujamaa to the liberating dynamic of the market mechanisms in No Shortcuts to Progress and subsequent writings. Market forces are to foster a productive bourgeoisie, the social forces capable of destroying the peasant mode of production and economy of affection and its negative by-products of nepotism, corruption and authoritarianism, while in the process creating not only a modern, rational economy but also a vibrant civil society and stable democratic order.

It is important to note that the neo-liberal interpretation of the African crisis shared by both the urban bias/coalition and economy of affection schools of thought, emerged out of a broader critique of state-capitalist development in advanced capitalist countries and the post-war Keynesian economic philosophy. Keynesianism in the post-war period was the hegemonic political economy approach which arose in response to the pattern of *laissez-faire* capitalist development that it blamed for causing the depression of the 1930s. Keynes held that *laissez-faire* could not reconcile and maintain a balance between savings and investment. He argued, for example, that low savings in relation to increased demand for investment led to inflation, while high savings in relation to decreased demand for investment would induce

increased levels of unemployment.¹⁶ Therefore, both inflation and unemployment were organic features of a market economy which could not be adjusted without active state intervention. Keynes thus offered a prescription to resolve the propensity of capitalism to create periodic crises. Placing emphasis on the unemployment problems engendered by capitalism, Keynes advocated an interventionist fiscal policy, where increased public spending would induce higher levels of demand, thus catalyzing employment and boosting productivity and economic growth. State-led capitalist development would also resolve the gross social inequities by extending a social wage in the areas of health care, education, unemployment insurance, etc. -- in short creating a welfare state. Indeed, the post-war global economy witnessed unprecedented levels of productivity, economic growth, expansion of world trade, employment and the establishment of a welfare state. While the benefits of this prosperity was uneven between/within regions and countries, the high levels of growth temporarily affirmed the Keynesian economic and social policies.

However, by the early 1970s, post-war global affluence began to decline. Falling growth rates, rising unemployment, increasing inflation, declining investments and profit rates were characteristic of developed economies in the wake of the 1973 oil crisis. World output declined from an annual average

¹⁶ Yusuf Bangura, "Overcoming Some Basic Misconceptions of the Nigerian Economic Crisis" in Adebayo Olukoshi ed., Crisis and Adjustment in the Nigerian Economy, (Lagos: JAD Publishers Limited, 1991).

growth rate of 5.5% between 1961-1973 to 3.6% in the 1974-1980 period.¹⁷ In this contracting global political economy, the predominant view blamed the post-war Keynesian policies of high demand, full employment and social welfare for the precipitous economic decline. Theoreticians of what came to be known as the 'new right', particularly its most ardent proponents Milton Friedman and Friedrich von Hayek attacked the inflationary impact of Keynesian economic prescriptions which, they argued, inhibited economic growth. For neo-liberals, excessive state expenditure and intervention in the economy led to rising levels of inflation by propelling increases in both public sector borrowing and the printing of money in support of state expansionism. By failing to regulate the money supply, the state caused excessive liquidity in the economy, prompting higher demand. Adversely affecting the process of capital accumulation, inflation increased workers demands for higher wages which cut into the profit margins of capitalists, thus reducing investments, which are further constrained by rising interest rates. All this inhibits economic growth and employment.

The neo-liberal explanations of economic decline in the advanced capitalist countries were simultaneously used to critique the pattern of Third World development and the role played by development economists. The discipline of

¹⁷ Dharam Ghai, Structural Adjustment, Global Integration and Social Democracy, (UNRISD Discussion Paper no.37, 1992) p.2.

development economics which in part influenced the pattern of post-colonial development, emerged in the post-war hegemonic Keynesian environment and was facilitated by the intellectual support accorded state-led development. The fall from grace of Keynesian economic thought in the 1970s, thus also led to an intense critique of development economics by neo-liberal analysts. Mkandawire aptly notes that "the crisis of the welfare state in the developed countries spelled trouble for Development Economics which was guilty of the Keynesian sin, if not by commission, at least by intellectual association."¹⁸ In short, for neo-liberal analysts, the African crises of the 1980s were not a consequence of exogenous factors, but rather primarily a result of bad domestic policies which encouraged statism, the ensuing inflationary pressures, declining economic growth and balance of payment difficulties. The development experience of the Newly Industrializing Countries (NICs) of Southeast Asia were portrayed as current and concrete proof that market forces allowed to operate could generate rapid and equitable patterns of growth.¹⁹ This is the broader context in which the Berg Report intervened to promote the 'rolling back the state' and the liberation of market forces as the catalyst for economic

¹⁸ Mkandawire, "Development Theory", p.213.

¹⁹ Nigel Harris provides a strong critique of the development record of the NICs. It illustrates that the state in these countries were extremely interventions, counter to the neo-liberal myth of the miracles of the market. Nigel Harris, The End of the Third World: Newly Industrializing Countries and the Decline of an Ideology, (Markham: Penguin Books, 1986).

recovery and development.

In contrast to the neo-liberal emphasis on the internal determinant of the economic decline, the dependency/underdevelopment school of thought attributed exogenous factors and forces for the current crisis. Emerging in the 1960s, a product of both Marxist and Latin American structuralist traditions, this school of thought focused on the constraints metropolitan capitalism placed on the development of peripheral countries and regions. The central organizing concept of *dependentistas*, unequal exchange, illuminated the manner in which social surpluses were siphoned from the periphery. Unequal trade, profit repatriation of transnational corporations and interest payments to foreign banks were the primary mechanisms through which social surpluses in the periphery are transferred to the centre. The consequence of this unequal relationship, led to distortions in the process of domestic accumulation and inhibited productivity and national development. The current socio-economic decline in Africa and Third World countries could not be extricated from the on-going appropriation of surplus value from the periphery to advanced capitalist countries. Accordingly, the pressures emanating from the global capitalist economy, propelled by the recession in West and the resultant contractionary and protectionist policies pursued by these countries, adversely affected dependent peripheral countries and regions. With declining terms of trade and

mounting import bills, the ensuing debt and debt servicing burdens were identified as the conditions which propelled African countries into crisis.

The dependency position was reflected in an early continental policy response to the socio-economic decline. The Lagos Plan of Action (LPA) adopted by the OAU in April 1980, emphasized the adverse consequences of colonial and neo-colonial exploitation on Africa's developmental experience.²⁰ Taking cognizance of the marginal position of the continent in the international division of labour, the LPA argued that development in this region had been hampered by the dictates of the world system, where internal improvements have relied heavily on the developments in the European Community, tied to the Yaounde and Lome Conventions.²¹ Alternative prescriptions to the crisis stressed the need for both national and regional self-reliance. At the cornerstone of the plan was the proposed formation of an African Common Market by the year 2000. A dynamic and interdependent African economy would lay the foundation for overcoming underdevelopment.

LIMITATIONS OF DEPENDENCY AND NEO-LIBERAL INTERPRETATIONS

The LPA suffered from similar limitations which have been

²⁰ OAU, Lagos Plan of Action for the Economic Development of Africa 1980-2000, (Addis Ababa: OAU Publication, 1980), p.5.

²¹ The Lome and Yaounde Conventions are recurrent trade and aid agreements between African, Caribbean and Pacific countries and the European Union.

associated with *dependentistas*.²² Undoubtedly, this school of thought offers valuable insights into the external dimensions of the crisis. It illuminates the manner in which social surpluses are expropriated from peripheral regions and countries by an unequal integration into the global economy and their subsequent vulnerability to global capitalist crises. Nonetheless, the near exclusive focus on exogenous factors of the socio-economic decline neglected the internal factors and forces which predisposed African political economies towards crisis. Relegating the state and domestic social forces to objects of exogenous dynamics, they failed to appreciate the intra and inter-class struggles in the state and civil society and the manner in which the contestation over social surpluses determined the process of economic development. The economism of much of the dependency analysis thus negated, like the LPA, the political dimension of the malaise and how internal social relations gave rise to developmental failure. The un-hegemonic character of the state, the rapacious character of large sections of the dominant class(es), the suffocation of political space and the ensuing marginalization of subaltern classes in civil society, are also factors which contributed to the crisis in Africa.

²² Needless to say, dependency theory is not a homogeneous school of thought, as it has variants which differ in their emphasis on the nature of underdevelopment and the roots of the current crisis. Space limitations preclude a comprehensive discussion of the divergent approaches. For an in depth examinations of the variations of *dependentistas* see: Anthony Brewer, Marxist Theories of Imperialism: A Critical Review (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980), and Christobel Kay, Latin American Theories of Development, (London: MacMillan, 1984).

What is abundantly clear about the neo-liberal interpretation of the malaise in Africa, by comparison, is the tertiary importance accorded external determinants of the crisis. Giving primacy to the detrimental impact of the politicization of the marketplace by an 'urban coalition', or the impediments of a relatively autonomous peasantry and the resultant relations of affection, there was a near total silence on how the integration into the periphery of an unequal division of labour makes the peasantry and the entire social formation susceptible to exogenous fluctuations. Recognizing the extraction of surplus value from the rural area to the urban centre, 'urban coalition' theorists however, divorce this process from the dynamics of the global economy. For instance, while both Lipton and Bates critique agricultural marketing boards as the principal mechanism through which surplus value is extracted from the peasantry and directed to capitalist urban enclaves, this is extricated from external factors such as access to markets, the stability of commodity prices and cost of inputs which also affect the ability of rural producers to reap equitable remuneration for their labour. For the economy of affection school, in contrast, it is the inability to extract surpluses from the peasantry which has caused the crisis in post-colonial development. Not only does this proposition ignore the penetration of the countryside by colonial state and capital - - albeit incomplete -- and the surplus value extracted from

the peasantry, but moreover, it overlooks how the rural areas in the post-colonial period have been subjected to the dynamics of both the smaller, yet dominant capitalist sector and the processes of the global capitalist economy. Various policies were enacted by colonial and post-colonial state in Africa to induce production of a narrow range of cash and food crops. This has integrated the peasantry both into the world market and the dynamics of the domestic capitalist economy. Peasant incorporation into the domestic capitalist economy is such that their reproduction is dependent on the market. This being the case, the countryside cannot be immune from crises in the global economy. These exogenous factors are conveniently omitted, opting for the near exclusive concentration on internal determinants of the crisis.

Departing from the technocratic approach of the Berg Report, the focus on the social and political determinants of the post-colonial developmental crisis by the urban coalition and economy of affection schools are however welcomed. The direction of development and the manner in which it is to be pursued are fundamentally political questions, contested by various social forces both within the state and civil society for control of the allocations of, and access to resources. The neo-liberal policies of the last decade are certainly not neutral, and promote particular interests in civil society. What is deficient about the neo-liberal schools of thought however, is the simplification of politics in Africa to

contrasting models of 'winners and losers' attached to state or market allocation of resources.²³ Taking the case of the former, the statism of post-colonial development is assumed to have benefited the 'urban class' to the detriment of the 'rural class'. Lipton and Bates recognize class differentiation within the rural and urban sectors. Nevertheless, oscillating in the treatment of the concept of class, in both the conventional materialist sense and the mainstream interest group usage, they invariably present a simple picture of 'winners' and 'losers' of post colonial development based on sectoral homogeneity. This ignored the ongoing process of class formation and the social differentiation and inequalities which permeated both the rural and urban areas.

Rural neglect in post-colonial Africa is largely not contested between liberal and radical genres. Available evidence supports the 'policy of indifference' towards the rural areas. While offering contrasting interpretations of rural neglect and the ensuing developmental ramifications, the economy of affection school, in asserting the predominance of a single peasant mode of production, and the so-called affective ties which the economy of affection spawns, also disguises the gross inequalities in African countries. The

²³ Yusuf Bangura and Peter Gibbon, "Adjustment, Authoritarianism and Democracy: An Introduction to Some Conceptual Empirical Issues" in Peter Gibbon et al. Authoritarianism Democracy and Adjustment: The Politics of Economic Reform in Africa, (Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1992).

assumption that affective relations act as social safety net for members of a community when economic conditions deteriorate, fails to discern "the way in which the material conditions for actually doing so differ radically between different segments of society."²⁴

For the urban bias proponents, the poor masses are identified with the rural classes. In contrast, the working class are presented as a labour aristocracy, a willing accomplice in the so-called privileged, consumptionist and parasitic urban coalitions which have captured the state and distorted the pattern of post-colonial development. In so doing, the 'urban coalition' school provides theoretical support not only for the neo-liberal reform, which are to shift the balance of forces in favour of the long neglected rural poor, but also legitimizes the detrimental effects of these policies on subaltern classes in urban and rural areas. Similarly, the economy of affection school, in arguing that development will not take place unless the peasantry are captured and subjected to the logic of the market, further legitimates the market reform and its adverse consequences on different social forces in civil society. These schools of thought converge to prop-up market forces and discredit the state as an instrument of development.

²⁴ Bjorn Beckman, "Comments" in Recovery in Africa: A Challenge for Development Co-operation in the 1990s, (Stockholm: GOTAB for Department for International Development and Co-operation, Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 1988) p. 62.

Whether captured by the 'urban coalition' or permeated by patron-client relations, the African state they assert is incapacitated by these forces and needs to be 'rolled back'. Post-colonial developmental crisis in Africa therefore was simply not a precipitate of policy errors by the state but rather a result of a constraining syndrome whereby the state is manipulated to serve narrow sectoral interests. With the state portrayed as an obstacle to development, liberated markets are then the only path to ensure recovery and development in Africa. In a summary article in which Goran Hyden responds to his critics, he presents a case for extricating state retrenchment from the ongoing neo-liberal reforms. He notes,

...what is at stake here is not a matter of 'rolling back the state' to suit a neo-liberal model of economics but to enhance the role of the state as a socially responsible agent. Ironically perhaps, this does entail reducing the role of the state as the pivotal and monopolistic dispenser of resources and services in African society.²⁵

In the attempt to divorce these complementary processes -- an inextricable part of the same neo-liberal project -- Hyden failed to answer some critical questions. What exactly is a socially responsible state? Who exactly determines the state's responsibilities? Is the state not a contested terrain in which various social forces struggle for control of resources and to push for how society should be organized and thus their interpretation of a socially responsible state? Is a

²⁵ Hyden "State and Nation".

socially responsible state one which fires workers, cuts social amenities, depresses incomes and represses social and political forces which challenge the neo-liberal onslaught? Hyden is silent on these questions, thus reproducing the neo-liberal 'vision' of what development ought to be. With the ideological shift in the global political economy in the late 1970s and the political ascendancy of conservative governments in the West, the neo-liberal interpretation of the crises and its 'vision' of development, based on a strong commitment to market forces, became hegemonic. In what Toye has called the counter-revolution in development theory, the neo-liberal paradigm has been the basis of policy-prescriptions on the African crisis for two decades.

SECTION TWO: THE ORIGINS OF THE NIGERIAN CRISIS AND PRE-ADJUSTMENT STATE CRISIS MANAGEMENT POLICIES

Nigeria's integration into an unequal international division of labour, as the producer of a narrow range of agricultural commodities in the colonial period, subjected the country to the expansion, contradiction and crisis in the global capitalist economy. The operations and domination of the major sectors of the colonial and post-colonial economy by transnational companies, such as the United Africa Company (commercial and manufacturing sectors), Elder Dempster (shipping), Barclays Bank currently Union Bank of Nigeria (financial) and Shell-BP and Texaco (mining) inextricably incorporated the political economy into the dynamics of

external factors and forces.²⁶ Inhibiting internal development, unequal incorporation into the global economy, however, does not render Nigerian and Third World regions idle captives to exogenous constraints. Colonial and post-colonial development created its own dynamism, fostering internal contradictions, struggles and state and class formation.

Relations of appropriation and domination in colonial capitalism engendered responses against racial domination and contestation over social surpluses from subordinate groupings and the incipient indigenous ruling classes. From the early formation of the Nigerian Civil Service Union in 1912 and the militant unionism which developed in the wake of the 1929 depression, hidden and overt, trade union movements in Nigeria resisted and struggled against racial discrimination, meagre wages and poor working conditions. The strikes of the 1940s, particularly the general strike of 1945, won concessions to the working classes and posed a direct challenge to colonial domination.²⁷ The period of decolonization led to the proliferation of trade unions, artisans groups, market women's and students' association, co-operatives, ethnic and religious bodies and professional associations in Nigeria's nascent civil society. Demands from subordinate classes for higher wages and better working conditions, increased producer

²⁶ Bangura, "Misconceptions", p.54.

²⁷ Wogu Ananaba, The Trade Union Movement in Nigeria (Benin: Ethiope Publishing Corporation, 1969).

prices, expansion of education and health care and democratic participation in the process of development formed the basis of the anti-colonial struggles. Internally disharmonious and unfailingly subjected to state manipulation and suppression, the weakness of civic associations and popular groups enabled the emerging ruling class to determine the direction of decolonization.

This period also intensified the contestation between colonial capital and emerging indigenous ruling classes. By and large this class was co-opted by the colonial state. However, state instituted obstacles which inhibited the emergence of a manufacturing class and frustrated less constricted commercial activities, were increasingly issues of concern for indigenous elites. Compounded by state discrimination against educated professionals, these were some of the compelling reasons which propelled indigenous elites into the leadership of the anti-colonial movement which ended formal political domination. At political independence, indigenous capitalists were weak, largely divorced from the means of production and for the most part commercial in outlook. The productive factions of the ruling class(es), engaging mainly in small-scale production, could not compete with transnational capital which controlled and dominated major sectors of the Nigerian economy. The dependent pattern of internal accumulation, bequeathed by colonialism, nurtured the contradiction between social surplus and investment, which

still persists today. The external orientation of the economy ensured that substantial surpluses generated internally were not retained to induce social and economic development in the country, but were squandered through TNC profit repatriation, overseas investments, conspicuous consumption, import dependency etc.

Consequently, the state became the principal locus of capital accumulation and the modality through which to create a economic base, and reconcile contradictions in the political economy. The disjuncture between what Festus Iyayi called the political and economic instances of the ruling class(es),²⁸ was a central contradiction which the post-colonial state attempted to mediate. For the state and ruling class(es), this disconnection militated against the expansion of the country's material base and the reconciliation of the incongruity between social surplus and investment. It also inhibited the ability to mediate the social contestation on the basis of class (intra and inter), gender, ethnicity and religion in the state and civil society and thus the ensuing difficulty in consolidating and reproducing ruling class hegemony.

POST-COLONIAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING IN NIGERIA

Development planning has been the basic instrument used by the post-colonial Nigerian state to redress these contradictions. As mentioned in the Chapter One, in the 1960s,

²⁸ Festus Iyayi, "The Primitive Accumulation of Capital in a Neo-Colony: The Nigerian Case" in SOAPE, no.30, 1986.

a consensus existed between the ruling classes in the Third World, development agencies and development economists, on the centrality of the post-colonial state in the process of development.²⁹ The post-war balance of forces which eclipsed the neo-classical free-market economic doctrine and its emphasis on international trade as the 'engine of growth' and the ensuing rise of Keynesian, state-led capitalist development influenced the study of Third World countries. Theoretical support from the proponents of the emerging discipline of development economics³⁰, such as the Singer-Prebisch thesis and Myrdal's 'backwash effect', that illuminated the adverse effects of primary commodity production on the term of trade of underdeveloped regions and countries, served to further discredit neo-classicalism and, in particular, the Ricardian concept of 'comparative advantage'. Influenced therefore by the post war Keynesian political economy, development economists advocated an interventionist state.

The state was viewed as the catalyst to increase domestic savings sufficient enough to achieve investment levels

²⁹ Kari Levitt, Evolution of Development Economics, Saint Mary's University International Development Studies Working Paper no.6, 1991, p.4. Levitt's article provides a useful analysis of the both the factors and forces in the immediate post-war global political economy, which gave rise to the study of Third World countries, and the intellectual currents in the new discipline of development economics.

³⁰ For a succinct compilation and retrospective of the works of the principal contributors to the discipline of development economics see: Gerald M. Meiers and Dudley Seers ed., Pioneers in Development (London: Oxford University Press for the World Bank, 1994).

conducive to changing the structure of the economy. While some analysts within this genre emphasized the indispensability of world trade (Viner) and/or foreign aid (Lewis) in order to compensate for insufficient domestic resources, in general development economists were weary of the benefits accruing from an unequal world trading system and sceptical on the longevity of resource flows in the form of foreign aid from the West. They stressed the need to mobilize domestic resources, particularly from the agrarian sector in order to finance import-substitution industrialization. Underdeveloped countries could break the 'vicious cycle of poverty' (Rosenstein-Rodan) and overcome the obstacle to capital formation and investment, if the state implemented well articulated development plans drafted by Western economists. Placing priority on increasing domestic savings (Nurkse and Rosenstein-Rodan) a path of balanced (Rosenstein-Rodan) or unbalanced (Hirshman) growth could be pursued, triggering -- to use Lewis' analogy -- a 'snowball effect', ensuring a process of continuous economic growth.³¹ Industrialization was to be undertaken with vigour. The state was encouraged to establish the appropriate exchange and trade policies to protect nascent industries from foreign competition in order to enable industrial productivity and economic growth. Without questioning how the unequal international division of labour

³¹ Lewis cited in Bjorn Hettne, Development Theory and the Three Worlds, (London: Longman Group, 1990), p.50-54.

militated against domestic development or critically viewing the internal social structures, development was reduced to economic growth and incremental rises in per capita real incomes.

This optimistic vision of a linear growth process under the direction of the state was quite attractive to the ruling classes in the Third World. The consensus on the centrality of the state in the development process boded well for the weak Nigerian ruling class in its appeal over a liberal market-driven option and compatibility with the need to use state power to ensure its reproduction in the political and economic spheres. With this imperative in mind, successive development plans set out to i) shift the structure of production from the dominance of agricultural exports to import substitution industrialization, ii) increase indigenous participation in the economy (particularly the productive sectors), and iii) meet the welfarist expectation of the mass democratic movement which were mobilized in nationalist struggle by providing employment opportunities, higher wages, access to education, housing, and health care for the majority of the population. Intra-ruling class conflicts, the politicization of region and ethnicity and ensuing political instability which led to the civil war (1967-1970) prevented the full implementation of the threefold strategy in the first plan period (1962-68). It was not until the 1970s that serious efforts were made to achieve these stated goals.

The confluence of the successful prosecution of the civil war and the developments in the global political economy in the wake of the first oil shock, where OPEC, the Group of 77, UNCTAD, and the Non-Aligned Movement demanded the restructuring of Third World peripheral integration into the global capitalist economy, gave the Nigerian state the impetus to strive to actualize post-colonial assertions of economic nationalism. Benefiting from the 1973 oil price hikes, the base of accumulation in the country shifted from the agrarian to the crude oil sector. The price of Nigeria's oil increased from 64 cents a barrel in 1970 to 1.56 U.S. dollars a barrel in 1971, representing a tremendous 240% rise in income, which nearly doubled (477%) by 1974. Oil production rose from 2.1 million barrels per day in 1970 to its peak of 2.4 million barrels in 1979 with revenues accrued, escalating from N1,403.3 million to N10 billion in the same period.³²

Oil revenues provided the financial basis of the Second (1970-74) and Third National Development Plans (1975-1980). An indigenization plan, import substitution strategy, and an ambitious public expenditure programme were central to the development plans of the 1970s. The 1972 and 1977 Nigerian Enterprise Promotion Decree (NEPD), introduced by the military governments of Gowon and Mohammed/Obasanjo, were the specific mechanism through which the Nigerian state sought to promote

³² Julius Ihonvbere, The State, The Bourgeoisie And The Crisis of Development in Post-Colonial Nigeria, mimeo: University of Texas, 1992.

the interest of local productive capital. The indigenization plan espoused the extension of Nigerian participation in the economy by defining spheres of influence in the economy between local and transnational capital. The indigenization component of the 2nd Plan under Gowon, reserved schedule one for entirely Nigerian capital. Schedule two stipulated that Nigerian equity must be at least 40%, while schedule three was left unaffected by the plan. Building on its predecessor, the 3rd Plan extended indigenization to include all enterprises operating in Nigeria by a similar three-tier scheduling of the economy. Schedule one again was the domain of local capital, while schedule two and three required 60% and 40% Nigerian equity respectively.

Though the 3rd Plan attempted to incorporate all sectors of the economy into the indigenization scheme, it had only a marginal affect in redressing transnational domination of the economy. Indeed, with the scope of manufacturing enterprise included, there was an increase not only in equity holdings in existing intermediate-scale manufacturing enterprise, but some local capital ventured into beverages, textiles, building materials and chemical production. *Prima facie*, it appeared as if the Nigerian state was able to counteract the dominant position of transnational capital in the Nigerian economy by the virtual compliance of TNCs with the equity sharing plan and the exodus of only two of the hundreds of TNCs operating in Nigeria. However, this was because TNCs were not yielding

managerial control of these enterprises. They utilized legal and extra-legal mechanisms to retain power.³³ It became more lucrative for factions of local capital to be a front for transnational firms in these equity schemes. Rather than investing the capital accrued from the indigenization exercise into expanded reproduction, factions of the local bourgeois engaged in corrupt practices, inflated contracts, and imported and consumed all sorts of luxury goods. J.S. Zwingina's study of the structure of ownership of the leading corporations in Nigeria concludes,

the domination of strategic enterprises by such powerful Nigerian gave the illusion of a Nigerian control of the economy, but in almost all cases, the management of foreign enterprises was operated by the foreign directors of the Board, who received many directives from their parent companies, while at the same time, enjoying the domestic protection of their powerful board members with contacts in the government. [sic]³⁴

While indigenous participation did increase in the government's three-sector scheduling of the Nigerian economy, the emphasis on ownership as opposed to control failed to alter the pattern of accumulation.

The ISI strategy was similarly designed to change the structure of production and the dependent pattern of accumulation in the country. By adopting compatible trade and

³³ For an in depth examination of the Indigenization programme in Nigeria, and specifically how foreign capital circumvented the equity requirements see: Claude Ake, Political Economy of Nigeria, (London: Longman, 1985), Thomas Biersteker, "Limits of State Power in the Contemporary World Economy" in P.G. Brown and H. Shue eds., Boundaries, (Tctowa: Rowman and Littlefield, 1981), Beckman, "Whose State? State and Capitalist Development in Nigeria" in ROAPE, no.23, 1982.

³⁴ J.S. Zwingina, Capitalist Development in an African Economy: The Case of Nigeria (Ibadan: University of Ibadan Press, 1992), p.150.

exchange policies, the local production of previously imported consumer goods could be induced. The strategy would discourage import dependency, avert balance of payment problems, while increasing foreign exchange savings and domestic manufacturing value-added. The fostering of sectoral linkages would contribute to the transformation of the structure of production towards national self-reliance. Nigerian manufacturing output grew rapidly between the adoption of the 2nd Plan and 1980. (see Table 2.1)

In this period, the annual average growth rate of the manufacturing sector was 12%, then began to decelerate in the 1980s. The most dynamic sector in the 1970s, manufacturing growth surpassed agriculture which registered negative growth rates in this period. Reflecting the continued import dependency of industrial production and the low level of value added, manufacturing growth was not associated with any significant increase in this sector contribution to GDP, as the 5% share of GDP in 1979 replicated the 1960 level. (see Table 2.2) The structure of manufacturing output was biased towards consumer goods and concentrated on the production of

TABLE 2.1. GROWTH OF PRODUCTION IN NIGERIA: AVERAGE ANNUAL GROWTH RATES 1960-1987 (%)

YEAR	GDP	AGR'L	IND'Y	(MANU)	SERVICES
1960-70	3.1	-0.4	13.8	(9.3)	5.6
1970-80	6.5	-0.3	8.1	(12.0)	9.7
1980-87	1.7	0.6	4.4	(-2.1)	-0.3

TABLE 2.2. STRUCTURE OF PRODUCTION IN NIGERIA: SECTORAL SHARE OF GDP 1960-1982 (%)

YEAR	GDP (\$m)	AGR'L	IND'Y	(MANU)	SERVICES
1960	2,180	63	11	(5)	29
1965	5,850	54	13	(6)	27
1970	(n.a)	23	50	(n.a)	27
1975	(n.a)	24	43	(n.a)	33
1979	70,170	22	46	(8)	32
1980	91,130	20	42	(8)	38
1982	71,720	22	39	(8)	39

SOURCE: WORLD BANK: WORLD DEVELOPMENT REPORTS 1979-1989

commodities such as food beverages, tobacco, and beer. The contributions of intermediary and capital goods in

manufacturing output was insignificant, merely reaching a peak of 26.7% in 1980. (see Table 2.3.) Though the industrialization plan shifted the structure of merchandise imports with machinery and transport equipment increasing from 34% in 1965 to 38% in 1982 and a decrease in consumer goods from 48% to 35% in the same period,³⁵ the importation "of intermediate and capital goods was for the domestic production

TABLE 2.3. STRUCTURE OF MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY 1958 - 1984 (%)

	1958	1963	1968	1973	1978	1979	1980	1984
CAPITAL GOODS	7.7	9.4	15.8	6.7	9.1	19.1	26.7	19.4
CONSUMER GOODS	92.3	90.6	84.2	93.3	90.9	80.9	73.3	80.6

SOURCE: FEDERAL OFFICE OF STATISTICS, INDUSTRIAL SURVEY OF NIGERIA; Cited in P.N.C. Okigbo, Planning in Nigeria

of consumer goods".³⁶ The ISI strategy only served to replace one form of structural dependency with another. As A.M. Osoba's study on small-scale industries in Nigeria revealed, major industrial groups such as textiles, paper and paper products, rubber and plastic products and basic metal were respectively 60, 90, 70 and 90 percent dependent on foreign sources of inputs.³⁷ The oil boom used to finance the plans of the 1970s did not reconcile the contradiction between surplus and investment by the diversification and strengthening of the country's productive base. The inability of the state to monitor and direct the ISI strategy such that

³⁵ World Bank, World Development Report 1985, (New York: World Bank Publication, 1985), Table 11, p.194.

³⁶ Bright Ekuereh, "Second Tier Foreign Exchange Market and the Structure of Industrial Growth in Nigeria" in R. Omotayo Olaniyan and Chibuzo N. Nwoke, Structural Adjustment in Nigeria: The Impact of SAP on the Economy, (Lagos: The Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, 1989), p.53.

³⁷ Osoba cited in Zwingina, Capitalist Development.

it ensured the utilization of local inputs and encouraged the production of intermediate and capital goods, led to the squandering of surplus value through TNC profit repatriations and the increased importation of both capital and consumer goods. The industrial sector only averted crisis because the huge petro-dollars accrued to the state were temporarily sufficient to meet the growing import needs of the economy.

Huge oil-rents also led to the rapid expansion of public sector expenditure in the areas of social services and physical infrastructure. Weak and disorganized subordinate groups, while unable to reduce the outflow of resources from the country or curb state excesses and abuses and subject development to the imperative of the poor majority; their struggles however, did lead to state concessions in areas of social welfare. In part compelling expanded public expenditures, parallel demands from ruling class factions, which saw an avenue for private accumulation, also prompted state action. Public expenditure, for instance, in the education and health sectors during the 2nd and 3rd Plan periods rose from 11.4 and 4.3 million naira(mn) in 1970/71 to 213.1 and 21.6 (mn) in 1974/75 respectively and then to 391.1 and 80.2 (mn) in 1979/80. State expenditure on water supply and transportation increased from 24.0 and 159.2 (mn) in 1973/74 to 123.6 (mn) and 1.2 billion naira (bn) in 1975/76, respectively, and to 359.6 and 962,3 (mn) in 1979/1980.³⁸ In

³⁸ Zwingina, Capitalist Development, p.123-124.

addition to increased wages and extended social wages during the Gowon regime, the Nigerian state sought to extend its hegemonic project beyond the capitalist urban enclave by pursuing regional development programmes and rural development schemes designed to reduce urban and rural disparities. For example, in the first year of the 3rd Plan, the stated resource commitments for the duration of the projects and programmes of rural electrification, community development and health and water supplies in the countryside were respectively 23.9, 84.3, 7.2 and 20.0 percent disbursed.

In spite of the expansion of social expenditures, the increasing dependence on oil exports to fuel internal development rendered these achievements unsustainable. Notwithstanding the enlarged expenditures in the countryside, the 1970s witnessed a near total neglect of the agricultural sector. As indicated in Table 2.1 and 2.2, this sector recorded an average growth rate of -0.3 between 1970 and 1980, while sectoral contribution to GDP fell drastically from 63% in 1965 to 20% by 1980. The export base of the Nigerian economy glaringly exhibited the same pattern, as major agricultural commodities which were the primary source of foreign exchange in the 1960s, by 1970 represented 30 percent of export earnings, declining to 5 percent in 1975 and dramatically dropping to 1 percent in 1980. (see Table 2.4) Cocoa, one of the country's major agricultural products, declined from 7.7 percent of total exports in 1975 to 2.2

percent by 1980.³⁹ Non-oil mineral production suffered a

TABLE 2.1 REPORT OF OIL AND MAJOR AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES 1970 - 1980 (BILLION NAIRA)

	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980
1. TOTAL EXPORTS	465	1231	1616	2376	5795	4825	4751	7611	4664	10617	11033
2. CRUDE OIL NET	519	951	1176	1824	5366	4564	6382	7873	5154	10167	10691
3. MIN. & NET	355	261	167	249	259	231	274	374	413	450	341
4.1 AG & OF 1	54	74	82	93	92	92	94	93	92	94	95
4.2 AG & OF 2	20	17	12	11	6	5	6	6	7	4	1

SOURCE: CENTRAL BANK OF NIGERIA (C.B.N.) Nigeria's Principal Economic And Statistical Indicators: 1970-1982 Cited in J.B Zwingina Capitalist Development in an African Economy: The Case of Nigeria (Ibadan: University of Ibadan Press) p136.

similar neglect as the production of the sector's two principal commodities, cassiterite and coal both declined by nearly 50% between 1975 and 1980.⁴⁰

Reflecting the predominant role of transnational and comprador capital in the Nigerian economy, the huge oil surpluses in this period led to the rapid expansion of imports. Nigeria's import receipts increased from N1.727 billion in 1974 to N7.087 bn in 1977 and nearly doubled by 1981 to the level of N12.919 billion. The import of capital and consumer goods represented 69% and 25%; 68% and 28%; and, 60% and 30% of total imports, in 1974, 1977 and 1981 respectively.⁴¹ This phenomenal growth in imports increasingly consisted of foodstuffs. By the mid-1970s Nigeria became a net importer of food. Food imports rose astronomically from N166.4 million in 1974 to N1.0 bn in 1977

³⁹ E. Usoro, "Development of the Nigerian Agricultural Sector Within the Framework of the Structural Adjustment Programme" in A. Phillips and E. Ndekwu eds., Structural Adjustment in a Developing Economy: The Case of Nigeria (Ibadan: NISER, 1987).

⁴⁰ Zwingina, Capitalist Development.

⁴¹ Yusuf Bangura, "Basic Misconceptions", p.57.

then more than doubled to N2.1 bn by 1981. The unproductive activities of comprador and transnational factions of the dominant class, which by succeeding in taking advantage of their control of the state apparatus to strengthen themselves in the commercial sector, greatly contributed to massive capital flight and the balance of payment difficulties the country experienced in the late 1970s. From the balance of payments surplus of N3.1 billion in 1974, Nigeria recorded a payment deficit of N3.4 billion in 1976 and N4.7 bn by 1977. The unproductive character of capitalist development in Nigeria was such that sectoral composition of GDP continued to be dominated by trading, extractive and service sectors. With the instability in the oil markets during the 1970s, the Nigerian state and economy could not avert a crisis of accumulation and legitimacy.

CRISIS AND PRE-ADJUSTMENT RECOVERY PROGRAMMES IN NIGERIA

The immediate signs of a deepening crisis in Nigeria occurred in 1977 when world oil prices briefly declined. Production of oil dropped from 2.1 million barrels a day in 1977 to 1.5mn barrels in 1978, reducing export revenues from N7 billion to N5.9 billion in the same period.⁴² With declining state revenue, the government was unable to meet its public sector expenditures. Agricultural and industrial production were constrained by the inability to import

⁴² Adebayo Olukoshi, "The Origins, Dimensions and Consequences of the Nigerian Economic Crisis: 1982 -1985" in Olukoshi ed., Crisis and Adjustment in the Nigerian Economy, 1991, p.29.

necessary inputs for the production process. In light of these developments, the Obasanjo regime, in the midst of a transition to Nigeria's Second Republic, introduced some 'austerity' measures. The government increased tariff levies in order to reduce the importation of particularly consumer goods. Public expenditures were reduced and user fees instituted on a range of social services. Continued foreign exchange constraints, however, led the import-dependent industries to either close down or dramatically reduce productive capacities. The ensuing increase in unemployment, rising inflation and cuts to social services led to a decline in living standards of the poor majority.

Popular responses to deteriorated material conditions were met by increased state repression. For instance, in 1978, students reacted to the immediate increases in university fees and the broader degeneration of socio-economic conditions in the country by organizing peaceful protest nation-wide. At both the University of Lagos (UNILAG) and Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), in particular, these demonstrations were met with police brutality, leading to the death and wounding of large numbers of students.⁴³ These atrocities were followed by strong public outcry and protests which later swept the country. A disorganized trade union movement in spite of the newly state constituted central labour organization, the

⁴³ A.S. Mohammed, "The Aftermath of the Ahmadu Bello University Students' Crisis of May 1986" in SOAPE, no.37, 1986.

Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC), remained factionalized and immobile amidst these developments. Despite the non-participation of trade unions, the nation-wide unrest rocked the Obasanjo regime and its precarious political transition. Facing a crisis of accumulation and legitimacy, the government entered into the international money markets borrowing in excess of \$U.S. 2 billion, in order to contain the deepening crisis.⁴⁴ Temporarily easing financial constraints, the infusion of revenues could not mitigate the economic decline and the tenuous legitimacy of the government. Attempts to re-institute 'belt-tighten' measures by the new civilian regime which came to power in October 1979 could not allay the impending crisis.

The ascendancy of Alhaji Shehu Shagari and the National Party of Nigeria (NPN, 1979-1983) became a 'free for all' for the ruling classes before the new government recognized that the state and economy were in the throes of a protracted crisis. With the domination of the state by a comprador faction of capital, the state moved to reverse the austerity measures introduced by the Obasanjo regime. Trade regimes were quickly liberalized and public expenditures expanded. The contradiction between social surpluses and investment was sharpened. Between 1979 when the Shagari regime took office and 1981, the country's import bill increased from 6.0 billion

⁴⁴ P.N.C. Okigbo, National Development Planning: 1990 - 92 (London: James Currey, 1989) p.174.

to nearly 13.0 bn. When in 1981-82 the oil glut in the world capitalist economy led to a decline in oil prices, export revenues plummeted by 50%, dropping from N10.1 bn in 1979 to N5.1 bn in 1982. Federal and state governments which depended on oil-export earnings for 60% and 80% (respectively) of their revenue faced a financial crisis.⁴⁵

Nigeria's balance of payment difficulties deepened in this period. Increasing from \$8.9 billion in 1977, Nigeria's external debt by 1982 totalled \$12.9 billion. Both agricultural and industrial crises reached unprecedented levels. For the import-dependent manufacturing sub-sector, production since the 1970s had been heavily tied to the fate of the oil-sector on which it exclusive relied to finance the imports of much needed raw materials. Unable to develop local sources of inputs, the process of deindustrialization which began in 1977 accelerated in the wake of the 1982 crisis. An industrial survey conducted by the Manufacturing Association of Nigeria (MAN) in 1983, concluded that between June 1982 and 1983 a total of 161 companies employing over 20 000 workers closed down. Industrial closures and reduced capacity utilization in existing manufacturing companies led to the unemployment of over a million workers between 1980 and 1983.⁴⁶ With the addition of public sector unemployment this

⁴⁵ Jon Kraus, "Economic Adjustment and Regime Creation in Nigeria" in Current History, vol.88, no.538, May 1989, p.233.

⁴⁶ Olukoshi, "Origin", p.32-33.

figure rose significantly. Workers wages in both the public and private sectors went unpaid for months. Social expenditures were drastically cut. Education and health sectors nearly collapsed. Agricultural neglect continued. Inflation rose exponentially. With the continued decline in living standards of the majority of Nigerians, the state finally introduced some measures to contain the crisis.

The Economic Stabilization (Temporary Provisions) Act adopted in 1982, deepened the austerity measures followed by the Obasanjo regime. Import restrictions were widened on consumer goods. Existing tariff levies on both capital and consumer goods were increased. Attempts were made by the government to regulate the import licensing system. Tight fiscal policies were introduced and included both the decrease in public sector spending and the increase of interest rates designed to reduce both inflation and the external deficit. Public sector workers were laid off in large numbers, wage freezes were enacted, user fees continued on a wide range of social services, new taxes, fees and tolls were initiated and interest rates were raised by 2 percent.⁴⁷

While stringent adherence to these measures would have gone some way to resuscitate productive sectors of the economy, albeit temporarily, slippage in the implementation of these provisions exacerbated the crisis. Transnational

⁴⁷ Julius Ihonyehere, "Structural Adjustment and Nigeria's Democratic Transition" in TransAfrica Forum, vol.8, no.3, Fall 1991, p.64.

capital, determined to maintain access to markets for the sale of excess commodity products, particularly when the crises in advanced capitalist countries inhibited the ability to dispose of surplus goods, increased the pressure on the Nigerian state to reduce trade restrictions. The influence of comprador capital, -- transnational and domestic -- in conjunction with factions of productive capital -- transnational and domestic -- which shared an interest in reversing the current trade regimes, enabled the circumvention of import controls. While the activities of comprador capital, TNC or domestic, concentrated as they are at the level of exchange, stood to benefit outright from the easing of trade regulations, the impact of relaxed import levies was mixed for factions of productive capital. For instance, both transnational and local productive capital do benefit from loosened trade regimes. Transnationals tend to acquire intermediary and capital inputs from the West, likewise, the import-dependent Nigerian industries. However, the anarchic import licensing system and constraints which Nigeria's high import profile had on productive sectors was a source of concern for domestic capital. The increasing indebtedness and scarcity of foreign exchange needed to import inputs inhibited the growth of production.

Their collective activities, nonetheless, reproduced the contradiction between social surpluses and investment as the continued high levels of imports -- both consumer and capital

goods -- exacerbated the country's balance of payments position. Access to import licenses and scarce foreign exchange under the Shagari administration was dominated by comprador capital. Posing a much greater threat to economic stability, the 'free license' to import a whole range of consumer goods accorded comprador capital, coupled with their continued speculative activities, continued to be lucrative but inconsequential in reviving productive sectors of the economy. The manufacturing bourgeoisie condemned the poor implementation of the austerity measures and continued to voice strong concerns about the constraints which foreign exchange scarcity posed for industrial production. The deteriorating situation led Jerome Udoji, the then President of MAN to declare "that 1983 was the worst in all the industrial history of Nigeria. One fifth of Nigeria's organized industry, or 107 industrial establishments suspended production for 'four to eight weeks' that year, while others went out of business".⁴⁸ Unable to obtain import licenses and access to foreign exchange, some companies closed and joined the unproductive activities of comprador capital, using the state for its own private accumulation.

When in April 1983 the Shagari government entered into negotiations with the IMF on an Extended Fund Facility of between N1.9 and N2.4 billion, the response from productive

⁴⁸ S. Othman, "Classes, Crises, and Coups: The Demise of the Shagari Regime" in African Affairs, no.83, no.333, 1984, p.452.

capital was mixed. An IMF loan was welcomed in that it provided an immediate ease on foreign exchange constraints faced by Nigeria's import-dependent industries. However, factions within domestic capital remained sceptical on the short and medium-term benefits of trade reversals. This is reflected in MAN's opposition to blanket liberalization since the inception of the negotiations. The Shagari government and the IMF however were deadlocked on the 'conditionalities' of the loan. Though the Economic Stabilization Act embraced policy prescriptions embodied in the standard orthodox package of the IFIs, such as the cuts in public expenditure, imposition of user fees, regulation of wages, privatization of state parastatals and incentives to transnational capital, continued state subsidies on petroleum products and the regulation of trade and exchange rate regimes were critical points of contention between the government and the IFIs.⁴⁹ These outstanding issues were not resolved in the 'second life' of the NPN regime which returned to power in the 1983 election.

The Supreme Military Council (SMC, 1984-85) headed by Muhammadu Buhari and Tunde Idiagbon came to power in a widely anticipated and welcomed coup on December 31, 1983. The recovery programme of the Shagari regime could not reverse the precipitous socio-economic decline. Unemployment, poverty, hunger, inflation increased rapidly in this period.

⁴⁹ Ekuerehare, "Second Tier", p.50.

Indiscipline and waste were taken to new heights. The state fostered a culture of corruption. Agricultural and industrial production continued to decline. The GDP growth rate in 1984 was -5.5 percent while external indebtedness stood at \$18 billion in the same year.⁵⁰ The gross mismanagement of the economy by the Nigerian state alienated productive capital, sections of the petty bourgeoisie and popular classes. Any vestige of legitimacy which the state might have enjoyed among popular classes in civil society waned as they continued to bear the brunt of the economic decline. Increased state repression from a crisis-ridden Nigerian state bent on reproducing itself, even through coercion, worsened the predicament. The conduct of the elections supervised by the ruling NPN, ensured that the incumbents won the rigging contest among factions of the ruling class. The concomitant manipulation of ethnicity, religion, region and the intensification of political violence and thuggery, totally discredited the state, its 'democratic' institutions and processes. This was the turbulent political and economic environment which the SMC was attempting to redress when it entered the fore of Nigerian politics.

Espousing the usual litany of explanations for the military's intervention, the maiden speech of the SMC captured deep rooted sentiments in civil society on the political and socio-economic decline experienced during the Second Republic.

⁵⁰ Kraus, "Economic Adjustment", p.233.

In the national broadcast of the coup, the then Brigadier-General Sani Abacha proclaimed to his,

...fellow countrymen and women...[that] you are all living witnesses to the grave economic predicament and uncertainty which an inept and corrupt leadership has imposed on our beloved nation for the past four years. I am referring to the harsh, intolerable conditions under which we are now living. Our economy has been hopelessly mismanaged. We have become a debtor and a beggar nation...⁵¹ (emphasis mine)

Scuttling all previous political institutions and suspending all talk on a return to civilian rule, the SMC set out to resurrect Nigeria's tottering economy. Reflecting the interests of productive capital at the base of the SMC, policies were enacted to curtail the activities of the parasitic comprador and corrupt elements of the ruling class which threatened the productive sectors of the economy. The 1984 Budget laid out the regime's recovery programme aimed at improving Nigeria's balance of payment position, encouraging foreign investment and restoring economic growth and development. The main tenets of the Budget included,

1. a rapid repayment of external loans in order to reestablish the country's credit worthiness; 2. a high rate of repayment of internal debts to placate local investors and contractors; 3. an increase in the rate and volume of internal revenue raised through taxes, levies, tolls and fees; 4. overall reduction in public expenditures particularly of social services like education and health; 5. a freeze on wages and salaries and a reduction in the total amount paid as wages through the drastic reduction of allowances; 6. large scale reduction of the labour force in the public services and parastatals to reduce the wage bill and promote efficiency and proper resource management; 7. closer monitoring and taxing of the economic activities of petty-traders, artisans and other self employed professionals as a way of raising revenue; 8. expanded incentives for foreign investors and the review of the indigenization regulations promulgated in the 1970s; 9. encouragement of large scale private investment in agriculture through a review of the land use decree and the indigenization programme; 10. the privatization and commercialization of public parastatals even those making profits as a way of generating revenue and rolling

⁵¹ S. Othman, "Classes, Crises and Coups", p.441.

back the role of the state in the economy; 11. review of all on-going projects with funding for only 'core projects' especially in the areas of basic raw material production; 12. priority investment in power and telecommunication 13. more effective coordination of the budgeting processes particularly at the level of monitoring; and 14. strict foreign exchange control in order to build up the foreign reserves and encourage the inflow of foreign investors.⁵²

In the continuum of 'austerity measures' embraced since the late 1970s, the implementation of the government's tight fiscal policies were pursued vigorously. Public sector expenditure continued to be curtailed. Rampant unemployment, wage freezes, and spending cuts in education and health care continued. State governments imposed onerous taxes on the people; workers, peasants and artisans, were required to pay poll and cattle taxes. User fees on education and health care were raised.⁵³ Reinforcing the states fiscal discipline, new capital projects were frozen and interest rates were raised.

Measures were also taken to reverse capital flight. In addition to extending import levies beyond the levels maintained by both the Obasanjo and Shagari regimes, the state reduced the percentage of remittable incomes, decreased foreign travel allowance and enacted anti-currency trafficking decrees. The puritanical manner in which the implementation of these measures were pursued increased the initial legitimacy of the SMC. Presenting comprador capital as the saboteurs of national development, the state, eager to curtail their

⁵² Ihonvbere, Post Colonial Nigeria, p.19.

⁵³ Othman, "Classes, Crises, and Coups", p.459.

activities, arrested members of this class, raided warehouses and seized their goods. Swift state actions against contract inflation, over-invoicing of imports, forgery, kickbacks, fraud, misappropriation of funds and a host of other corrupt practices reinforced the disciplinarian character of the state. The so-called 'War Against Indiscipline' (WAI) which the government declared early in its administration, provided the ideological plank to force through further draconian anti-labour and unpopular decrees. Frivolous strikes, industrial slow-downs and lockouts, declared the Labour Minister, S.K. Omojokun, were public acts of indiscipline which would be dealt with ruthlessly.⁵⁴ Thatcherite 'no work, no pay' legislations adopted by the Nigerian state were an outgrowth of the global ideological shift to the right in this period. Protests by workers and other subordinate social groupings were then met with brutal force.

Through the discipline of labour, the state sought to enhance the conditions for domestic capital accumulation. Unlike previous regimes, the SMC seriously pursued measures to shift the dependent pattern of accumulation by restructuring the nature of industrial production. Emphasizing the optimal use of local raw materials and inputs, the state enforced tariff increases -- between 5 and 200 percent -- on all imports destined for industrial production.⁵⁵ A critical

⁵⁴ Othman, "Classes, Crises, and Coups", p.458.

⁵⁵ Olukoshi, "Origins", p.41.

component of the SMC's industrial policy was the unilateral disallowances of any prospective industry lacking a local resource base. The state, additionally, encouraged productive capital to reinvest larger profits in order to hasten economic recovery. In spite of these far-reaching measures taken by the state and the serious attempts to reconcile the contradiction between social surpluses and investment by limiting capital flight and encouraging inter-sectoral linkages, economic decline persisted. External debt by 1985 totalled US\$19.5 billion while the debt servicing ratio stood at 33%⁵⁶ -- the federal government figure place this figure at 44% of export earnings. Inflation increased to 40%, and despite the emphasis on the uses of local resources, manufacturing closures and decreased capacity utilization continued. The recovery programme reached a state of near collapse when in 1985 the international financial institutions intensified the pressure on the Nigerian state to acquiesce to the dictates of the IMF.

In spite of the resumption of talks between the government and the IMF in February 1985, the outstanding concerns over the withdrawal of petroleum product subsidies and the deregulation of trade and exchange rate regimes, which had led to previously stalled negotiations, remained contentious issues. For the government, the adoption of these measures would weaken domestic productive capital and flood

⁵⁶ World Bank, World Debt Tables: 1992 (Washington: World Bank Publication, 1992), p.298.

the Nigerian market with all sorts of goods, running counter to state efforts to strengthen productive capacities and inwardly reorient the Nigerian economy. Reflecting on the march towards structural adjustment in Nigeria, Adebayo Olukoshi aptly notes that the depth of the anti-labour austerity measures, the zeal in implementation and the forthrightness of the state in repressing popular opposition to these policies, should have been enough to endear the Buhari regime to the IMF.⁵⁷ But the refusal to adopt all the conditionalities of the IMF loan led Western governments and commercial banks through the Paris and London Clubs, to withdraw credit guarantees on Nigeria's imports. Western creditors also insisted that the country adopt the IMF policy prescriptions before outstanding debt obligations could be rescheduled. The World Bank intensified the pressure on Nigeria to come to terms with the IMF by threatening to suspend relations.⁵⁸ With declining industrial and agricultural production, unemployment, inflation, widespread scarcity of goods, and increasing debt and debt-servicing, the government attempted to ease the foreign exchange constraints by circumventing the Western dominated international financial system through the acquisition of non-Western aid and the pursuit of a counter-trade policy. In the latter, Nigeria's

⁵⁷ Adebayo Olukoshi, "The March to Adjustment in Nigeria", Olukoshi ed., Crisis and Adjustment, p.66.

⁵⁸ Ekuerehare, "Second Tier".

oil was bartered for raw materials, spare parts, consumer goods and food, from notably Brazil, Italy and Poland. Like the abortive efforts to obtain a N1.6 billion loan from the Saudi Arabian government -- which capitulated to Western pressures -- the policy of counter-trade could not be sustained.⁵⁹

Declining material conditions intensified internal contradictions and conflicts. Factions of productive capital, constrained by foreign exchange scarcity and disillusioned by the counter-trade policies and continued stalemate in the negotiations with the IMF, increasingly lost confidence in the government.⁶⁰ State legitimacy among the petty bourgeoisie and popular forces in civil society also continued to wither. The proclaimed "WAI" was used to harass and suppress opposition to the economic recovery programme by workers, peasants, students, radical intellegencia, market women, street traders, journalists etc. For instance, in March 1985 protests by Nigerian Airways pilots against unilateral wages cuts led to wholesale job losses and the subsequent re-employment under harsh terms. A month later, striking doctors opposing cuts to medical benefits and the deterioration of the health sector were dismissed *en masse* and the principal

⁵⁹ Olukoshi, "The March", p.66.

⁶⁰ Kris Obodumu, "The Nigerian Military and Leadership Succession: A Materialist Examination of the Economic Foundation of Nigeria's Third Republic" in B. Caron et al. eds., Democratic Transition in Africa, (Ibadan: CREDEU, 1992), p.246.

umbrella medical bodies, Nigerian Medical Association (NMA) and the National Association of Resident Doctors (NARD), were proscribed.⁶¹ The anti-labour policies of the regimes escalated conflicts between the labour movement and the SMC. Declining to engage the NLC in dialogue over a wide range of grievances such as massive job losses, unpaid wages and wage freezes experienced under the government's economic recovery programme, intensified antagonisms. Public appearances by Buhari and Idiagbon at the Organization of African Trade Union Unity annual conference held in Lagos in January 1985 and at May Day celebrations, led to strong opposition and public outcry. Similarly, student unions continued to be one of the preferred targets of state harassment. In the attempt to clampdown on student political activities, the state banned the National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS) in 1984. Confronted by deteriorating material conditions, state capacity to co-opt and placate demands from subordinate groups, became increasingly limited. It thus relied heavily on coercion to reproduce its tenuous hegemony in civil society.

A series of executive fiats in this period intensified the suffocation of civil society. The notorious Decree No.2 empowered state security agents to detain without charge individuals regarded as threats to the state. As state coercive mechanisms were strengthened, trade union leaders,

⁶¹ Tayo Fashoyin, "Nigerian Labour and Military: Towards Exclusion?" in Labour, Capital and Society, vol.23, no.1, April 1990, p.25.

student activists, radical intellectuals and journalists increasingly became recipients of heightened harassment and detention. The promulgation of Decree No.3 sanctioned the formation of military tribunals to expedite deliberations on individuals defined as 'security threats'. With closed trials and no recourse to appeals, the state dispensed with the rudimentary precepts of justice and arbitrarily deliberated and convicted individuals onto whom the burden of proof had been shifted. Decree No.4 specifically targeted the fourth estate and academic freedoms. Empowered to establish a National Security Organization (NSO), headed by Idiagbon, this decree was mandated to deal with individuals that published 'false' information about the government and its policies. Under this decree prominent journalists and radical intellectuals were harassed, arrested and detained. The totality of these anti-labour and anti-popular policies which dismissed basic civil liberties and human rights increased the alienation of the state from civil society. State persecution and alienation from virtually all sectors of civil society coupled with its isolation from the centres of capital, created the environment in which Ibrahim Babangida came to power in a blood-less coup in August 1985. The recovery programme of Babangida and the Armed Forces Ruling Council (AFRC, 1985-1993), entailed the fundamental restructuring of the pattern of state-capitalist accumulation, guided by the IMF, with which it reached an accord in 1986.

I have discussed Africa's historical experience with specific reference to Nigeria's colonial and post-colonial development in order to provide a fairly comprehensive background on the both the roots of the political and social-economic crisis which engulfed African countries during the 1980s and the antecedent of neo-liberal market reforms in Nigeria. The remainder of this chapter discusses the impact of the hegemonic structural adjustment programme on the Nigerian economy and the continuing policy debates on the adjustment exercise.

SECTION THREE: THE STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT PROGRAMME IN AFRICA: THE IMPACT OF THE IMF AND WORLD BANK POLICIES ON THE NIGERIAN ECONOMY

Since the early 1980s, over two-thirds of the countries in Sub-Saharan Africa have adopted the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank guided structural adjustment programmes. In this period the IFIs have dominated the debates on the African crisis with their recovery programme, designed to restructure the pattern of post-colonial accumulation. The IMF and World Bank were established in 1944 as part of the Bretton Woods Agreement and were sanctioned to regulate the post-war international monetary system. The Articles of Agreement defined separate but reinforcing functions for the International Financial Institutions. The role of the IMF was envisioned as promoting, balance of payment stability, international monetary co-operation, expansion and balanced growth of international trade and assistance to member

countries through periodic lending.⁶² The World Bank (Group) which consists of a number of institutions. The most prominent of which include the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), the International Development Association, (IDA) and the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and are collectively formed to finance reconstruction, promote foreign investment, international trade and provide long-term lending assistance. The IDA was established in 1956 to financially assist low income countries, while the IFC formed in 1960 concentrated on encouraging and financing private enterprises.⁶³ Today, the World Bank usually refers to the IBRD and the IDA.

Prior to the 1980s the Bank's activities in Africa emphasized agricultural promotion, agrarian reforms and population controls in the effort to promote rapid economic growth,⁶⁴ while the IMF's operations continued to centre around the stabilization of external balance of payments difficulties. In the wake of the crisis in the global economy in the late 1970s, the Bank and Fund worked in closer collaboration in their interaction and approach to deteriorating socio-economic conditions in Africa and the

⁶² Eghosa Osagie, "The IMF and the World Bank in Nigeria's Economic Recovery" in Eghosa Osagie ed., Structural Adjustment Programme in Nigeria, (Kuru: NIPSS, 1992).

⁶³ Barend A. de Vries, Remaking the World Bank (Washington: Seven Locks Press, 1987) p.8.

⁶⁴ Bade Onimode, "Introduction" in Onimode ed., The IMF, The World Bank and the African Debt: Volume 1: The Economic Impact, (London: Zed Books, 1989) p.5.

Third World. The structural adjustment exercise therefore refers to the joint programme advanced by these institutions. It aims to achieve short-term balance of payment 'stability' and long-term 'adjustment' or reintegration of African economies into the international division of labour through the promotion of export commodity production.

The IMF seeks to accomplish balance of payment stability by providing member countries access to capital to meet external debt obligations. The funds which the IMF disburses are derived from numerous sources. Contributions first come from country members' own deposits or 'quotas', which are a function of GNP and percentage of world trade. That is, the amounts allotted by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries are greater than that of poor Third World nations. The IMF makes mandatory the payment of at least 25 percent of the quota in hard currency (ie. all G7 currencies except those of Canada and Italy), or Special Drawing Rights (SDRs), the credit facility established in 1969 to purchase hard currencies from the IMF. The Fund also provides capital through the General Agreement to Borrow facility (GAB) which is obtained from member countries' contributions beyond stipulated quotas. The SDR facility alluded to, enables members to borrow against the respective country's credit account with the IMF and is used to purchase

hard currency from the Fund.⁶⁵ The IMF, of course, earns income from loans to debtor countries and transactions in commercial markets.

Borrowing from the IMF is determined by a system of 'tranche' or lending preconditions, which attaches stricter stipulations on escalated acquisition of loans. In the 'reserve tranche', capital, up to 25 percent of the member country's quota is available upon request devoid of conditions. The 'first tranche' however, enforces minimal prerequisites on members drawing exactly 25 percent of the quota.⁶⁶ The 'upper credit tranche' in which African and Third World countries are the main users, consists of an Extended Fund Facility (EFF) and Stand-by Arrangements subject to full IMF conditionalities. The latter predates the EFF -- established in 1974 -- and differs only in the duration of the granted loans. An EFF repayment periods is usually 3-4 years while traditional stand-by arrangements last 12-18 months.⁶⁷ The IMF's 'hard' loans are generally short-term in span and carry interest rate at prevailing market rates.

The World Bank's lending policies since the early 1980s

⁶⁵ A. Brett, "The IMF's View of the World" in Martin Honeywell ed., The Power Brokers: The IMF AND Latin America (London: Latin America Bureau, 1983), p.23-24.

⁶⁶ Mary Sutton, "Introduction" in Tony Killick ed., The IMF and Stabilisation: Developing Country Experience (New York: St.Martin's Press, 1984), p.3-4.

⁶⁷ Stephan Haggard, "The Politics of Adjustment: Lessons from the IMF's Extended Fund Facility" in International Organization, vol.36, no.3, Summer 1985, p.506.

have shifted from stipulations on specific projects or programmes to now include economic policy reforms in recipient countries. In 1980 the Bank established the Structural Adjustment Loan (SAL) to provide quick disbursements to debt-straddled countries and to strengthen and monitor the ensuing market policy reforms.⁶⁸ Obtaining capital in the same fashion as the Fund, the World Bank's 'hard' loans are usually administered over a 10-15 year period at current market rates. Both institutions offer concessional loans to low income Third World countries. In addition to pre-adjustment 'soft loans' such as the now defunct Compensatory Financing Facility, Buffer Stock and Oil Facilities, in 1986 and 1987 respectively, the IMF established the Structural Adjustment Facilities (SAF) and the Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facilities (ESAF) designed to support, through low interest and relatively long-term loans, countries adopting the Fund's market reform. The IMF recently approved an Enlarged ESAF which will carry the same stipulation for eligibility and like SAF and ESAF, an interest rate of 0.5% and a repayment period of 10 years with 5 years grace.⁶⁹ The Bank's concessional lending continues to be administered by the IDA. The IDA, through triennially replenished capital contributions from advanced capitalist countries, (ie. IDA-6 (1981-83) -- IDA-10

⁶⁸ Stanley Please, The Hobbled Giant: Essays on the World Bank (Boulder: Westview, 1984).

⁶⁹ IMF, "IMF's Executive Board Approves Renewed and Enlarged ESAP" in IMF Survey, vol.23, no.1, January 10, 1994, p.1.

(1993-96) disburses to least-developed countries, loans which have a repayment period of fifty years at a 'service charge' of 0.75 percent on the total amount allotted and carry a ten year grace period.

As the IFIs have added stringent conditionalities to aid to African and Third World countries, it should be noted that the recurrent access to capital from the World Bank and IMF is contingent on "adequate" progress on the implementation of its policy prescriptions. Usually biannually, monitoring teams from the Bank and the Fund visit recipient countries to evaluate the progress in the execution of market reforms, with an endorsement of satisfactory crucial for any further multilateral 'hard' or 'soft' loan. Controlling as it does U.S.\$12 billion of \$15 billion in multilateral aid flows to the continent⁷⁰, the IFIs have gained enormous influence in its policy dialogue with African countries. But its power go further. The non-compliance to the IFIs dictates has usually blocked access to commercial credit, bilateral aid flows, debt-rescheduling and debt-forgiveness, since Western governments and creditors through the Paris and London Clubs (respectively) insist that recipient countries reach an agreement with the Bank and the Fund. The implications of this to the state autonomy of African and Third World countries are quite clear. Commenting on Western leverage over internal processes in Africa, given the continent's debt peonage, the

⁷⁰ Ake, "Rethinking", p.41.

former Secretary-General of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, Prof. Adebayo Adedeji, noted that the "IMF and the World Bank are now more powerful in Africa than the former colonial masters."⁷¹ In the same vein, David Finch, recently adjudged the relationship between Africa and the IFIs as "somewhat akin to that of colonial power and colony."⁷² With the current practise of aid conditionalities and consistent external monitoring of adjustment programmes, the centre of authority have increasingly been supplanted from national to international institutions, constricting the policy options of African states in the decisions affecting the country's recovery and development. This is not to suggest that African states and civil societies are politically effete to the designs of IFIs, as the continued contestation around the direction of economic recovery clearly indicates the contrary (see Chapter Three). Rather, it underscores the increasing dependency of African countries on international capital over the last decade.

The principal objectives and policy prescription of the IFI's cross-conditionalities, aimed at inducing recovery and self-sustained growth, include the following.

- * **Currency Devaluation:** This measure seeks to improve the balance of payments position of African countries by raising the cost of imported goods and making commodity exports competitive in the global economy.

⁷¹ Adebayo Adedeji cited in Ake, "Rethinking", p.41.

⁷² David Finch cited in Patrick Smith, "Aid Conditionality is "Swamping" Africa" in Africa Recovery, vol.7, no.3/4, December 1993-March 1994, p.15.

* **Domestic Demand Management Policies:** This policy aims to check spiralling inflation by cutting public sector expenditures, particularly in social services. Massive public sector retrenchments, wage cuts and freezes are also pursued. To reduce inflationary pressures, tight monetary and credit policies are further adopted.

* **Freeing of Prices:** Since the statist-model of capitalist development is blamed for the current crisis, the freeing of prices, through the desubsidization of food, fertilizers, oil and other items are required for the restoration of market forces necessary to guide economic recovery and development. * **Import Liberalization:** Relatedly, the liberalization of trade regimes is an important component in 'getting the prices right,' and rolling back the state in economic life. It seeks to open local industries to competition and facilitate increased foreign trade.

* **Privatization of parastatals:** Similarly, this measure further seeks to retrench the 'over-extended state' by reducing its protection of inefficient economic enterprises, which the private sector is better suited to organize, make productive and profitable.

While there has been shifts in policy emphasis over the last 15 years -- eg. poverty alleviation, political and military conditionalities -- the totality of these measures remain the policy thrust of neo-liberal market reforms in Nigeria and the rest of Africa.

NIGERIA AND THE STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT PROGRAMME

The regime headed by Ibrahim Babangida (AFRC, 1985-1993) came to power seeking to end the country's isolation from international financial institutions. The regime thus made it clear that it would reach an accord with the IMF by conceding the outstanding issues of subsidy removals and trade and exchange rate deregulations, which had stalled negotiations on an EFF of US.\$2.5 billion between the Fund and previous Nigerian governments. It followed that the AFRC in the early days of its administration, stressed that market reforms would be the central thrust of any economic recovery programme it adopted. Recognizing however, the tenuous legitimacy of the

Nigerian state and opposition to market reforms from diverse sectors of civil society, the government employed a two-pronged approach in its initial drive to build a consensus around the proposed recovery package. The regime first adopted a human rights posture, repealing Decree No.4 which was previously used to restrict press and academic freedoms. Detained journalists and lecturers were immediately released. It curtailed the powers of the NSO, held public viewing of the NSO detention centres, probed the abuses of NSO, yet, soon reconstituted the NSO as the State Security Service (SSS). The government also announced its intention to reestablish civilian rule by 1990. These measures were to reinforce the new policy of tolerance, openness and a commitment to civil liberties. Despite these initiatives, the Nigerian state could not divert attention from its contentious economic recovery programme.

Therefore, in September 1985, the AFRC held a national debate on the question of an IMF loan. Through the media and public debates, multiple forces in civil society -- workers, students, market-women, community organizations, religious bodies, intellectuals, co-operative associations, etc. -- forcefully rejected the IMF loan.⁷³ Acceptance of an IMF loan was viewed as a precursor to relinquished Nigerian control of the economy, giving Western interests undue influence on the direction of development in the country. Drawing on

⁷³ Olukoshi, "The March", p.68.

experiences from other African and Third World countries, they also argued that market reforms would create extreme hardship for the poor. In spite of internal conflicts, productive capital also came out against the IMF loan. While some members of this class felt that securing the loan would enable the state and private capital to reschedule external debts, obtain foreign aid and boost the financing of imports, others feared deregulation would have disastrous consequences on industrial production. Represented by the MAN, manufacturers expressed their strong opposition to the loan.

Amidst these debates, the Nigerian state promulgated the National Economic Emergency Powers Decree No.22 (NEEP, 1985)⁷⁴ which empowered the president to unilaterally make decisions on economic policies deemed in the 'national interest'. The NEEP deepened the ongoing austerity measures, initiated further cuts to public expenditures, laid-off workers and expanded the sectors affected by wage cuts and freezes. In 1986, the government rejected the IMF loan and instead opted for a so-called 'homegrown' structural adjustment programme.⁷⁵ With the full approval of the London/Paris Clubs and the IFIs, the annual budget embraced in

⁷⁴ Ihonvbere, "Democratic Transition", p 651

⁷⁵ There was very little 'homegrown' about Babangida's recovery programme. It consisted of the standard tenets associated with orthodox adjustment packages. While the government refused to accept the IMF loan, the periodic presence of IMF monitoring teams and rescheduling arrangements realized in the last eight years, confirms the accord reached with the Fund. In 1986, 1989, 1991 and 1992 the government rescheduled loans with both Paris and London Clubs, consisting also of debt for development and equity schemes.

its entirety the prescriptions of standard orthodox SAPs. The objectives of SAP articulated in the 1986 budget are as follows.

1. to restructure and diversify the productive base of the economy in order to reduce dependence on the oil sector for imports.
2. to achieve fiscal and balance of payments viability.
3. to lay the basis for sustainable non-inflationary or minimal inflationary growth.
4. to lessen the dominance of unproductive investments in the public sector, improve the sector efficiency and intensify the growth potential of the private sector.⁷⁶

SAP represents the most far-reaching economic policy in Nigeria's post-colonial history and is aimed at fundamentally re-structuring the state led pattern of accumulation in order to give free reign to market forces.

TABLE 2.5 **SECTORAL OBJECTIVES OF THE STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT PROGRAMME IN NIGERIA**

AGRICULTURE	MANUFACTURING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increase domestic food production with a view to improve nutritional intake and elimination of external dependence; • increasing domestic supply of agricultural raw materials such as cotton, cocoes, palm oil, sorghum etc., to the manufacturing sector, thereby increase local value added and reduce dependence on imported raw materials; • increasing production of exportable cash crops in order to diversify the export base of the economy; • achieving regional optimal crop production mix in accordance with the comparative advantages of each agro-ecological zone. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • encourage the accelerated development and use of local and use of local raw materials and intermediate inputs rather than depend on imported ones; • development and utilisation of local technology; • maximise growth in value added of manufacturing sector; • promote export-oriented industry; • generate employment through the encouragement of private sector small and medium scale industries; • remove bottlenecks and constraints that hamper industrial development including infrastructural, manpower, and administrative deficiencies; and liberalise control to facilitate greater indigenous and foreign investment.

SOURCE: S.O. Titilola, "The Impact of SAP on the Agricultural and Rural Economy of Nigeria", p.178 and J. Olorunhuan, "Re-Colonising Nigerian Industry: The First Year of the Structural Adjustment Programme, p.136. in: A.O. Phillips and S. Ndekwe, Structural Adjustment Programme in a Developing Economy: The Case of Nigeria (Ibadan: NISER, 1987).

With specific reference to the major sectors of the Nigerian economy under examination here, mainly industry and agriculture, the stated objectives are highlighted in Table 2.5 above. The major policy measures below collectively aim to induce the free working of the market mechanisms. Of direct bearing on the agricultural and industrial sectors are the deregulation of trade and exchange and the pursuance of tight monetary policies.

⁷⁶ Adedotun O. Phillips, Economic Impact of Nigeria's Structural Adjustment Programme, (Ibadan: NISER Monograph Series, 1990), p.2.

1. adoption of a 'realistic exchange rate'. 2. state deregulation and liberalization of trade. 3. removal of subsidies on public goods and services. 4. privatization and rationalization of public enterprises and a general reduction of the size of the government sector. 5. strong demand management policies particularly (tight monetary and credit policies)

The pursuit of a 'realistic' exchange rate through the abandonment of preexisting administrative controls on foreign exchange and its new determination through market forces, is the centrepiece of Nigeria's SAP. In September 1986, the government established a two-tier foreign exchange market. The first tier, now defunct and unrelated to current transactions, was designed to cover existing external debts, both public and private, incurred prior to the date of deregulation. This was to enable both the Nigerian government and indigenous capitalists to settle accounts with foreign creditors at the previous exchange rates. The second-tier foreign exchange market (SFEM) -- later replaced by the Inter-Bank Foreign Exchange Market (IFEM) -- was established to determine the availability, price and structure of allocation of foreign exchange in the economy.⁷⁷ As previously discussed, the IFIs argued that Nigeria's currency was 'overvalued', which adversely affected industrial production by encouraging a high import profile and capital flight. By making imports more expensive, the devaluation of the naira was expected to reduce the import-dependency of industries and encourage the of local

⁷⁷ Christopher Kolade, "The Effect of SFEM on Industry" in R. Omotayo Olaniyan and Chibuzo N. Nwoke, Structural Adjustment in Nigeria: The Impact of SFEM on the Economy, (Lagos: Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, 1990), p.32.

resources, thereby increasing local value-added manufacturing and increase inter-sectoral linkages. In the agricultural sector, an overvalued currency lay at the root of agrarian and rural decay. It was anticipated that devaluation would immediately boost the production of food and export crops. Of course, devaluation primarily sought to generate capital in order to meet external debt and debt servicing obligations.

To fund the new exchange regime, the Nigerian state attempted to escape the dependency on oil export earnings. It therefore established a foreign currency domiciliary account in which Nigerians who had substantial deposits in foreign banks -- legal or illegal -- were encouraged to repatriate these funds into the new account. Similarly, Nigerian nationals who earned salaries in foreign countries and/or received commission or payments for professional services in hard currency were urged to use these accounts. Export earners were forced to retain 75% of their incomes in these accounts, while tourism receipts and TNC external accounts served as additional sources. The SFEM was the instrument to settle external debts, correct past maladies and increase domestic production through the anticipated privileged allocation of foreign exchange to productive capital. Through the weekly auction (later biweekly) of foreign exchange, the naira was expected to find its 'realistic' exchange rate. Under the supervision of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), a two-tiered bidding system, demarcating large and small banks was

organized. The successful offers in the respective sessions were permitted to purchase 10 and 7 percent of the available foreign exchange. The weekly bidding wars led to the a precipitous decline of the naira. This downward pressure was heightened when the government opened the exchange contest to so-called new merchant banks. With the continuous depreciation of the naira and the ensuing growth of the parallel foreign exchange market, this further served to intensify the decline in the value of the naira and the massive mis-allocation of resources away from productive capital. In January 1989, the government merged the pre-existing autonomous Interbank-Foreign Exchange Market (IFEM) and the official rates. To stem the widening naira gap between the two exchange markets and simultaneously improve the allocation of foreign exchange, the government licensed financial firms to establish *bureau de change*.⁷⁸ In spite of these measures, the devaluation of the naira continued unabated.

The corollary of the fixed exchange rate was the structure of tariffs in Nigeria, which the IFIs argued reinforced the distortions in domestic production. For local industries, it encouraged the import-dependency of production while in the agricultural sector the inflow of foreign maize, rice, vegetable oil and wheat which the country is

⁷⁸ Akin Fadahunsi, "Devaluation: Implication for Employment, Inflation, Growth and Development" in Adebayo O. Olukoshi ed., The Politics of Structural Adjustment in Nigeria, (Ibadan: Heinemann Books, 1993), p.39-40.

climatically suited to produce, was a disincentive to food producers. A review of the current tariff structure was needed to curtail imports in some areas and an outright ban of the aforementioned food commodities and exportable crops, such as cocoa.⁷⁹ The rationalisation of custom tariffs, while protecting some local industries, was simultaneously designed to subject this sector to 'healthy' competition from imports.⁸⁰ Deregulatory measures therefore were also designed to facilitate the flow of foreign trade and capital. The Nigerian state initially moved to liberalize the import regime in an interim tariff structure. It ended the previous import licensing system and generally reduced the level and range of import duties, but the government maintained officially a commitment to protect local industries. By the late 1980s, Nigeria had adopted an 'open door policy', revoking all previous impediments to the free flow of trade, investment and foreign exchange.

A withdrawal of subsidies from goods and services, the privatization and rationalization of public enterprises, the reduction of the public sector and strong demand-management policies, particularly tight monetary and credit policies were

⁷⁹ In spite of proclaimed support for a ban on food imports, in November 1992, the government capitulated to pressure from transnational capital, particular U.S. and fractions of local capitals and reversed the ban on wheat.

⁸⁰ M.O.A. Adejugbe, "Nigeria's Industrial Policies During the Era of Structural Adjustment" in Eghosa Osagie ed., Structural Adjustment Programme in the Nigeria Economy (Jos: National Institute for Policy Strategic Studies, 1992), p.215.

further designed to arrest state intervention in the marketplace and to restore sound market prices. The removal of subsidies on social services had been a central feature of pre-SAP recovery programmes. The AFRC continued to reduce public expenditures in these areas. The Nigerian state also eliminated subvention for agricultural inputs, such as fertilizers. The question of oil subsidies, while partially removed, remains a contentious issue and will be treated later. The rolling back of the state has been further pursued through the active privatization of parastatals and abolishment of state-marketing boards. In 1988, the government promulgated the Privatization and Commercialization Decree No.25, empowering the Technical Committee on Privatization and Commercialization (TCPC) to transfer wholesale, government shareholdings in specific state corporations to the private sector and to drastically reduce state-ownership in others.⁸¹ In the agricultural sector, the state withdrew from marketing and determining agricultural prices. By 1987, the government dismantled six agricultural marketing boards and eliminated its involvement in 11 of 18 agro-based parastatals.⁸² Tight fiscal policies designed to control spending and reduce

⁸¹ The Privatisation and Commercialization Decree No.25, (1988) cited in Olusegun Yerokun, Legal Aspects of Structural Adjustment Programme in Nigeria (Ibadan: Olakulehin Press, 1989), p.222.

⁸² Eno. J. Usoro, "Development of the Nigerian Agricultural Sector Within the Framework of Structural Adjustment" in A.O. Phillips and Eddy Ndekwu ed., Structural Adjustment Programme in a Developing Economy: The Case of Nigeria, (Ibadan: The Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research, 1987), p.170.

inflation and external deficits, has been an integral part of the adjustment exercise. After much internal and external pressure, the government in 1987 deregulated the interest rate enabling market forces to be its determinant. Periodically the CBN also issues treasury bills to absorb excess liquidity in the economy. In its entirety, the market driven, export-oriented development approach was to enable the Nigerian state to meet its debt serving requirement, generate foreign exchange for internal development and create a stronger and more stable national economy by re-directing the Nigerian economy away from external dependence towards national self-reliance.

IMPACT OF THE SAP ON THE AGRICULTURAL AND INDUSTRIAL SECTORS

Our assessment of the impact of structural adjustment on the Nigerian economy must take cognizance of the limitation of the data used and the often conflicting figures from data sources. The Nigerian state, through its statistical offices, mainly the Federal Office of Statistics (FOS) and the CBN continues to churn out figures, albeit contested, which praise the accomplishments of the adjustment exercise. In the final analysis, the most significant indicator of the SAP's performance is the impact of the programme on the socio-economic lives of various levels in civil society, particularly subordinate classes (see Part Two). The discrepancies in the basic economic indicator between the MAN's Half-Year Report for July-December 1991 and the CBN

yearly Report ending December 1991 intensified the statistical controversy on the performance of SAP. For instance, MAN set the GDP growth rate and capacity utilization in 1991 at 4.3% and 37.4% respectively, while the CBN placed these indices at 4.4% and 40%.⁸³ Although the statistical findings of both the MAN and CBN listed here are quite close, throughout the eight years of the Nigerian adjustment programme these bodies have hotly contested SAP's performance. MAN continues to oppose the SAP, while the CBN remains optimistic about the programme's achievements. In spite of the statistical differences and the usual over-optimism of the CBN, we can point to areas where SAP has contributed to some appreciable 'gains' in the agricultural and industrial sectors.

Setting out to encourage the Nigerian industrialist to utilize local raw materials for the production process has resulted in less reliance on foreign inputs and an increased utilization of domestic resources by some manufacturing firms. Local inputs in the bakery, brewery, printing, publishing, and pharmaceutical industries, increased to between 40 and 70 percent.⁸⁴ In addition, the programme encouraged agricultural productivity in both export and food crops sub-sectors. Producer prices in the agricultural sector have also risen.

⁸³ Anon. "MAN: A Prophet of Doom?" in Citizen, vol.3, no.27, July 6-12 1992, p.31. and Anon. "Nigeria: Industries in Doldrums" in West Africa, July 27, 1992, p.1246. (Excerpts of MAN's Half-Year Report: July-December 1991.

⁸⁴ Julius Ihonvbere, Nigeria: The Politics of Adjustment and Democracy, (New Brunswick: Transaction, 1993).

For example, the price of cocoa initially increased from N3,500/per tonne in 1986 to N7,500 in 1987 and then to N16,000 in 1989. Food crops prices, such as maize and cassava, have increased from N714 and N663/per tonne in 1986 to N1,520 and N1,798 in 1989, respectively.⁸⁵

However, the internal contradictions of these prescriptions militated against these 'gains'. The devaluation of the naira astronomically elevated the cost of agricultural and industrial production. In the agrarian sector, devaluation while increasing producer prices, raised the cost of basic farming implements, imported agrochemicals, fertilizers and labour. In the environment of withdrawn subventions from agricultural inputs, this led to the increase in food costs. For the manufacturing sector, the effects of a devalued naira is accelerating the pre-SAP process of de-industrialization. The establishment of the IFEM failed to halt the plummeting value of the naira. The cost of obtaining hard currency to import inputs increased drastically for industrialists. The impact has varied across the manufacturing sectors. Firms able to obtain local raw materials tended to be insulated from the disastrous effects of currency devaluation. Agro-allied industries, for example, have increasingly used local raw materials and curbed the need for imported inputs. Import-dependent metal processing, engineering works and automobile

⁸⁵ Sole Akanji, The Changes in the Structure of Export Crops and Food Crop Production under the Structural Adjustment Programme: The Case of Cocoa and Yams, (Ibadan: NISER, 1992), p.7.

assembly firms, in contrast, fared far worse.⁸⁶ For these manufacturing firms, the operation of the IFEM has made the production process difficult.

Assessing the performance of SAP, however, by the demarcation of manufacturing 'winners' and loser' based on the ability to increase access to local raw materials and inputs is not clear cut. Some firms able to increase the use of local resources still required external inputs. Other manufacturing firms were simply unable to obtain the necessary inputs internally and/or are awaiting the development of a local resource base for the needed input. The inability to use local inputs is further compounded by competing demands for local raw materials. Potential raw material for certain types of manufacturing -- groundnuts, sorghum, maize and cassava -- are all important staple foods for both rural and urban consumption. Simultaneous efforts of the adjustment programme to boost the country's non-oil commodity exports, further intensified the demands for these commodities. Also, raw materials for other agro-processors -- cocoa, cotton, rubber and groundnuts -- were equally in demand by exporters who were prepared to out-bid industrialists by paying exorbitantly for these commodities in anticipation of earning hard currency. Larger firms, in turn, acquired agricultural lands for the

⁸⁶ Adebayo Olukoshi, "The Performance of Nigerian Industry Under the Structural Adjustment" in Crisis and Adjustment, p.99.

cultivation of needed raw materials.⁸⁷ For instance, textile firms have invested heavily in cotton production; likewise, flour milling firms in the cultivation of wheat and other grains. However, attempts to produce both raw materials and consumer goods have proven extremely difficult. Agricultural ventures, largely transnationals, such as the United Africa Company (UAC), have generally been unsuccessful. In assessing this type of backward integration, Okigbo asks: "should the shoe-maker be expected to rear his herd of goats and cattle to raise the skins for the leather for his shoes? Should the tyre-maker raise a rubber plantation or set up a carbon black plant to supply the materials for his tyre?"⁸⁸ Although these questions are instructive, they become moot points when considered against the backdrop of a rapidly depreciating *naira*, which makes efforts even towards these sorts of linkages a daunting task. Curtailing or attempting to curb the degree of import-dependency, large sections of the manufacturing sector still require external inputs for the production process.

Foreign exchange scarcity as an effect of continued dependency on volatile oil revenues, escalating debt and debt-servicing obligations and the distorted character of exchange

⁸⁷ Olukoshi, "Industry", p.99.

⁸⁸ Okigbo cited in Christopher Kolade, "Second Tier Foreign Exchange Market and Structure of Industrial Growth in Nigeria" in R. Omotayo Olaniyan and Chibuzo N. Nwoke, eds., Structural Adjustment in Nigeria: The Impact of SAP on The Economy, (Lagos: Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, 1990) p.58.

allocation has compounded matters. The new foreign exchange regime was designed to remove the distortions associated with the import-licensing system and the parallel markets, which its proponents argue, caused the foreign exchange scarcity in the immediate pre-SAP period. A rational, market allocated foreign exchange system, they anticipated, would reward productive capital. Access to foreign exchange however, has been the exclusive preserve of transnational, financial and commercial capital. A study of the sectoral allocation of foreign exchange conducted by the CBN concluded that since the deregulation of Nigeria's exchange regime, industrial and agricultural sectors received respectively, 77.6% and 0.3% in 1986, 68.6% and 0.2% in 1989 and 64.2% and 0.3% in 1991 of total allotments.⁸⁹ While the abysmally low agrarian distribution of exchange is widely agreed between several independent sources, the stated allocation to the industrial sector is however contested. The prominent Nigerian economist Sam Aluko recently noted, that foreign exchange channelled into productive investment has become minimal, constraining productive efficiency. At the (bi)weekly auctions, he further asserts, commercial and merchant banks bid on behalf of their customers, without much to show in their allocation, particular in the distribution of exchange to productive

⁸⁹ Mudashiru Yusef, "Agriculture Disadvantaged?" in The Nigerian Economist, vol.5, no.23, August 17, 1992, p.27.

sectors.⁹⁰ Demands for foreign exchange, are increasingly for speculative activities and for the storage of legitimate or ill-gotten wealth. Speculative endeavours have been an indelible feature of Nigeria's structural adjustment programme. Paralleling experiences in Latin America and Eastern European market transitions, the SAP in Nigeria has encourage commercial and speculative activities, rather than production leading some to label this 'paper' capitalism.

Such endeavours spawned inflationary pressures which further contributed to the declining value of the *naira*. For instance, factions of comprador capital "hoard goods in anticipation of being able to sell them at a high post-FEM price, and has sent the prices of such items as milk, sugar, meat, soups and detergents, cigarettes and beer soaring upwards."⁹¹ In the agricultural sector, the abolishing of marketing boards opened the door to so-called 'new-breed' merchants, particularly within the cocoa sub-sector. Comprador capital, (local and transnational) seeking to repatriate capital from an unstable Nigerian economy, moved their wealth through the exportation of cocoa and other primary commodities.⁹²

With capital flight, speculative activities and the

⁹⁰ Sam Aluko cited in "Is the naira really fuelling inflation?" in African Business (Special Survey: Nigeria: New Economic Direction, no.177, May 1993, p.28

⁹¹ Ihonvbere, Nigeria, p.18.

⁹² Adejugbe, "Nigeria's Industrial Policy", p.214.

resultant exchange scarcity, the gap between the official exchange rate and that in the parallel market widened. Taking advantage of this differential, banks and others with access to exchange simply made a profit by selling the foreign exchange at the higher naira rate in the bureau de change or parallel market. In turn, the naira accrued from the transactions are used to purchase exchange at the cheaper official rates. This encouraged the mushrooming of so-called merchant banks and by March 1992 over 120 banks were bidding at exchange auctions, compared with approximately 40 at the inception of the deregulated regime in September 1986.⁹³ The manipulation of exchange rates has become so lucrative that in most urban centres it would be highly unusual not to see at least one 'merchant bank' on each corner. Rather than being the facilitator of productive investments, banks have become a locus of accumulation for un-productive factions of the dominant classes.

The implications for the industrial sector were clear. The instability of the exchange rate increased production costs, reduced capacity utilization and forced manufacturing closures. On March 5, 1992, the government intervened to arrest the instability of the naira by selling hard currency at the prevailing market prices. The government expected this drastic measure to eliminate the foreign exchange

⁹³ Elizabeth Obadina, "Currency Devaluation SAPs Nigeria" in Africa Recovery, vol.6, no.2, August 1992.

differentials, speculative activities and encourage production. Overnight, the value of the naira depreciated by 80%. While temporarily succeeding in eliminating the 8 naira gap which existed in the weeks prior to March 5, the government's so-called 'shock therapy' failed to maintain the stability of the naira (Table 2.6). The differential between the CBN rate and that in the parallel markets has escalated

TABLE 2.6. OFFICIAL VS PARALLEL RATES TO THE DOLLAR (JANUARY 1990 - NOVEMBER 1993)

DAYS	CBN RATE (N)	P. MKT. RATE (N)	GAP (N)	DAYS	CBN RATE (N)	P. MKT. RATE (N)	GAP
1990				1992			
JAN-MAR	7.91	9.20	1.29	JAN-MAR	10.69	10.69	0.00
APR-JUNE	7.94	9.44	1.50	APR-JUN	10.62	19.66	9.04
JULY-SEPT	7.97	9.72	1.75	AUG.	10.63	20.80	10.17
OCT-DEC	8.70	10.16	1.46	NOV.	19.47	23.84	4.37
1991				1993			
JAN-MAR	8.70	11.70	3.00	APR.	21.99	26.00	4.01
APR-JUN	10.61	13.20	2.59	MAY	21.99	41.26	19.27
JUL-SEP	9.06	14.19	5.13	OCT.	21.96	43.80	21.84
OCT-DEC	9.06	16.39	7.33	NOV.	21.99	43.70	21.71

SOURCE: Jan 1990 - Jun 1992: CBN 1992 Report cited in September 14, 1992 *The Nigerian Economist* (Ikeja: Sahel Publishing and Printing) August 1992 - November 1993 was compiled from various sources of this journal.

from N0.21 in January-March 1992 to N4.37 in November 1992 and astronomically widening to N21.71 a year later.⁹⁴

Increased production costs, caused by the rapid devaluation of the naira was further exacerbated by the government's tight monetary and credit policies. Since 1986, the CBN has adopted measures aimed at reducing the level of liquidity in the economy. The liquidity ratio, which represents the required percentage amounts that commercial and merchant banks must deposit in the CBN, has increased incrementally, hovering around 30% in the last few years.

⁹⁴ The widening gap between the CBN rate, which remained fairly constant throughout 1993, and the parallel market naira rate, is attributable mainly, to continued speculative activities and the massive capital flight in the wake of the cancellation of the June 12 election which deepened the political crisis in the country.

Ostensibly designed to tackle inflation and the external debt by removing excess monies from the economy, with such an increase in the liquidity ratio, this has compelled commercial banks, already averse to lending to productive capital, to astronomically increase their interest rates. Furthermore, the CBN periodically issues treasury bills, stabilization securities and recently initiated an Open Market Operations (OMO) -- a new monetary tool -- all designed to absorb excess liquidity in the economy. For instance, in the first six months of 1992, the Central Bank of Nigeria issued and allocated N15.5 billion in stabilization securities to the banks. Between 1990, when the securities were first issued, and June 1992, the CBN absorbed up N44.1 billion from the banks. In September 1992, another N7.5 billion was further removed from circulation.⁹⁵ With the liquidity squeeze, inter-bank rates rose drastically to 60% and resulted in exorbitantly high rates of interest, ranging between 60% and 65%.⁹⁶

It has become extremely difficult for industrialist to access capital at existing rates. Likewise, the cost of capital to increase capacity utilization for tottering local industries and for new investments in enterprises have been prohibitive. In the agrarian sector, the high interest rates

⁹⁵ Anon., "It Is A Blow" in Newswatch, November 16, 1992, p.32.

⁹⁶ Jato Thompson, "Hoped-for Recovery is still eagerly awaited" in African Business, May 1993, p.20.

have also constricted the 'new breed' farmers which moved to cash in on the 'cocoa bonanza.' Retired military generals and high level civil servants have found it difficult to sustain agricultural operations and are putting their farms up for sale.⁹⁷ A recent study conducted by Bola Akinji, on cocoa and yam production in the era of structural adjustment, also highlighted the constraints of escalating interest rates on small and medium-scale farmers. Despite the relatively low lending rates charged by commercial banks, the collateral requirement make loans virtually inaccessible to the majority of these farmers. The Study revealed the differentials in interest charges between export and food crop producers, with the latter required to pay higher lending rates and subjected to stiffer collateral conditions.⁹⁸ Although the CBN intervened to pressure commercial and merchant banks to allot a stipulated percentage of loans at concessional rates, by and large access to formal institutional loans remains out of reach for small and medium scale farmers.

The CBN's recent attempt to ease the liquidity squeeze failed to reduce lending rates which still fluctuate between 60% and 65%. Higher production costs in both the agricultural and industrial sectors have led to increased levels of inflation. Escalating costs are passed on to consumers, in the

⁹⁷ Abdul Raufu Mustapha, "Structural Adjustment and Agrarian Change in Nigeria" in Adebayo Olukoshi, The Politics of Structural Adjustment in Nigeria, (Ibadan: Heinemann, 1993), p.121.

⁹⁸ Akinji, (1992) Export Crops and Food Crops, p.23.

context of decreasing purchasing power of the majority of Nigerians. Increasingly, local consumer goods, simply remain on retail shelves or stacked in industrial warehouses. The MAN's 1992 Half-Year Report (July-December) highlighted the continuing problems of this sector. It concluded that unsold stocks held by most manufacturers, increased by 113.3% from the previous year. The Report further notes that 51 of the 135 companies surveyed recorded unsold stocks, totalling N520.86m in 1992 as compared to N244.18m in 1991, and 23.3% of the total output from the 135 companies surveyed went unsold⁹⁹ in 1992, amounting to N2.23bn.⁹⁹ Olukoshi sums up the situation well:

As a result of SAP, a vicious inflationary cycle is presently at work in the Nigerian economy in which devaluation and high interest rates lead to high costs of production which in turn reflect themselves in highly priced commodities and an ever-growing wholesale and retail price index which in turn leads the government to tighten further the liquidity and credit squeeze, thereby increasing further the cost of production in the context of an ever dwindling naira and which, in turn, means even higher costs of production and higher wholesale and retail prices.¹⁰⁰

In spite of drastic cuts in state disbursements to social services, the massive unemployment of workers, wage freezes and reductions and the tight monetary and credit policies, the government continues to spend well beyond its means in a host of unproductive activities and remains the primary locus of accumulation for factions of the dominant classes. The continuing appropriation of billions of naira in oil revenues,

⁹⁹ Pini Jason, "Companies Play a Waiting Game" in African Business, Special Survey: Nigeria: New Economic Direction, no.177, May 1993, p.35.

¹⁰⁰ Olukoshi, "Industry", p.101.

the waste of additional billions in ill-conceived white elephant projects, the exorbitant amounts of naira drained in military expenditures (particular its so-called leadership role in ECOMOG), the further squandering of added millions on Babangida's vehicle donations to all military officers and farewell 'gifts' to loyalist in the top military brass, the billions of naira consumed on the aborted political transition programme, are merely a few examples of the government's 'extra-budgetary' expenditures which have contributed to the national deficit. The mounting debts and debt-service obligations leads to the instability of the naira which accentuated the 'vicious cycle of inflation' Olukoshi highlighted with such lucidity.¹⁰¹

The deregulation and liberalization of trade in this context is making it nearly impossible for agricultural and industrial producers to compete with foreign imports. In the agrarian sector, the government's recent decision to lift the six year ban (temporarily?) on wheat imports is a fitting illustration of the long-term consequences of trade liberalization for domestic food security and self-reliance. In 1987, the Babangida regime banned the importation of wheat and other grains on the premise that they could be produced locally in sufficient quantities to meet both domestic

¹⁰¹ For an comprehensive examination of corruption in the era of structural adjustment see: chapter on "Adjustment, Politics and Corruption" in Pita Agbese and Julius Ihonvbere, The State, Structural Adjustment and Crisis in Nigeria (Boulder: Westview, 1992).

consumption and industrial needs. Declared consistent with the policy thrust of the government's adjustment programme it sought to increase domestic agricultural production, partially through the rationalization of trade. The prohibition of these food imports would save scarce foreign exchange from the massive import bill which totalled N6.1 billion (wheat imports were N327m) in 1985 alone. Lower import expenditures would enable the government to settle external debt obligations and allot exchange to priority sectors such as industry.¹⁰² In the environment of escalating production costs, poor climatic conditions and persistent smuggling of wheat imports, the production of wheat and producer prices still increased significantly between 1987 and 1991.

A combination of external and internal pressure, however, led the government to rescind the ban on wheat imports in November 1992. Since 1990, the U.S. government, concerned with the plight of its grain farmers, intensified pressure on Nigeria to lift the ban by threatening sanctions for 'unfair' trading practices.¹⁰³ Domestically, flour mill firms

¹⁰² Mashud Fashola, "Effects of Wheat Importation on the Economy" in The Nigerian Economist, vol.6, no.5, December 7, 1992, p.39.

¹⁰³ U.S. wheat exports to the country between 1975 and 1986 represented no less than 86% of Nigeria's total wheat import receipts. Concerned about losing the Nigerian market, since 1987 the U.S. government made its displeasure known on the country's so-called unfair trade practises. The U.S. however, adopted a carrot and stick approach to induce the rescinding of the ban. Princeton Lyman, former U.S. Ambassador to Nigeria, spared no effort in extolling the virtues of liberalized trade. In 1989, the U.S. offered a \$300 million loan facility to a 'forex strapped' Nigeria in order to enable the importation of wheat. In the same period, higher tariffs as opposed to an outright ban was encouraged by the U.S. When the loan and a revised tariff structure on wheat was rejected, the U.S. threatened trade sanctions.

escalated these demands. Represented by the Flour Milling Association of Nigeria (FMAN), the largely U.S. dominated 22 wheat milling companies in the country complained of insufficient domestic wheat production for sectoral needs and the resultant decline in utilized installed capacities. However, the lifting of the ban has contributed to Nigeria's food dependency. Indeed, persistent smuggling of wheat and wheat flour made the effect of the ban negligible. A year into the government's ban, the MAN was already alarmed about rampant smuggling, threats to food security, insufficient use of domestic raw materials and existing investments in wheat cultivation.¹⁰⁴ Locally owned flour mills, as previously mentioned, despite difficulties in simultaneously producing wheat and wheat flour, invested enormously to develop a local raw material base and, in the process, backward sectoral linkages. With the liberalization of trade, local mill firms, however, have found it extremely difficult to compete with cheaper imported wheat flour and transnational firms that also import wheat. Flour mill and bakery closures and ensuing job losses have accelerated since November 1992. A 1988 MAN Report had already indicated 60,000 jobs lost in this sub-sectors. Wheat production has declined. Huge capital investments were lost and minimal sectoral linkages were reversed overnight. Similar scenarios have vitiated attempts to boost domestic

¹⁰⁴ Fadahunsi, "Devaluation", p.50.

food production through import bans, all generally loosely enforced.

In the broader manufacturing sector, the consequences of trade liberalization have been similar. The finalization in 1989 of the new tariff regime hastened the dumping of all sorts of foreign manufactured imports on the Nigerian market, to the detriment of indigenous industrial production. As Molaria Ogundipe-Leslie notes;

...SAPs have contributed seriously if not, caused the destruction of the entrepreneurial middle class...in Nigeria in general. Yet the beguiling song of the policy was that trade would be liberalized so that local producers would compete in the import and export trade, producing goods for export.¹⁰⁵

Broad sectors of Nigeria's manufacturers now compete with goods from Britain, U.S., Japan, France and Germany, when devaluation, subsidy removals and exorbitantly high interest rates have increased the costs of local production.

The adverse effects of trade deregulation and liberalization remains a consistent complaint of the MAN. The association continues to highlight the short and long-term consequences of a relaxed trade regime on the manufacturing sector. MAN argued that between September 1986 and December 1988, it became more profitable for manufacturers to import certain finished consumer goods than to produce them locally. Reinforcing this trend, Ohiorhenuan revealed that in the first

¹⁰⁵ Molaria Ogundipe-Leslie, "Stories of Structural Adjustment: The Human Cost of The Structural Adjustment Policy for Women". Paper delivered at the Workshop sponsored by the Social Science Research Council on Structural Adjustment and Prospects for Peace in Africa, (Toronto: Park Plaza Hotel, October 1990).

six months of SFEM's operation about 25% of foreign exchange sold on the Nigerian market went towards the importation of finished producer goods, with serious implications for the survival of industries.¹⁰⁶ For instance, both the textile and electronic sub-sectors continue to voice serious concerns over negligible import duties. Small-scale local industries, anticipated to benefit from the deregulated environment, have also suffered from the liberalization of trade. Local industries, which produce writing paper, toilet paper, hygiene products, candles, soap and cosmetics, have been unable to compete with cheap and often sub-standard imported consumer goods and are being forced to close.¹⁰⁷ MAN's consistent appeals to government, until recently, did not yield any significant concessions.

The above analysis and evidence presented suggests that eight years of the structural adjustment programme have failed to revive the Nigerian economy. Instead, the policy framework pursued by the government in accord with the Bretton Woods institutions to enhance domestic accumulation and strengthen the country's productive base has inhibited growth and

¹⁰⁶ J. Ohiorhenuan, "Re-Colonising Nigerian Industry: The First Year of the Structural Adjustment Programme" in A.O. Phillips and E. Ndekwe, Structural Adjustment Programme in a Developing Economy: The Case of Nigeria (Ibadan: NISER, 1987), p.136.

¹⁰⁷ Adjustment advocates argue that small-scale industries which purportedly rely largely on domestic raw materials and inputs would be insulated from the adverse effects of devaluation. In spite of the deepening crisis, the informal sector is said to be thriving on the margins of Nigerian and African social formations. The process of informalization in recent years has been accorded with potentialities conducive to democratic renewal which will be assessed in Part Two of this chapter and subsequent chapters.

development. In the agrarian sector, the initial devaluation of the naira led to significant increases in agricultural production and producer prices of both food and cash crops. However, the escalating production costs associated with devaluation induced inflationary pressures, led to declining agricultural productivity and rural incomes. Indicative in the spiralling costs of basic foodstuffs, the production of food remains insufficient to meet the country's needs. Compounded by the activities of middlemen and speculators seeking to capitalize on the appreciating CFA currency (relative to the naira), until its recent devaluation, the smuggling of Nigerian foodstuffs into neighbouring Francophone Africa countries was rampant. In the cash-crop sub-sector, with the exception of cocoa, the production and contribution to export of non-food agricultural commodities has been insignificant. Plagued by heightened productions costs, declining world market prices for these commodities have compounded matters. The world price of cocoa, Nigeria's principal non-oil export, in 1989 plummeted to a 16 year low.¹⁰⁸ Increased productivity of other Third World producers, Western protectionism, the development of synthetics, continues to exert downward pressure on the prices of primary commodities.

In the industrial sector, the SAP has constricted the development of a local raw material base, greater inter-

¹⁰⁸ African Development Bank, African Development Report- 1993, (Abidjan: ADB, 1993), p.31.

sectoral linkages and the diversification of the country's productive base. Despite efforts to source local inputs, the import-dependency of industrial production persists. The oil sector remains the lifeline of the economy, which continues to depend on oil receipts for over 90% of foreign exchange earnings. Though creating a low-wage economy and intensifying the exploitation of labour, industrial growth has been inhibited by the spiralling prices of raw materials and inputs, the high cost of credit, the depressed purchasing power of the majority of Nigerians, and the liberalized trade environment. The pre-adjustment process of deindustrialization accelerated during this period. Surviving local manufacturing firms drastically reduced productive capacities, which have steadily declined since the inception of SAP. According to the MAN's Half Year Report (July-December) 1992, installed capacities utilized decreased from 40.7% in 1989 to 37.4% in 1991, declining further to 34.5% in 1992.¹⁰⁹ Mass unemployment consequently followed. Reorganizing operations in recognition of the depreciating naira, transnational companies such as the UAC, in spite of increasing sales, and recording huge naira profits, drastically reduced work-force sizes, in order to increase the real returns on investments.¹¹⁰

Unsurprisingly, the general climate of industrial and

¹⁰⁹ MAN's Half-Year Report 1992 cited in Mudashiru Yusef, "Any More Magic?" in The Nigerian Economist, vol.6, no.6, 1992.

¹¹⁰ Fadahunsi, "Devaluation", p.44.

economic decline has proven unattractive to foreign investors who were anticipated to enter the deregulated Nigerian market. Despite intensified efforts by the government to attract foreign investment, through the liberalization of investment laws, the ambitious pursuance of privatization and debt equity-swap programmes, capital inflows remain negligible. On the contrary, the deepening crisis in the Nigerian political economy encourages continued capital flight. The volatility of the naira, the on-going political instability, government mismanagement and corruption, growing mistrust of Nigerian businessmen, and diminishing returns, has led to divestment by some TNC's of their Nigerian operations. New markets opened in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, in the wake of the collapse of socialist regimes, have made the region attractive to transnational capital to invest away from Africa. Contributing further to capital flight, the deregulation of trade and the exchange rate has rewarded transnational, financial and comprador capital, leading to the squander of substantial social surpluses into conspicuous consumption and expatriation, amidst productive decline and domestic squalor. Debt and debt-servicing obligations rose respectively from 19.5bn and 33.3% of export earning in 1985 to 34.5bn and 30.4% in 1991 adding further to capital flight.¹¹¹

Given these developments since the inauguration of the programme, it cannot be said that SAP has set the Nigerian

¹¹¹ World Bank, World Debt Tables - 1992, p.298.

economy on the path to recovery and self-sustained growth. The deficiency of SAP, however, cannot simply be measured in the inability to resuscitate the Nigerian economy. More importantly, the abysmal failure of the adjustment exercise is reflected in the devastating impact the programme has had on the majority of Nigerians. Anti-labour and anti-popular policies of the Nigerian government and IFIs exacerbated the already depressed living conditions of marginalized groups. The doldrums in the economy and industry led to the unemployment of hundreds of thousands of public and private sectors workers. Wage freezes and reductions are widespread. Unemployment and underemployment continues to increase. Devaluation has led to rampant inflation. The incomes of wage and salary earners have not kept pace with the spiralling cost of food, rents and transportation. Inflation has diminished the real incomes of farmer. Food security and nutritional standards of rural and urban households continues to deteriorate. Malnutrition and associated diseases, such as kwashiorkor have significantly increased. The imposition of user fees on education and health care have made the situation unbearable. Throughout the country, hospitals are without medicines; patients have been left to die because they cannot afford the cost of drugs. The deterioration of the living standards of the majority of the people has continued unabated since the introduction of SAP. Macro-economic statistics which extol the 'successes' of SAP continue to ignore the human

suffering which adjustment has rendered on subordinate social groupings.

The uneven pains of adjustment and the continued opposition and criticism against the SAP, were met with state repression. Anti-SAP riots which erupted in 1989, 1990, 1992, and 1993, were ruthlessly crushed. State curtailment of civil liberties, democratic rights, popular organizations and institutions have been an integral part of the adjustment exercise. The credibility of the Nigerian state continues to wane. The disastrous consequences of the adjustment programme on marginalized groups, the suppression of civil society and the attendant political instability engendered, continues to militate against economic recovery and development. Since the mid-1980s, these critical issues have increasingly been highlighted in international debates on Africa's recovery and development. Faced with internal and external opposition against the SAP, conventional wisdom in the Bretton Woods institutions began to appreciate the political dimension of the crisis. By the late 1980s the policy prescriptions of the Bank and the Fund emphasized 'getting the politics right', as the complement to continued market reforms.

**SECTION FOUR: THE CONTINUING POLICY DEBATES ON AFRICA'S
RECOVERY AND DEVELOPMENT: FROM THE BERG REPORT TO
THE WORLD BANK'S LONG-TERM PERSPECTIVE STUDY**

The early continental response to the deepening crisis, the Lagos Plan of Action, was quickly pushed off the agenda for Africa's economic recovery in the 1980s. Overly economistic, silent on internal causes of the crisis, ambiguous in its prescriptive measures and largely dependent on foreign assistance to promote national and collective self-reliance, these factors all mitigated any serious attempt to implement the programme. With mounting debt and debt-servicing obligations, internal economic and political instability, the unequal nature of the policy debates on the crisis led to the predominance of the Bretton Woods institutions' neo-liberal market reforms in Africa.

In 1985, the OAU adopted the African Priority Programme for African Recovery, 1986-1990 (APPER), attempting to resuscitate the LPA and African endeavours for continental recovery. Built on its predecessor, while sharpening its prescriptive measures, the revival of the agrarian sector was placed at the centre of the plan.¹¹² Requiring external resources for the full implementation of its estimated \$128.1 billion cost, the OAU approached the U.N. to consider the region's deepening socio-economic decline and the urgent need

¹¹² The full implementation of APPER was estimated to cost \$128.5 bn, of which African governments committed \$82.5 bn and anticipated \$46.0bn from external sources. see: Adebayo Adedeji, "Transforming Africa's Economies" in Africa Report, May - June 1986.

for international support of African programmatic initiatives to redress the crisis. In the first exclusive focus on a world region, in 1986, the U.N. convened a Special Session on Africa and subsequently adopted the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development, 1986-1990 (UNPAAERD). With the objectives of APPER embodied in the U.N. programme, and the external financial commitment of \$9.2 bn annually (U.S.\$46.0 bn total), it was optimistically felt a 'consensus' had emerged on Africa's developmental needs.¹¹³

The predominance of IFI's orthodox SAPs persisted. In the absence of Bank and Fund certification, external financial resources remained inaccessible for crisis-ridden African countries. In this period however, a plethora of international conferences, seminars, workshop, and publications were increasingly critical of the adverse consequences of adjustment programmes on African countries. The *Khartoum Conference on the Human Dimension of Africa's Recovery and Development*, held in March 1988, under the auspices of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), criticized SAPs for overlooking urgent human needs and exacerbating the already low living standards of the poor. The subsequent Khartoum Declaration noted that adjustment programmes "rather than improve the human condition...have aggravated it because

¹¹³ Excerpts of UNPAAERD in Africa Recovery, February - April 1987, no.1.

they are incomplete, mechanistic, [sic]"¹¹⁴, and negated fundamental issues of equity in its pursuit of short-term macro-economic objectives. Highlighting the deteriorating of social gains made during the 1960s and 1970s and the impoverishment of vulnerable groups, the Declaration insisted that recovery programmes in pursuance of economic growth must recognize the 'human dimension', and urgently enjoined the IFIs to place social and human priorities at the centre of their programmes. Similar assertions by NGOs, UN organizations such as the ILO, UNCTAD, UNESCO and UNICEF, stressed the need to provide a 'human face' to adjustment programmes. For instance, the two volume study published by UNICEF, Adjustment with a Human Face drew attention to the impact of adjustment on vulnerable groups -- children, women, the aged -- and advocated the inclusion of poverty alleviation programmes in adjustment packages.¹¹⁵

Conceding the glaring evidence of the disastrous consequences of SAPs on the poor, Michel Camdessus, Managing Director of the IMF admitted that "too often in recent years it is the poor who have carried the heaviest burden of

¹¹⁴ Khartoum Conference on the Human Dimension of Africa's Economic Recovery and Development (1987), Special Supplement of the conference proceedings in Africa Recovery, vol.2, no.2, June 1988.

¹¹⁵ G.A. Cornia, R. Jolly and F. Stewart, Adjustment with a Human Face: Protecting the Vulnerable and Promoting Growth, (London: Clarendon Press for UNICEF, 1987/88), see also: G.A. Cornia, R. van der Hoeven and T.Mkandawire, Africa Recovery in the 1990s: From Stagnation and Adjustment to Development, (London: St. Martins Press for UNICEF, 1992).

economic adjustment."¹¹⁶ By the end of the decade there was widespread consensus that adjustment packages required a strong social component to protect the poor. Various African countries subsequently incorporated measures to protect marginalized groups. Ghana, for instance, in late 1988 initiated the Program of Action to Mitigate the Social Cost of Adjustment (PAMSCAD), in the much heralded first 'socially conscious' adjustment programme in Africa. Consisting of 23 socially oriented projects, PAMSCAD concentrated on employment generation, community development and basic human needs initiatives.¹¹⁷ Similarly, Nigeria established various programmes, such as, the Peoples Bank, Better Life for Rural Dwellers, the National Directorate for Employment, the Directorate for Food, Road and Rural Infrastructure, and the National Commission on Women, to allay the impact of adjustment on vulnerable groups.

However, like PAMSCAD, poverty alleviation programmes have not significantly assuaged the hardships generated by adjustment. They are poorly grafted onto existing market reforms, lack consistency, are insufficiently funded and poorly implemented. The March 1989 staff mission report on adjustment experiences in Ghana and Senegal, conducted by the

¹¹⁶ Michel Camdessus, "IMF in Africa: Managing Director Michel Camdessus Answers the Funds Critics: An Interview with Salim Lome" in Africa Recovery, no.4, December 1987.

¹¹⁷ Adotey Bing, "Ghana: Adjusting the Social Conscience" in Africa Recovery, vol.2, no.2, 1988, p.4-5, 31.

Subcommittee on Africa of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the U.S. House of Representatives, noted that despite the short-term macro-economic gains in these 'successful adjusters', the programmes have exacerbated urban poverty, eroded health care, and depreciated the incomes of food and export crop farmers. While welcoming PAMSCAD and the Senegalese job-creation programmes, the Report further concluded that both initiatives were insufficient in scope to reduce poverty.¹¹⁸ This approach, while providing temporary palliative measures, nonetheless ignored the basis of the intensified critique of SAPs, which articulated the necessary treatment of vulnerable groups as subjects of Africa's recovery and development.

It was amidst these criticism of orthodox adjustment exercises, that the ECA in early 1989, building on the Khartoum Declaration, adopted the African Alternative Programme to Structural Adjustment Programmes for Socio-Economic Recovery and Transformation (AAF-SAP), challenging the existing hegemony of the neo-liberal market reforms. A radical critique of orthodox structural adjustment, AAF-SAP argued that the pre-occupation of market reforms with short-term macro-economic improvements has exacerbated the socio-economic decline in Africa and the living standards of the poor majority because they fail to appreciate the structural

¹¹⁸ Nil K. Bentsi-Enchill, "What's Wrong with SAPs: U.S. Congress Report" in Africa Recovery, vol.3, no.1-2, 1989, p.25.

roots of the crisis. In its presentation of the political economy of Africa, the Document highlights the disarticulation of production, the predominance of commercial activities, and the excessive dependency on a narrow range of export commodities.¹¹⁹ In light of these 'structural characteristics, redress of the African crisis requires not simply 'adjustment', but rather 'adjustment with transformation'. Manifestations of the crisis, like the continued balance of payment difficulties, cannot be dismissed. However, the policy framework of adjustment which aims to correct these maladies must address the underlying structural roots which precipitated the economic decline. AAF-SAP criticizes orthodox adjustment programmes and offers alternatives which among others include a gradual depreciation of domestic currencies, reduction of interest rates, selective subsidy removal, trade liberalization and privatization, the diversification of the export base and the simultaneous reorientation of production to satisfy internal needs.¹²⁰

The most significant contribution of the ECA's programme was its clear recognition of the political dimension of the crisis. Unlike the LPA, the ECA's publication also attributed the crisis in Africa to the authoritarianism and corruption of African governments and the resultant marginalization of the

¹¹⁹ ECA, African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment Programmes for Socio-Economic Recovery and Development, (Addis Ababa: E/ECA/CM.15/6/Rev.3, 1989).

¹²⁰ ECA, AAF-SAP p.32-48.

people in the process of development. The document concluded that,

...basic rights, individual freedom and democratic participation by the majority of the people are often lacking in Africa. This pervasive lack of democracy also makes mobilization and effective accountability difficult. This is one important sense in which Africa needs more democratic political structures in order to facilitate development.¹²¹

Its new democratic agenda was explicitly articulated in the African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation, a document adopted at the 1990, ECA-organized International Conference on Popular Participation in Africa, held in Arusha, Tanzania. Attended by a wide range of African peoples' organizations, governments officials, non-governmental organizations, and United Nations agencies, the participants unanimously agreed that the continuing marginalization of the people is a major obstacle to the on-going recovery process.¹²² Emphasizing the subjective dimensions of Africa's decline, the document expressed the urgent need to empower subordinate groups and democratize African societies in order to achieve economic recovery and long-term structural transformation. Popular participation as defined by the Charter, asserts that ordinary people must be involved in the development process, from the conceptualization of strategies and policies to the

¹²¹ ECA, AAP-SAP, p.5.

¹²² ECA, African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation (New York: U.N. General Assembly, Forty Fifth Session, A/45/150, 1990), p.8. First adopted in Arusha, this document was subsequently endorsed by the U.N. General Assembly.

formulation, implementation and monitoring of prescriptions. To this end, the majority of the population would be mobilised in the development process, accept the pains of recovery and share equitably in the benefits of development.

In the interval since the ECA's declarations, the World Bank published two seemingly contradictory reports in response to the intensified criticism of neo-liberal reforms. A comparative assessment of adjustment experiences in Africa, the March 1989 report, Africa's Adjustment and Growth in the 1980s, concluded that countries which had implemented strong adjustment programmes achieved higher growth rates than 'weak or non-adjusters' in the same period. Notably silent on social impacts of the adjustment exercise, the Report reaffirmed that internal policy deficiencies of African countries remained the primary factor to the unabated socio-economic decline. The ECA quickly responded and published a preliminary study which based its assessment of SAPs on the Bank's own original, unpublished data. In contrast, this study argued that the GDP growth rates of 'strong adjusters' were no higher than those of 'weak or non-adjusting' African countries. The study went on to criticize the selectivity of the data presented, arbitrary choice of country case studies and variations in the reference periods applied.¹²³ The positive grades which SAPs

¹²³ Excerpts of World Bank, "Africa's Adjustment and Growth in the 1980s" and ECA, "Statistics and Policies: ECA Preliminary Observation on the World Bank Report: Africa's Adjustment and Growth in the 1980s" cited in anon., "Adjustment: ECA/Bank Debate the Record" in Africa Recovery, October, 1989, p.36-37.

received from the Bank's study seem to have been garnered to affirm preconceived conclusions and to deflect the mounting resistance within Africa against SAPs as well as the intensified criticisms of these programmes in international fora.

In late 1989, the Bank published Sub-Saharan Africa: From Crisis to Sustainable Growth: A Long-Term Perspective Study (LTPS) as the basis of a long-term, human-centred approach for Africa's recovery and development in the 1990s. In contrast to its previous optimistic assertions on SAPs performance in Africa, the Bank conceded that its successes had been limited. Departing from its usual technocratic approach to the crisis and recovery, the Report attempted to incorporate the widespread concerns and intensified criticisms from mainly the ECA and other UN bodies into a clear strategic agenda.¹²⁴ Now recognizing the political dimension of the continent's deepening socio-economic decline, the Report stated that a 'crisis of governance' underlay the persistent development failures.¹²⁵ The lack of transparency, the personalization of politics, the web of 'rent seeking' and patronage networks spawned, compounded by the coercive and

¹²⁴ see the Forward by former Bank President Barber Conable, World Bank, Sub-Saharan Africa: From Crisis to Sustainable Growth: A Long-Term Perspective Study, (Washington D.C: World Bank, 1989). While there remains fundamental difference between the Bank's report and ECA's declaration, as we discuss later, the World Bank's Long-Term Perspective Study, appropriates the language of the ECA, and as Robert Browne has recently noted, virtually plagiarizes the document in places.

¹²⁵ World Bank, LTPS p.60.

arbitrary character of governance in Africa, attenuated the legitimacy of the state.

Renewed efforts must be made, the Report goes on to say, to build pluralist institutions and rehabilitate the judiciary in order to uphold contracts and the rule of law. Such an environment would protect press freedoms, human rights, encourage public debates and enhance the participation of ordinary people in the decision making process.¹²⁶ The new democratic agenda of the Bank is developed further: It advocated the empowerment of women's groups, farmers associations, co-operatives, grassroots communities and other segments of the 'non-modern sector' as a significant bulwark to delimit the state and unlock entrepreneurial energies in civil society.¹²⁷ NGOs, as mentioned in Chapter One, are accorded an important, if not crucial, role in the Bank's concept of civil society. Noting that in recent years they have become the champions of the poor and have achieved impressive records in the implementation of micro-development projects, the Bank argues that NGOs are becoming indispensable intermediaries between the state and grassroots organizations and institutions. They can facilitate a broader spectrum of policy dialogue, while simultaneously keeping the state accountable to the majority of the population.

The report concludes by advocating the inclusion of

¹²⁶ World Bank, LTPS, p.6, 192.

¹²⁷ World Bank, LTPS, p.6, 182.

political conditionalities to the litany of economic policy stipulations attached to foreign assistance by the Bretton Woods institutions and donor communities. The World Bank boldly declared the advent of a broad consensus on Africa's developmental needs, based on governance and continued neo-liberal market reforms in the 1990s.¹²⁸ Who are the social forces inside and outside Africa included in this consensus? Have subordinate social groupings in Africa agreed to the direction of development that the Bank proclaims? The remainder of this thesis attempts to answer these questions.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the predominance of the neo-liberal market reforms in African political economies in the 1980s have been treated at length, from its interpretation of the crisis, rationale of its policy prescriptions, its affect on the Nigerian economy and its shifting policy emphasis towards the end of the decade. Illuminating the limitations of the neo-liberal interpretations of the crisis, I have argued that holistic explanations of its origins and dimensions must appreciate the nature of dependency of colonial and post-colonial accumulation in Africa. The crisis must also be situated in the internal structure of power and politics and

¹²⁸ A critical assessment of the Bank's new policy direction will be provided in the closing of this exposition, in combination with the 1991 U.N. initiative, New Agenda for Development of Africa in the 1990s (UNNADAF) and the new World Bank inspired consultative forum Global Coalition for Africa.

the increasing hegemonic crisis faced by African states since the mid-1970s. While dismantling the state-led capitalist development model of the 1960s and 1970s and enthroneing market forces, the abysmal failure of SAPs was detailed in the assessment of Nigeria's adjustment experience. Rather than catalyzing recovery and development, SAPs have deepened the crisis and devastated the already depressed living conditions of the subordinate social groupings in Africa.

This discussion establishes a firm backdrop of the material conditions which subaltern social groups have suffered and have struggled against in the 1980s as well as the immediate impetus to democratize African social formations in the 1990s. Coinciding with a favourable international situation, mainly the collapse of authoritarian regimes in Latin America, Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union and the advent of IFIs and bilateral donor's political conditionalities, while contributing to the intensification of movements for multi-party democracy, the current pace of political change has varied. Nigeria provides an interesting case for this examination. While pre-dating the intensification of the continental wide impetus towards democracy, the recently aborted state-guided transition to Nigeria's Third Republic, exposed the precarious character of political transitions in Africa. It is also a sobering reflection on the euphoria which underlay initial mainstream assessments. The second part of this chapter investigates the

individualized responses to cope with the economic crisis before returning to civil society's collective and political responses to structural adjustment and democratic agitation.

PART TWO

THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT OF ADJUSTMENT AND SURVIVALIST STRATEGIES IN CIVIL SOCIETY THE CASE OF NIGERIA

The dictates of survival and the forces of belief have propelled the reconstitution of democracy in smaller units. Economic revival in the nonformal sector carries the seeds of political renewal. Existing coping strategies...have shown how groups and organizations have carved out economic fields in which they can operate. As resources have accumulated and skills honed, these structures have garnered a modicum of economic -- and hence also political space.¹²⁹

Countermarkets allow subordinate classes to enjoy some of the benefits that illegal, informal practices can offer. This is not to imply that such practices minimize inequalities and undermine the hierarchy of class (and gender); on the contrary, corruption tends to exacerbate existing inequalities and reproduce the very conditions that so severely limit subalterns' lifechances. Countermarkets do not operate independently of state agents; in fact, their very expansion hinges on the complicity of government officials.¹³⁰

The 'exit option' has become the gospel of those researchers who have sought to dethrone the state and to replace it with the producer and the market. (emphasis is mine)¹³¹

Deepening socio-economic decline in the era of IMF and World Bank policies have drastically reduced the living conditions of large sections of the intermediate and subordinate classes in civil society. The continued doldrums of state and economy and the attendant industrial closure, reduced capacity utilization and heightened casualization of labour, coupled with public sector cut backs, wage freezes and reductions, have accelerated public and private sector unemployment. Escalating inflation and state retreat from the social reproduction of marginalized groupings in civil society

¹²⁹ Naomi Chazan, "Ghana: Problems of Governance and the Emergence of Civil Society" in Larry Diamond et al. Democracy in Developing Countries Volume Two: Africa (Boulder: Lynne Rienner for the National Endowment for Democracy, 1988), p.130-132.

¹³⁰ Robert Fatton Jr., Predatory Rule: State and Civil Society in Africa, (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1992), p.84.

¹³¹ Janet Roitman, "The Politics of Informal Markets in Sub-Saharan Africa" in The Journal of Modern African Studies, vol.28, no.4, 1990, p.678.

has led to a rapid decline of real incomes and forced the majority of people to find creative ways to survive the crisis. Thus, the pre-crisis processes of informalization intensified during this period. The dictates of social reproduction necessitated the straddling of multiple means of income-generation which transverse the formal and informal sectors of the economy. Neo-liberal analysts anticipated a rapid expansion of the informal sector and held this engender positive implications for economic recovery, development and democracy. Evading the repressive and predatory character of the state, ordinary people are said to be challenging the seemingly insurmountable obstacles of daily life by organizing an unofficial economy which compensates for the failures of the state and formal economy. It is postulated that the advent of market reforms would boost the growth potential of the informal sector. By providing inexpensive consumer goods and raw materials for formal sector manufacturing firms, the informal sector's abundant endowment of unskilled and semi-skilled labour in conjunction with the low-level technology utilized, is expected to increase labour absorptive capacities and informal sector incomes. Simultaneously releasing dormant entrepreneurial energies and enhancing the arena of accumulation outside the purview of the state, this would decrease intra-ruling class contestation for 'rent seeking' opportunities while diminishing the use of patronage networks. Hence, informality is also deemed to sow the seeds for state

delimitation, emboldening civil society and enhancing prospects for consensual democratic politics and popular participation.¹³²

Part One of this chapter analyzed the ruinous consequences of SAPs on the Nigerian economy and more importantly the disastrous impact of the programme on the lives of the poor majority. Section Five through Seven of Part Two of this Chapter, focuses on the differential impact of the SAP on various social classes in civil society, mainly the working classes, intermediate middle stratum and the subordinate rural classes (respectively). The responses to the crisis at the level of economic and individualized survival strategies are illuminated, concentrating on the possible implication of informalization for the strengthening of civil society and democratic struggle. Like the differential impact of adjustment is dependent on class location and gender status, so too is the room to manoeuvre in ensuring economic survival. I accept the main elements of M. Castells and A. Portes definition of informalization, which is viewed as a process that involves unregulated production and exchange relations, in a political economy in which similar activities are regulated. The distinction between informal and criminal activities, while instructive, is however, unhelpful in this

¹³² Azarya, "Reordering", Chazan, "Patterns", and de Soto, The Other Path.

investigation of the political significance of informality.¹³³ Certainly, most individualized responses to cope with the crisis are within the realm of quasi-legal or non-legal activities. However, the unprecedented rise in extra-legal means of accumulation for the survival of broad sections of middle and subordinate strata and the political implications of such dynamics for the transition and consolidation of democracy, makes necessary the appreciation of the sharpened contradictions and social anomie in civil society. The last section of this chapter therefore focuses on the contradictions of SAP and economic informality. Here, I argue that despite the vitality of informalization, the intensification of this process has unleashed contradictions inimical to the strengthening of civil society.

SECTION FIVE: SAP, INFORMALIZATION AND THE NIGERIAN WORKING CLASSES

The standard of living of the Nigerian working class rapidly declined over the last decade, particularly under the regime of devaluation, subsidy removal, social expenditure curtailment, etc. An important dimension of the arguments in favour of neo-liberal market reforms attributes post-colonial development failure in Africa to the parasitic activities of a privileged 'urban coalition', of which the working classes

¹³³ Manuel Castells and Alejandro Portes, "World Underneath: The Origins, Dynamics and Effects of the Informal Economy" in A. Portes et al. eds., The Informal Economy: Studies in Advanced and Less Developed Countries, (Baltimore: John Hopkins University 1989), p.12-15.

are an integral part. In manipulating the state to suit narrow 'vested sectoral interest', the resultant distortion of market prices, in addition to the massive social expenditure demanded, fuelled inflationary pressures which precipitated rising unemployment, stagnating growth and balance of payment difficulties experienced in the 1980s. Accordingly, the SAP has consistently targeted the consumption patterns of the working class. The devaluation-induced inflationary spiral on goods and services in the environment of massive unemployment, compulsory leaves, devalued compensation packages, unpaid salaries and wages and wage freezes have been borne heavily and disproportionately by workers, particularly the women in this social class. Unfortunately, the inconsistency and unreliability of official figures from the Federal Office of Statistics (FOS) inhibits an accurate account of employment trends, inflation levels, wage and salary rates and real incomes. The paucity in disaggregated data also limits quantitative assessments of the differential gender impact of the SAP in Nigeria. The class bias of SAPs and the patriarchal and class structure of the Nigerian state, economy and civil society, together with anecdotal evidence, however, provides a picture of the impact of the programme on workers and women.

The reductions in public expenditures, in conjunction with industrial closures, the restructuring of existing manufacturing firms, reduced capacity utilization and an

increasing casualization of labour during the adjustment period have intensified public and private sector unemployment. With public sector rationalization and industrial restructuring, wage freezes and pay cuts have been commonplace. At the onset of the adjustment exercise, the government promulgated the National Minimum Wage Order (1986) designed to roll back the established minimum wage of N125 per month attained by fierce working class struggles in 1981. Under the decree, employers with a workforce of less than 500 employees were exempt from minimum wage stipulations. Since nearly 80% of firms in Nigeria employed less than 500 workers, the decree amounted to a *de facto* rescinding of the previous minimum wage. Existing firms with a workforce in excess of 500 employees, quickly moved to capitalize on the anti-labour decree, by downsizing at least to get under the government's new cap.¹³⁴

With women representing approximately 8% of Nigeria's formal sector workforce in 1984, public and private sector reorganization severely affected their level of employment. The most sought after form of work by women, wage employment opportunities in post-colonial Nigeria have been limited. They are usually concentrated in the service sectors (public and private), with a minority of women employed in manufacturing.

¹³⁴ Steve Amale, "The Impact of the Structural Adjustment Programme on Nigerian Workers" in Adebayo Olukoshi Crisis and Adjustment in the Nigerian Economy, 1991, p.128. (Workers agitation did compel the state to reinstate the minimum wage rate, consistently eroded however by spiralling inflation.

With only one percent of women in the top echelons of state bureaucracies, women in the public sector typically have worked as teachers, nurses, secretaries, receptionists, street cleaners, among other occupations deemed 'suitable' for women. The structure of employment in the private sector is similar, with the majority of women pigeon-holed to 'pink collar' work. That is, women's work is ghettoized and is considered less valuable than that of their male counterparts. Confined to a vulnerable rung of employment, the imperatives of spending cuts in public expenditures and reversal of social benefits, among which include, maternal leave and tax allowances for children, coupled with patriarchal assumptions of a 'male bread-winner', have usually made working class women the first victims of labour restructuring. The impact of adjustment on single women, (divorced, separated or unmarried) is especially noticeable, as pregnancy has become tantamount to automatic job termination. Patriarchal assumptions of docility, compounded by the predominant view of women's work as supplementary household income, also contributes to the widening wage and salary gender gaps in this period. In the private sector the trend has been similar. For instance, in the manufacturing sector, pervasive gender discriminations further reduces women's incomes as the industrial crisis deepens. They are paid considerably less than their male counterparts engaged in comparable work. Assumed to be passive and less likely to unionize, they are relegated to menial work

and subject to increasing uncertainty by TNC's casualization of labour, women have been relegated to largely temporary employment in this sector. The anti-working class policies of adjustment and the efforts to discipline workers, have created a vast pool of cheap labour, particularly comprised of women.¹³⁵

In the environment of contracting wage and salary earnings, the escalating cost of basic foodstuffs, housing, clothing and essential services have drastically reduced real incomes. Between 1981 and 1987, the prices of staples foods, such as gari, yams, plantain, beans, milk, rice etc rose by an average of 150% to 300%.¹³⁶ In the weeks following the March 1992 'shock treatment', in which the value of naira declined overnight by 80%, the prices of basic food items more than doubled. For many Nigerian households, food consumption has been reduced to one meal per-day. '*Suffering and smiling*', sole daily meal-times are referred to by the formula, 1-0-0 (breakfast), 0-1-0 (lunch), and 0-0-1, (dinner). As food prices soar and working class Nigerians structurally adjust their stomachs, nutritional standards within these households deteriorate. Malnutrition related diseases are on the rise.

¹³⁵ Sylvia Frederici and Stella Ogbuagu, "Women and Work in the Urban Areas" in Women-in-Nigeria ed., The WIN Document: Conditions of Women in Nigeria and Policy Recommendations to 2000 A.D. (Zaria: Ahmadu Bello University Press, 1992), p.17-21.

¹³⁶ Yusuf Bangura and Bjorn Beckman, "African Workers and Structural Adjustment: A Nigerian Case Study" in Adebayo Olukoshi ed., The Politics of Structural Adjustment in Nigeria, (Ibadan: Heinemann). Also printed in Dharma Ghat ed., IMF and the South: The Social Impact of Crisis and Adjustment, (London: Zed for UNRISD, 1991).

For example, kwashiorkor and marasmus among children have reached levels unparalleled since the civil war. The deplorable housing conditions of the working class increase the susceptibility to a plethora of diseases. Expensive to build and rent, housing has become scarce and unaffordable to a rising number of households. With rents demanded months and sometimes years in advance, working class quarters are reduced to squalor by landlords. Refuse dumps in urban neighbourhoods are widespread. Poor sanitation and water quality create conditions ripe for the spread of diseases.¹³⁷ Nigerian hospitals have become worse than mere consulting clinics, with medical services becoming inaccessible to the poor. The escalating costs of pharmaceutical and medical treatment are out of reach for the majority of workers.

Other essential services in the SAP era have also witnessed an accelerated rise in cost. Spending cuts to transportation services, combined with the rising prices of imported spare parts and petroleum, have crippled the sector and elevated passenger prices. In most urban centres, particularly Lagos, experiences commuting to and from work and market places, have reached nightmarish proportions. With the decrease in commercial vehicles due to rising costs, urban bus stations are chaotic centres, where frustrated and weary passengers struggle to board vehicles which arrive

¹³⁷ Mere Kisekka, et al., "Women and Health" in WIN ed., The WIN Document, p.64.

sporadically.¹³⁸ Declining real incomes make automobiles, even *tokumbos* (used and over-used vehicles) unaffordable to the majority of workers. Therefore, consigned to travel on dilapidated commercial vehicles, journeys, particularly in a *molue* (commercial bus), have become virtual death traps for commuters.

The fallout of the SAPs is turning access to education into the exclusive terrain of wealthy Nigerians. A combination of rising costs and devalued worth of education in the country, has led to declining enrolments in elementary, secondary and tertiary institutions. For instance, in elementary and secondary institutions, the impositions of user fees in this period have moved beyond levies on entrance examinations and tuition to now include fees for chalk, report cards, testimonials, etc. Unable to afford these levies, working class households lose interest in educating their children. University degrees are no longer a guarantee for gainful employment, affirmed by the thousands of graduates that pass through the National Youth Service Corp annually en route to join the swelling ranks of unemployed medical doctors, pharmacists, dentists, engineers among other graduates roaming the streets of major urban centres. In the calculations of most working class households, education is an expensive and unwise investment. The same scenario applies to

¹³⁸ Jubril Joe Obende, "All Mass and Still no Transit" in African Guardian, January 11, 1993, p.11.

elementary and secondary institutions, where appreciating costs force the withdrawal of numerous school children, which are then redeployed to assist in the immediate reproduction of the household.

Diminishing real incomes of salary and wage earners have intensified working class struggles, pushing the state to increase the existing minimum wage from N125 (by 1987, less than N25 in real terms) to N250 in 1991, and compelled the government to commit to a SAP relief package, designed to cushion widespread economic hardships. In the aftermath of the May 1989 anti-SAP riots, state concessions included, among others, a commitment to ease public transportation problems, the establishment of the National Directorate of Employment -- anticipated to create over 60, 000 jobs -- and the re-alignment of public and private sector wage and salary structures (see below). In 1991, the government dismantled the unitary salary structure in the civil service and enjoined state and local governments to negotiate with public sector employees on new arrangements. State government's only began implementing new salary structures in October 1992, eighteen months after the initial federal government directive, with uneven implementation between the 30 states of the federation.¹³⁹ However, the on-going depreciation of the naira continued to exert upward pressure on the prices of

¹³⁹ Tajudeen Atitebi, "State Governments Approve New Relief Packages for Civil Servants" in Newswatch, September 28, 1992, p.45.

essential commodities, eroding the real gains of these packages as quickly as they were agreed upon. Declining real incomes, a largely indifferent Nigerian state and the descent of millions into absolute poverty, have compelled the working classes to rely heavily on informal sector activities to ensure economic survival.

Estimated to occupy close to seventy percent of the working population in urban areas, the millions of new entrants now crowding the parallel economy adopt various strategies, often simultaneously, to survive the deteriorating material predicament. Individualized working class strategies, primarily centred on farming, transport services, and petty trade. When access to land is possible, most categories of workers, employed or not, resort to farming to meet subsistence needs. When surpluses exist they are sold to generate additional income. It has therefore become necessary for the working class to balance farming with wage employment. However, with the general inaccessibility to land, they seek to commercialize acquired skills and assets. Workers with mechanical skills, for instance, open repair shops when possible or pursue employment in existing informal sector enterprises. Operating below 10 percent capacity utilization, widespread job losses in the automobile sub-sector has contributed to the proliferation of roadside mechanics in this period. The study conducted by Bangura and Beckman on the automobile TNC, Steyr-Nigeria, in Bauchi State, notes that one

response to massive lay-offs, saw workers establish small-scale enterprises (SSE) to service the company's vehicles.¹⁴⁰ Attempts to establish SSE by the working classes, however, generally remains blocked, due to capital constraints. The rising prices of motorcycles, *tokumbos* and spare parts, have made vehicles precious assets to middle and working class Nigerians. Not merely used for private convenience, motorcycles and cars are converted into commercial vehicles, a notable means of earning extra income in the era of adjustment. Nigerian vehicle owners frequent the plethora of 'conversion engineers' 'panel beaters' and 'improvising mechanics' to cut costs and time, in order to maintain the operations of this important means of accumulation. Various called, 'express', 'ina zaki', 'achaba', 'okada', motorcycle taxi services are crucial second or third jobs, straddled with wage employment. While more frequent among middle class Nigerians, workers that own cars also convert their vehicles into *kabukabu* (unlicensed taxis).

Petty trading also has intensified as a survival strategy for the Nigerian working classes. Previously a woman dominated occupation in some cities, and the principal non-domestic occupation of urban women. it includes market and street vending, often integrated with home based production.¹⁴¹ The increase in cottage industries, generates alternative sources

¹⁴⁰ Bangura and Beckman, "African Workers", p.84.

¹⁴¹ Frederici and Ogbuagu, "Women and Work", p.16.

of household income. These forms of production range from dress-making, weaving and spinning to pottery-making, cloth-dyeing and food processing. These goods are largely transported to market and traded by women and their children.¹⁴² Hitherto, petty trading represented an alternative economy outside of state control and male domination. In recent years, however, the new male entrants have eroded women's autonomous power and incomes. This has occurred at a time when any male contribution to household incomes may have been significantly reduced due to job losses. Compounded by the vicissitudes of rising inflation, this has compelled longer working hours, yet continued downturns in incomes. Reproductive responsibilities of child care and domestic labour has doubled the working day of women. Diana Elson's seminal work on women and structural adjustment highlights the underlying gender bias of SAPs, which assumes women's reproductive labour to be infinitely elastic.¹⁴³ Undervalued and invisible to macro-economic indicators, Nigerian women unevenly shoulder the burden of social reproduction. By and large, the working classes have exploited available opportunities in order to meet the demands of daily survival. However, informal means of accumulation

¹⁴² Glory Kilanko, "Feminine Industry: Towards a Sound Economy", Paper presented at the 1994 National Productivity Day Symposium: Lagos State Chapter: on the theme Productivity for a Viable Polity in Lagos State, February 21, 1994, p.3.

¹⁴³ Diane Elson, "The Impact of Structural Adjustment on Women: Concepts and Issues", (Manchester: Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Development Studies Association, 1987. Also reprinted in Bade Onimode, The IMF, The World Bank and African Debt: The Social Impact, (London: Zed for IFAA, 1989).

have been limited with incomes that are marginal at best.

SECTION SIX: SAP, INFORMALIZATION AND THE NIGERIAN MIDDLE CLASSES

Petty bourgeois classes have not escaped the hardships engendered by SAP. For large sections of the professional and entrepreneurial middle classes, the crisis, adjustment and closure of avenues for social mobility, tempered aspirations, as they are now engulfed in personal struggles to maintain past gains. The salaries of academic staff have not kept pace with runaway inflation. For example, a graduate assistant earns N6, 894 and a full professor N14, 280 annually, on opposite extremes of the university salary structure (the pay structure was recently increased by 45% after a protracted struggles led by Academic Staff of Universities Union).¹⁴⁴ Most Nigerian lecturers can no longer survive on their monthly earnings. Feeding their families, educating their children, and providing familial health care have become daunting tasks. The entrepreneurial middle classes have not fared much better, despite the optimistic expectations of SAP's proponents that envisaged significant informal sector growth and rising incomes in a deregulated environment. On the contrary, the policy framework of adjustment which is devastating productive sectors in the formal economy, as previously detailed, inevitably spawns adverse consequences for the informal

¹⁴⁴ Dan Agbese, "Man of the Year: Attahiru Jega: A Pen Portrait" in Newswatch, vol.17, no.2, January 11, 1993, p.15.

sector. By virtue of the multiple interconnections with the dominant capitalist sector on which it depends for resources and access to markets, the informal sector therefore continues to be subject to the vagaries of the SAP.¹⁴⁵

To illustrate, neo-liberal assumptions of limited usage of formal sector commercial credit and non-import dependency in the operations of small-scale enterprises¹⁴⁶ have proven erroneous. Therefore, tight monetary policies and the devaluation of the naira converged to increase the cost of informal sector production. Despite the lower capital outlay for its operations, SSEs cannot compete with large formal sector firms or even small-scale industries (SSIs), due to the exorbitantly high interest rates and stringent collateral stipulations. Often, educational background and comprehensive feasibility studies documenting profitability prospects are determinants which militate against SSEs finding access to formal sector credit.¹⁴⁷ In any case, as mentioned in Part One, the general aversion of commercial and merchant banks to facilitate productive investment, when the environment created

¹⁴⁵ Kate Meagher and Mohammed Bello Yunusa, Limits to Labour Absorption: Conceptual and Historical Background to Adjustment in Nigeria's Urban Informal Sector, (Uppsala: UNRISD Discussion Paper no.28, December 1991).

¹⁴⁶ The distinction between small-scale enterprises (SSEs) and small-scale industries (SSIs), based on capital base below N500 000 and employing less than 50 workers is accepted here. see: David B. Ekpenyong and M.O. Nyong, Small and Medium-Scale Enterprises in Nigeria: Their Characteristics, Problems and Sources of Finance, (Nairobi: African Economic Research Consortium, AERC Research Paper no.16, December 1992).

¹⁴⁷ Ekpenyong and Nyong, *Op.cit.*, see also A.W. Obi, "Prospects for Small-Scale Industries Development Under A Structural Adjustment Programme: The Case of Nigeria" in Africa Development, vol.xvi, no.2, 1991.

by the SAP is so conducive to more lucrative speculative activities, has made formal sector financial credit even less accessible. Moreover, SSEs continued dependency for 60% of inputs from the formal sector and the skyrocketing of local and imported inputs have escalated production costs.¹⁴⁸ Further constrained by the competing demands for local resources from speculators, new entrants and larger firms, raw material and input scarcity continues to raise the production costs of informal sector enterprises. Rising costs and shrinking markets due to the depressed purchasing power of wage and salary earners have constricted informal sector growth and the incomes of the entrepreneurial middle class. As with workers, the erosion of middle class living standards has precipitated multiple strategies to cope with the crisis. These survival mechanisms are generally not geared towards daily existence -- unlike workers -- but rather towards maintaining previous lifestyles; ie. available opportunities are exploited to generate supplementary income.

By virtue of professional skills, asset endowment and enhanced political networks, the middle classes have often found more reliable sources of income generation. More likely to own vehicles, the commercialization of private cars into *kabukabu* has been a common source of alternative income. A rarity before the mid-1980s, the proliferation of *kabukabu* and recent attempts by state governments to regulate the their

¹⁴⁸ Meagher and Yunusa, Limits to Labour Absorption.

operations, reflects its growing importance as part-time work.¹⁴⁹ In addition, the continued rise in food prices and declining nutritional standards have transformed broad sectors of the middle classes into part-time farmers. Some university lecturers have succeeded in establishing large farms, for subsistence and profit. Similarly, backyard poultry farming activities have grown in recent years. Farming by middle class households in some cases provides a resource base for food processing. Beyond agrarian sources of supplementary income generation, a preferred mode of garnering earnings prevalent among the intellectual middle class, exploits clientele networks.¹⁵⁰ Academics in large numbers vie for state contracts, political appointments, consultancies and placements in parastatals, where the opportunity is seldom lost to appropriate national income. They have also sought employment in commercial and merchant banks to capitalize on the exchange speculation bonanza. For the less fortunate, access to banks at least enhance the prospects of securing credit for the establishment of other means of accumulation, such as SSEs, when personal savings are often insufficient.

The swelling of the informal sector compelled traditional middle class entrepreneurs and the new entrants to also adopt methods to sustain the profitability of enterprises. The

¹⁴⁹ Abdul Raufu Mustapha, "Structural Adjustment and Multiple Modes of Social Livelihood in Nigeria" in Peter Gibbon et al., Authoritarianism, Democracy and Adjustment, 1992, p.204.

¹⁵⁰ Molar Ogundipe-Leslie, "Stories", p.7.

production of lower quality, often faulty and occasionally counterfeit goods are common strategies to minimize costs. Paradoxically, the increasing consumption of often sub-standard informal sector goods in this period, reflects the decline in real incomes of workers and large sections of the middle classes. Extended working hours ranging from 9-17 hours daily are yet another mechanism to cut costs, where SSEs intensify the exploitation of women's labour and apprentices recruited at younger ages.¹⁵¹ Due to the pervasive lack of formal sector employment, a growing number of unemployed university graduates have joined the pool of cheap informal sector labour,¹⁵² as SSEs seek to cut costs and increase working hours in order to cope with rampant enterprise closures and declining profitability and incomes. With the exception of pockets of vitality in this sector, the degree of accumulation, labour absorption and incomes has been negligible. The bulk of participants struggle for meagre and insecure livelihoods as the crisis continues unabated.

SECTION SEVEN: SAP AND SUBORDINATE RURAL CLASSES

Exchange rate deregulation was expected to benefit the majority of the peasantry, long neglected in the process of post-colonial development. By changing the structure of

¹⁵¹ Meagher and Yunusa, Limits to Labour Absorption, p.17.

¹⁵² A. Adejunmobi, Coping Strategies for Survival Among Unemployed Nigerian Graduates, (Ibadan: NISER Monograph Series No.12, 1991).

incentives from non-tradeable to tradeable goods and services,¹⁵³ market reform and an emphasis on the price mechanism would boost agricultural production and incomes, thereby shifting the balance of forces away from the rapacious 'urban coalition' towards the hitherto exploited and oppressed 'rural class.' Indeed, as envisioned by the advocates of adjustment, the production of major cash and food crops have increased from pre-SAP levels. Correspondingly, nominal producer prices rose in this period. For both export crop and domestic food producers, however, the SAP has created new and exacerbated pre-existing contradictions, deepening the poverty of the majority of rural farmers. Productivity gains and higher nominal producer incomes in the export crop sub-sector remain vulnerable to external constraints, where tariff and non-tariff barriers in the West, raw material substitutes, coupled with the simultaneous productive increases in structurally adjusting Third World countries, continues to exert downward pressure on the international prices of primary export commodities.

Furthermore, the abolition of state marketing boards militates against the growth of cash crop production and higher real producer prices, despite optimistic expectations. In certain agrarian export sub-sectors, cocoa for example, the

¹⁵³ Tradeable refers to goods and service for which an international and domestic market exists. While the macro-economic environment of SAP is designed to increase agrarian productivity, export-commodity production is given privileged and priority status over domestic food production.

state's retreat from the pricing and marketing of export crops and the ensuing non-inspection of produce, fuelled the rise of adulterated and under-weight commodities. With the resulting poorer quality goods, international demand and market prices for some Nigerian commodities declined in this period.¹⁵⁴ Rising rural incomes, expected to occur with the elimination of monopolistic marketing boards, have also been constrained by the entrance of new middlemen, exploiting the vacated regulatory space, and now mediating interactions between direct producers and the market.¹⁵⁵ The example of the so-called 'new breed' cocoa farmers, seeking to export capital from the unstable Nigerian economy by extracting surplus value from the peasantry was previously highlighted. Similarly, in the food sub-sector, escalating costs of transportation and storage facilities have opened up avenues for the intervention of middlemen. Often urban men, and usually displacing rural women traders, they charge rural producers exorbitantly high rates to haul their produce to markets.¹⁵⁶ Persisting speculative activities in this period increased the smuggling

¹⁵⁴ Mustapha, "Multiple Modes", p.121.

¹⁵⁵ A critique of the disastrous consequences which resulted from the abolishing of state marketing boards in the period of SAPs, in no way suggests a return to the inefficient and corrupt institutions, which were largely unable to cushion rural producers from the vagaries in the global economy. We recognize these pre-existing limitations, however make a distinction in the stated regulatory role (which is still relevant today) of marketing boards, and its specific character in colonial and post colonial Africa. Marketing Boards are necessary buffer mechanisms for rural producers. The point is to restructure and democratize these institutions.

¹⁵⁶ Saba Mebrahtu, "Women, Work and Nutrition in Nigeria" in Meredith Turshen ed., Women and Health in Africa, (Trenton: Africa World Press, 1991), p.98.

of Nigerian foodstuffs into neighbouring Francophone African countries where, until the January 1994 devaluation of CFA currencies, higher prices were to be found, though this was seldom reflected in rural real incomes. Porous Nigerian borders further denied domestic food producers equitable remuneration, largely tempering any gains which may have accrued from the initial government ban on imported foods.

Undoubtedly, since the inception of adjustment, the rapidly declining *naira* value and the ensuing inflationary pressures this induced, has eroded the real income of the majority of rural farmers. While initially boosting productivity and nominal incomes, exchange rate deregulation simultaneously raised the cost of agricultural production. Merely serving as conveyor belts, rising incomes of small and medium-scale farmers are transferred to higher priced fertilizers, hoes, machetes and labour. Where the social reproduction of rural classes is dependent on the market, elevated production costs and soaring prices of food, transportation and other essential goods and services have threatened the economic survival of most rural households. Restricted credit access for most rural farmers has compounded matters. Despite stated commitments to increased sectoral credit allocations and concessional loans to rural producers, agrarian interests rates according to official government

statistics increased from 10% in 1985 to 26% by 1989,¹⁵⁷ although anecdotal evidence places this figure between 30% and 40%. At existing interest rates, formal sector financial credit became inaccessible. Unable to secure capital, agricultural productivity and incomes have subsequently declined. In 1990, the CBN abolished the so-called preferential access to loans which essentially formalized pre-existing credit closure for the bulk of rural producers.¹⁵⁸ The combined effect of devaluation, subsidy removals and tight credit policies, have deteriorated the living standards of most small and medium-scale farmers, with particularly adverse consequences for the majority of rural women.¹⁵⁹

The aggregate data on female labour, in which rural women in Africa comprise 60-80% of the agrarian labour force and produce 80% of food for household consumption, holds true for Nigeria.¹⁶⁰ SAPs emphasis on tradeables and the primacy of

¹⁵⁷ Excerpts of the joint study on the agricultural sector conducted by the Central Bank of Nigeria and the Nigerian Institute for Social and Economic Research, cited in Tajudeen Atitebi "Cry, Thy Beloved SAP" in Newswatch, July 27, 1992, p.35-36.

¹⁵⁸ Atitebi, *Ibid.*, p.35.

¹⁵⁹ The specificities of region and ethnicity in part influence the character of contemporary rural sexual divisions of labour in Nigeria. Among the three dominant ethnic groups, for instance, Hausa women (North), usually engage in home based food processing due to the religious inhibitions of purdah, Yoruba women (South-West), are normally concentrated in trading endeavours, while Igbo women (South East), primarily engage in farming. Generally however, the productive activities of rural women, centres primarily around, planting, sowing, weeding, harvesting, while reproductive activities include, food preparation, cooking, cleaning, child-care, health-care, fetching fuel and water, among others. see: Ayesha Imam et al. "Women and Work in Rural Nigeria" in WIN ed., The WIN Document, 1992.

¹⁶⁰ see chapter on Environment and Gender Issues, in Tade Akin Aina and Ademola T. Salau, The Challenge of Sustainable Development in Nigeria, (Ibadan: INTEC Printers for the NEST, 1992).

export commodity production, has shifted 'traditional' agrarian sexual divisions of labour, with profound effects on rural women. In post-colonial Nigeria, women's productive work was concentrated in food production. In the period of adjustment, however, women are increasingly recruited to work with internationally tradeable crops, where their wages are lower in comparison to male counterparts.¹⁶¹ Simultaneously, women farmers must maintain food production, processing and trading activities in addition to daily reproductive obligations. Such intensification of women's work occurs in a climate which increases the impediments to their productive activities. The renewed emphasis on cash crop production, for instance, in the prevailing environment of vicarious usufructuary land rights for women, has often confined their land access to marginal and less fertile plots, as transnational and national agri-businesses and male-dominated small and medium-scale farmers appropriate lands previously cultivated by women to earn potentially higher incomes. The increasing incidence of encroachment onto school fields and median strips along some Nigerian highways, reflects the marginalization of women food producers, forced in recent

¹⁶¹ Anita Spring and Vicki Wilde, "Women Farmers, Structural Adjustment, and FAO's Plan of Action for Integration of Women in Development" in Christine Gladwin et al. eds., Structural Adjustment and African Women Farmers (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1991), p. 388-393.

years to wrestle food from available lands.¹⁶²

While constraints on land availability heightened the struggle to grow food for household consumption and profit, production costs concomitantly escalated with the inflationary spiral in the Nigerian economy. The general inaccessibility to formal sector credit further constricts women's productive activities. In the absence of formal land rights, women are often unable to secure loans from commercial banks due to collateral stipulations that usually make land ownership mandatory. Bola Akanji's recent study on domestic food crops and agrarian export commodities under SAP highlights the differential access to formal sector loans in which collateral requirements on food producers are usually extremely stringent.¹⁶³ Building on existing gender biases, the primacy on export crop production further prevents women from securing credit when urgently needed to pay for higher priced tools, seed, fertilizer, transportation, storage facilities, etc. With these constraints on women's productive activities, the burden of daily reproductive functions has further increased.

Rising costs of basic goods and services have restricted women's access to timesaving technologies such as electricity, fuel, manufactured tools and appliances. As a result, the

¹⁶² U.M. Igbozurike, "The Impact of the Structural Adjustment Programme on Nigerian Agriculture", Paper presented at the NEST 1993 Annual Conference on SAP and the Nigerian Environment, Benin, Edo State, May 2-5, 1993, excerpts in NEST Forum, vol.2, no.2, April-June 1993.

¹⁶³ Bola Akanji, The Case of Cocoa and Yam.

daily tasks of gathering water and firewood have intensified, as have the chores of food preparation, cooking and cleaning, among others. In many cases, the reproductive responsibilities of rural women have expanded. They are compelled to absorb the stresses of urban working and middle class households struggling to survive the crisis. Molara Ogundipe Leslie, notes that rural women "sometimes serve as havens and back-up systems for relatives ... retrenched or impoverished in their wage employment." In large numbers, she further states, "children are sent back to poor and struggling rural relatives, sometimes grandparents who themselves are trying to piece together a life."¹⁶⁴ Here as with urban households, nutritional standards in the countryside have deteriorated. In some instances, rural households have turned to famine foods, such as *dusa* -- a grain normally used as animal fodder -- in Northern Nigeria.¹⁶⁵ A recent joint study by the CBN-NISER, concludes that the quality of life in rural areas have deteriorated in the last few years. Beyond food processing and petty trade, non-farming modes of income-generation have been restricted. The Report highlights the changes in rural household consumption, in which the elimination of certain expensive food items (eg. meats, eggs, rice, bread) make it

¹⁶⁴ Ogundipe-Leslie, "Stories", p.12.

¹⁶⁵ Comfort B. Olayiwole, "The Role of Home Economics Agents in Rural Development" in Northern Nigeria: The Impact of Structural Adjustment in Christine Gladwin et al. eds., African Women Farmers, 1991, p.369.

difficult to maintain basic nutritional standards.¹⁶⁶ Maternal mortality is on the rise and curable diseases and ailments are widespread. Whereas the SAP set out to improve the living conditions of the poor, oppressed rural masses, the programme has deepened the poverty and underdevelopment of the countryside.

**SECTION EIGHT: ADJUSTMENT, INFORMALIZATION, CONTRADICTIONS
AND SOCIAL ANOMIES IN CIVIL SOCIETY**

The crisis, adjustment and the dictates of economic survival have given rise to creative and imaginative responses to cope with the deterioration of material conditions. Pre-dating the crisis, the straddling of formal and informal forms of income-generation in the period of adjustment intensified, leaving the majority of Nigerians to now manage even scarcer resources. The extent to which the informal sector is thriving however, should not be exaggerated and idealized. Informal sector participation is not devoid of social struggles over access to resources, as power relations persist "which define and constrain individual or group strategies, as well as the nature and extent of straddling."¹⁶⁷ Moreover, the heightened process of informalization, cannot be simplistically reduced to a wilful escape by subordinate groups from the predatory Nigerian state into an unencumbered social space. The retreat of large sections of working and middle classes into the

¹⁶⁶ CBN/NISER Study cited in Atitebi, "Cry", p.35-36.

¹⁶⁷ Roitman, "Informal Markets", p.691.

informals is generally involuntary, resulting from the inability to secure a 'living wage' in the formal economy and at a general level further reflects the determination of all impoverished Nigerians to survive the strains of SAP. Beyond limited areas of vitality, and the positive contributions of certain informal sector goods and services, the growth, labour absorptive capacity, incomes and development potential of the sector have been negligible. In the macro-economic environment created by SAPs, elevated production costs and deflated wage and salary earnings have hindered informal sector productivity and growth, although these have increased consumption of informal sector products in this period. As a consequence of these constraints and the enumerable entrance of new actors, pre-existing uneven remunerations in the sector have widened, with obvious ramifications for the majority of women. Informal forms of income-generating activities remain precarious, subject to the vicissitudes of monetary fluctuations and abound with contestations for access to scarcer resources. The majority of participants are barely eking out a livelihood.

The unprecedented level of negative social trends and the rapid rise in extra-legal modes of accumulation, have been an outgrowth of material decline and the closure of economic opportunities, even in the much-celebrated informal sector. With the escalating costs of education, in the socio-economic context which has pauperized large sections of the intellectual middle classes and swelled graduate unemployment,

children by the hundreds of thousands are withdrawn from schools to assist in activities such as farming and street hawking, in order to ensure the daily reproduction of poorer households. Prostitution has increased. Often in full knowledge of parents, young girls line the streets of major urban centres soliciting customers. Street children abound, abandoned by their families due to the depth of poverty. Teenage pregnancy is rampant. Homelessness and panhandling have heightened. Carriers of the AIDS virus number over half a million, with Anambra and Lagos state leading in reported cases, 20 and 18 percent respectively.¹⁶⁸ A recent conference on *Essential Child-Care in the 1990s and Beyond* concludes that the "Nigerian child is getting a raw deal not only from his [or her] family but from the society and nation. The abuses are truly legion, child labour, under-age marriage, rape, forced prostitution, destitution, battering, ...children are exposed to drugs, culminating in its abuse."¹⁶⁹ Resorting to petty theft in order to survive, thousands of school-age children are languishing in Nigerian jails.

Corruption has permeated all levels of society. Reaching unprecedented proportions, brazen corruption and wanton displays of wealth among the ruling classes, together with deepened material deprivations, heightens extra-legal modes of

¹⁶⁸ Julius Ihonvbere, "Economic Crisis, Structural Adjustment and Social Crisis in Nigeria" in World Development, vol.21, no.1, 1993, p.147.

¹⁶⁹ Gladys Umerah, "Endangering Our Tomorrows" in Tell, no.51, 1992, p.21.

accumulation among non-bourgeois forces. Public sector workers, from administrative clerks and low-level custom officials to toll gate attendants and court bailiffs, have exploited available opportunities to exact meagre fees to supplement declining formal incomes. Poorly paid police officers utilize the mounted road blocks which criss-cross the country to exhort monies from passing motorists. At most universities, public funds earmarked to improve the conditions of dilapidated facilities on campuses have been appropriated by school administrators, academics and non-academic staff. The search for state contracts and consultancies have been matched by extra-legal means of income-generation within campuses, where lecturers now levy private fees for university admission and make consistent monetary demands on students for routine advice, assistance and passing grades.

In an environment of decaying social institutions and declining real incomes, members of the intellectual middle classes have emigrated to Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and North America in startling numbers. Alarmed, the government commissioned the Ibidapo Obe Panel on Brain Drain, which simply reaffirmed the large-scale departure of Nigerians with technical and specialized skills. The exodus of doctors and nurses, for instance, is estimated to exceed over 1500 and 500 respectively in the last five years.¹⁷⁰ The vacuum created by the mass exodus of health care specialists, in the climate of

¹⁷⁰ Ihonvbere, "Social Crisis", p.148.

escalating costs for medical treatment, is being filled by quack doctors, herbalists, and home remedies. This is not to negate the valuable contributions of naturopathy, but rather to recognize the danger of incursions by unregulated medical practitioners and vendors. The sale of counterfeit pharmaceutical products, for example, has become a profitable, yet socially hazardous means of income-generation. In Oyo state alone, at least 800 drug vendors and 200 unlicensed chemist shops were operating in 1992.¹⁷¹

Wasting Nigeria's human resources, university graduates have joined the ranks of the unemployed and underemployed disgruntled youths and are increasingly recruited as couriers in the booming international narcotics trade, in which Nigeria has become an integral cog in recent years. Throughout Europe and North America, hundreds of Nigerians have been arrested for drug-trafficking. In 1988, in the United Kingdom alone "nearly 66 percent of all arrests...for the illegal importation of hard drugs were Nigerians...[they] also accounted for 33 percent of total seizures of heroine."¹⁷² Youth are employing every means possible to flee the country. The notoriety of the 'green book' which continues to subject even high ranking Nigerian officials to scrutiny at international airports, has led to a growing market for forged

¹⁷¹ Adebola Adewole, "Hospitals as Theatres of War" in Tell, no.43, 1992, p.17.

¹⁷² Julius Ihonvbere, Nigeria.

visas and passports. In the social milieu which has come to glorify wealth, regardless of the means of its acquisition, criminal syndicates popularly known as '4-1-9', have set up elaborate and seemingly legitimate businesses for the sole purpose of duping foreign investors.¹⁷³ Here again, the skills of students have been found useful, actively sought in these sophisticated, lucrative, yet dubious operations.

Urban crime, such as burglaries, assaults, rapes and murders have also risen phenomenally. Isolated nightly attacks on motorists in the 1970s have given way in the last decade to more numerous and brazen attacks by gangs of armed robbers now operating -- seemingly freely -- in broad daylight. Women increasingly are recruited to serve as decoys in car theft rings that have sprung up and stretch across Nigeria's three borders. The sources of sophisticated weaponry used in these and other operations continues to perplex the government. Yet, some police officials have brought attention to the booming underground market in arms, gained from national military armouries and often via soldiers returning from ECOMOG peace-monitoring activities in Liberia. The celebrated search for 'king pins' Ishola Oyenusi and Lawrence Anini in the 1970s and 1980s, have been paralleled by the quest for Shina Rambo in

¹⁷³ Nigerian 'businessmen' with strong connections to the state, have developed an international reputation for fraudulent practices. Popularly called '4-1-9' (after the state decree against fraud), hundreds of international investors, anticipating huge profits, with of course minimal investment, have been lured into fake business ventures. Foreign businessmen have lost millions in these scams, prompting governments and leading business journals in Europe, North America and Asia, to alert nationals entering joint-ventures with Nigerians.

recent years. Most urban centres are increasingly terrorized by so-called Area Boys, the gangs of disgruntled youth produced and fuelled by declining material conditions. Even the countryside has not been immune from the rise in crime, with the theft of food crops being particularly widespread.¹⁷⁴

Countrywide the struggle to cope with the pains of adjustment has reduced able bodied Nigerians to scavenging. The impoverished now rummage in dump-sites -- particularly in urban centres -- to transform the seemingly unconvertible for personal usage and sale. While it has been argued that such coping mechanisms reflect the vitality of the informal sector, this crude form of income-generation exposes the poor to noxious gases and diseases in the daily pursuit to stave off hunger. The limited prospects for economic survival from these meagre forms of accumulation is worsened by the exploitive role of middlemen who prosper from the resale of refuse. The closure of economic opportunities has propelled millions of Nigerians into abject poverty, while daily, a tiny minority of Nigerians continue to display their wealth and affluence.

Undisturbed by the deepening malaise, the impoverishment of millions and state withdrawal from the social reproduction of marginalized groupings, the ruling comprador bloc of the dominant classes continues to use state power to enhance its

¹⁷⁴ Samuel Olukoya, et al. "Reign of The Robbers" in Newswatch, vol.16, no.26, December 18, 1992, p.14-15.

private accumulation, thriving in fact from the socio-economic decline. The economic crisis, the restructuring of the statist model of capitalist development, and the attendant constriction of avenues for accumulation has intensified the contestation among factions of the Nigerian ruling classes to gain access to contracting state resources. Already tenuously engaged in production, the constraints on domestic accumulation, exacerbated by SAPs, has propelled the ruling classes to strengthen traditional modes of appropriation, such as contract inflation, kickbacks, and the outright embezzlement of public funds. State access has also been utilized to buttress new extra-legal modes of private enrichment which have gained 'currency'. Usually operating through intermediaries, high ranking military and police personnel, government officials, politicians, central bankers, business professionals and judges have found new wealth, in currency trafficking, drug peddling and the multifarious 4-1-9 activities.

Nonetheless, the beguiling song of neo-liberal analysts continues to encourage state withdrawal from economic activities and the freeing of market forces in order to reduce the premium on state power for private enrichment. Checking the hitherto endemic corruption which catalyzed the crisis, neo-liberal policies were to further maximize scarce resources, release dormant entrepreneurial energies and enhance domestic accumulation outside the state realm. Thus,

the SAP would foster economic recovery and create a material base conducive to stability and consensual politics. Indeed, economic deregulation and liberalization have shrunk the public arena; yet, intra-ruling class struggles and the plunder of national wealth rose to new heights in this period.¹⁷⁵ Fraudulent practises in the private sector have also been enhanced by SAP. As Adigun Agbaje observes:

"the extent to which the terrain of the struggle for scarce resources is gradually shifting from public bureaucracies into private bureaucracies [occurs] without a complementary shift in the nature of such struggles and the role of the state as a major determinant of the terrain and essence of the struggle."¹⁷⁶

To illustrate, exchange deregulation and the attendant free-fall of the naira has enhanced ruling class wealth and produced new billionaires and millionaires from currency speculation, which flourishes despite the Abacha regime's recent declaration to eliminate illegal foreign exchange transactions. Nigerian dailies are replete with documentation of the massive corruption in the banking industry. As highlighted in the previous chapter, access to foreign exchange has been limited to factions of the ruling classes with strong ties to the state. A lucrative means of accumulation, numerous commercial and merchants banks have sprung up all over the country to capitalize on the 'exchange bonanza'.

¹⁷⁵ Agbese and Ihonvbere, "Corruption".

¹⁷⁶ Adigun Agbaje, "Adjusting State and Market in Nigeria: The Paradoxes of Orthodoxy" in Afrika Spectrum no.27, 1992, p.126.

While the anti-statist logic of neo-liberal reforms reduces state prerogatives in maintaining even minimalist social amenities for the marginalized, the Nigerian state remains interventionist in promoting ruling class unproductive accumulation in the formal and informal economies. The unprecedented Nigerian involvement in the international trade of illicit drugs, which has produced a class of *nouveau riche*, prospers due to active state involvement. The recent public disclosure of unaccounted drugs seized by the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), exposed the widespread corruption which has plagued the agency since its formation in 1990. From the resale of seized drugs to the protection of known drug 'king pins', high and middle level officers of the NDLEA maintain strong links with drug syndicates in the country. State participation transformed the agency into a convenience store for drug barons and couriers, who preferred to obtain cheaper and low risk contraband at the NDLEA.¹⁷⁷ In the current investigation by the Miscellaneous Offence Tribunal, allegations abound which connect the former Attorney-General in the Babangida regime, Clement Akpamgbo to national drug syndicates. In likemanner, most '4-1-9' operations flourish with clear connivance of central bankers and high ranking government officials.

Rather than creating an unencumbered social space, the

¹⁷⁷ Joshe Arinze et al. "NDLEA: Nigeria's Stinking House of Drugs" in Tell, February 21, 1994.

Nigerian state has had a determining role in the processes of informalization. With the relative closure of formal sector accumulation, the process of informalization has enhanced the avenue to amass wealth for the ruling classes. In his recent work, Robert Fatton concludes that,

...withdrawal diminishes the exposure of the ruling classes as they enter the murky alley of the black market. Hiding behind intermediaries to avoid direct personal participation and manipulating their strategic position within the state apparatus to enhance their opportunities, powerful government officials have indeed become dominant entrepreneurs of the underground economy. The state has retained its determining impact on the legal and illegal acquisition of status, wealth and power, however much it may ostensibly disengaging from society and markets.¹⁷⁸

Despite the massive increase in legitimate or ill-gotten wealth, rather than convert the surpluses into productive capital accumulation domestically, the majority of the Nigerian elite remain decadent, unproductive, expending scarce resources in conspicuous consumption and overseas investment. These deep-rooted contradiction have served to alienate broad sectors of civil society from the state. The state is viewed with hostility and continues to lose credibility, as a small minority of Nigerians, strongly attached to the state apparatus continue to flaunt their wealth amidst social squalor and decay.

With the accentuation of social inequalities, the tenuous legitimacy of the Nigerian state and mounting internal and external pressures, the Babangida government was compelled to implement measures to protect vulnerable groups. Coinciding

¹⁷⁸ Fatton, Predatory Rule, p.63.

with the global clamouring to 'humanize' structural adjustment packages in the Third World, the government introduced SAP relief packages for public sector workers, in addition to buttressing and initiating social programmes. Most notably, the Directorate for Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI), the National Directorate for Employment (NDE), the Better Life for Rural Dwellers (BLRD) and the Peoples Bank, were established. All these programmes seek particularly to alleviate the poverty and deprivation in rural areas. The DFRRI, for instance, was formed in February 1987 to develop and mobilize rural communities. Entrusted with diverse functions, the Directorate pursued projects in the area of basic rural infrastructure and food production, designed to stimulate agrarian activities. The NDE (1987), embarked on employment generation programmes, mostly encouraging, however, self-employment through the disbursements of small loans.¹⁷⁹ The BLRD program (1987) (formerly Better Life for Rural Women) established by Maryam Babangida -- the former dictator's wife -- sought to ameliorate the hardships of rural life via programmes to enhance women's access to resources. Lastly, the Peoples Bank (1989) since its inception, set up branches in various parts of the country seeking to generate rural and urban employment. Mainly targeting rural villages and urban

¹⁷⁹ Dalue Mbachu, "NDE: Wanted: Vacancies" in Newswatch, October 5, 1992. p.22-24 The NDE has organized four programmes, which include vocational skills enhancement, agrarian development, public works initiatives and the promotion of small-scale enterprises, which specifically targeting the youth and tertiary institution graduands.

slums, the programme disburses interest free loans pegged at a maximum of N2000.¹⁸⁰

These initiatives have largely failed to meet stated objectives and remain plagued by massive mismanagement and corruption. While state pronouncements continue to exalt the achievements of DFFRI, the programme has done very little to build or rehabilitate roads, electrify the countryside, or boost food production, in spite of the N2.5 billion allocated between 1986 and 1992. Independent assessments and even successive state monitoring teams, continue to discover the massive misuse of public funds, unearthing a plethora of ghost projects in communities listed as beneficiaries.¹⁸¹ In the same manner, the NDE and the Peoples Bank are beset by corruption and financial impropriety. True, both programmes have made contributions to reduce rural and urban unemployment. The emphasis however, on self-employment through small-loan allocations, in the context of spiralling inflation, makes a pittance of such disbursements before any ventures are embarked upon. These accomplishments are further diminished when the huge financial outlays, totalling N2.2 bn (1987-1992) and N520 mn (1989-1991) are considered. A task force set up by the Peoples Bank to investigate allegations of corruption, for example, has also been plagued by waste,

¹⁸⁰ Special Edition on "The Money Guzzlers: DFFRI, MAMSER, FRSC, NDE, FUMPT and the Peoples Bank" in Newswatch, October 5, 1992.

¹⁸¹ Mike Akpan, "DFFRI: Miles of Performance, Inches of Evidence" in Newswatch, October 5, 1992.

financial indiscretion and outright looting. Assessing these programmes, Gani Fawehinmi, asserts "that they are a ruse to hoodwink and mislead the unwary, the innocent, the aggrieved, the cheated, the persecuted and oppressed in our country."¹⁸² Similarly, the Better Life for Rural Dwellers program, despite the fanfare which accompanied project launchings, anniversary celebrations, national and international accolades bestowed on the former 'first lady' hailing the programme's successes, has done little to improve the plight of rural women. Popularly dubbed *Better Life for Ruler Women* and *Better [off] Women for Rural Life*, the programme was essentially a public relations campaign for Maryam Babangida, the wives of former governors, and other elite women. So ineffective was the programme, that the National Commission for Women (NCW) established in 1990 to succeed the BLRD, concluded from its countrywide evaluation of the BLRD "that the programme did not have the sort of structures that would enable it to permeate down to the grassroots and cover a wide area [of initiatives]."¹⁸³ Personalized by Maryam Babangida, the programme's hand-over to the NCW was consistently frustrated and has since collapsed with the exodus of the Babangida dictatorship in August 1993.

¹⁸² Sam Olukoya, "PEOPLES BANK: For the People, Minus the People" in Newswatch, October 5, 1992, p.29.

¹⁸³ Mary Ette and Olu Ojewale, "Is Life Better After Five?" in Newswatch, November 2, 1992, p.44-45. see also "Better Life for Rural Dwellers: But are their Lives Really Better?" in African Guardian, November 27, 1989.

CONCLUSION

A recent examination of the social cost of adjustment succinctly summarizes, the impact of SAPs on the Nigerian civil society. Eight years after the programme was introduced by the Babangida regime, Ihonvbere notes that "the calm, harmony and trust which used to characterize the rural areas has disappeared... [and throughout the country] a general mood of distrust, suspicion, anger, disillusionment and cynicism has taken over from what was once an active, ebullient, innovative, creative and productive society."¹⁸⁴ Against this backdrop of socio-economic decay, however, one positive and unintended by-product of the adjustment era has been the proliferation of organizations in the civic terrain. Socio-economic decline, widening social inequities, widespread abuse and privatization of power, increasing suffocation of political space and the marginalization of the majority of Nigerians in the recently failed statist transition to civil rule, intensified popular struggles for democracy. Individualized and economic endeavours to survive the crisis have increasingly been matched by broader collective and political responses demanding restructuring of power relations and the improvement of material conditions. The collective responses in the civic terrain to economic decline and predatory rule is the topic of the next chapter.

¹⁸⁴ Ihonvbere, Nigeria.

CHAPTER THREE

ADJUSTMENT, THE FAILED TRANSITION TO NIGERIA'S THIRD REPUBLIC AND POLITICAL RESPONSES IN CIVIL SOCIETY

...may I say that the last seven years have been very catastrophic in the history of our country and the history of Africa as Nigeria occupies a place of prominence. We are looking at the two fundamental programmes the Babangida Regime has imposed on the country ie. the political transition and the structural adjustment programmes. These two programmes I must confess, have subverted democracy in our country and totally destroyed the future of our youths. If you look at the political transition programme... the whole case of democracy that the Babangida regime planted, I say Nigerians have not been encouraged to live a democratic life. Democracy is being imposed and it is more like as if we were in the barracks whereby orders are passed down. If you talk democracy, people have got to do it their own way. They are bound to make mistakes, but they are going to learn along the way. What will be the fate of democracy when Babangida leaves the stage?¹ (emphasis mine)

Fellow Nigerians, SEQUEL to the resignation of the former head of the Interim National Government(ING) and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces Chief Ernest Shoneken, and my subsequent appointment as Head of State and Commander-in-Chief, I have had extensive consultations within the Armed Forces hierarchy and other well meaning Nigerians, in a bid to find solutions to the various political, economic and social problems which have engulfed our beloved country and which have made life most difficult for the ordinary citizens of this nation. Many have expressed fears about the apparent return of the military. Many have talked about the concerns of the international community. However, under the present circumstances the survival of our beloved country is far above any other consideration. Nigeria is the only country we have. We must therefore solve our problems ourselves. We must lay a very solid foundation for the growth of true democracy. We should avoid any ad hoc or temporary solutions. The problems, must be addressed firmly, objectively, decisively, and with all sincerity of purpose. Consequently, a Constitutional Conference with full constituent powers will be established...to determine the future constitutional structure of Nigeria,...recommend the method of forming parties, which will lead to the ultimate recognition of political parties formed by the people. This regime will be firm humane and decisive. We will not condone nor tolerate any act of indiscipline. Any attempt to test our will, will be decisively dealt with. The government is a child of necessity with a strong determination to restore peace and stability to our country and on this foundation, enthrone a lasting and true democracy.¹ (emphasis mine)

On November 17, 1993, in an all too familiar speech, (second quote above) General Sani Abacha, head of the current junta, declared the reluctance, yet necessity, of the military's return to centre stage of Nigeria's political arena. The intervention, they noted, was aimed at arresting

¹ Femi Falana, cited in "The Babangida Years: What Legacy?" in African Concord, vol.7, no.15, August 31, 1992, p.37.

² General Sani Abacha, "We Must Lay Solid Foundations", Maiden Broadcast of the Abacha Coup cited in Vanguard, vol.10, no.2780, November 19, 1993, p.2.

the deepening political and socio-economic crisis which had gripped the country, particularly in the last few months. Overnight, the eight year transition programme to Nigeria's Third Republic and all accompanying political institutions were terminated. The statist political transition programme (PTP) was initiated by the former Babangida regime (1985-1993), concomitant with the imposition of the SAP. The 1986 Budget proclaimed the complementarity of these programmes, asserting that they were designed to establish a self-reliant economy and truly democratic foundation for the Third Republic. Indeed reinforcing, the SAP and the PTP exacerbated the malaise in Nigeria, deepening the crisis of the state, civil society and economy.

From the onset, the so-called democratic transition was marred by massive state manipulation, constant electoral rigging by factions of the ruling classes, systematic exclusion of supposed 'extremists' and 'radicals', and the continuous alienation of the majority of Nigerians, treating them as mere objects of the political process. However, the June 12, 1993 presidential elections, marked a significant juncture in the country's post-colonial history. Beyond the choice of the two presidential aspirants and parties, M.K.O. Abiola (Social Democratic Party, SDP) and Bashir Tofa (National Republican Convention, NRC), and the resounding victory of the former, the election reaffirmed the resolve of a broad sector of civil society to determine the political and

socio-economic landscape of the country. To this end, 'naira politics' and the often exploited ethnic, religious and regional cleavages were transcended in the quest for a new politics in Nigeria.

As an extension of state interference in the PTP, the results of the June 12 elections were subsequently annulled, despite widespread agreement, nationally and internationally, that they were the freest, fairest and most peaceful elections conducted in the country's history. The deepening socio-economic and political crisis galvanized opposition from broad sectors of civil society. Organized under the leadership of the Campaign for Democracy (CD), trade unions, student and women's associations, radical intelligencia, and a plethora of human rights NGOs, joined by nationalist factions of the ruling classes and external pressures, intensified the protracted struggle which led to the capitulation of the eight year Babangida dictatorship. Mounting popular opposition challenged the surrogate Interim National Government (ING) appointed by the exiting Babangida regime. The current Abacha junta, in terminating the PTP simultaneously dispensed with the facade of the civilian-headed ING, -- which the military ostensibly controlled. A constitutional conference has since been declared, a 19 member commission (CCC) was recently appointed by the Abacha led Provisional Ruling Council (PRC) to organize the modalities of the conference. So, for the third time in the country's history, the military has

arrogated to itself the role of democratic custodian and the decisive domestic force in shaping the direction of politics, economic recovery and development in the 1990s.

This chapter extensively examines the interplay of structural adjustment and the tumultuous and recently aborted political transition programmes in Nigeria. It seeks to assess the dynamics of Nigeria's emboldened civil society and the prospects for democratic development in the country. Examining the collective and political responses of various social classes and groupings in the civic terrain to the continuing crisis, adjustment and the defunct transition programme, we critically investigate which factors and forces strengthen and/or weaken civil society (particularly its popular organizations), their histories, democratic character, relations with the state, and demands and social project(s). Devoting attention to these critical issues and exploring the responses of popular forces in civil society to the unabating crisis will contribute to a deeper understanding of the alternatives advanced from below for democratic development in the last decade of the millennium. Here, I argue that while adjustment and state suffocation of civil society have paradoxically led to the proliferation of civic organizations campaigning to delimit the state and enthrone political democracy, the civic terrain is still weak, replete with economic, gender, ethnic, and religious contradictions and remains subject to state manipulation and domestication.

Section one provides a background of the failed democratic transition to Nigeria's Third Republic. A brief, yet critical historical sketch of popular democratic struggles in Nigeria, in section two, will give an important contextual framework for analyzing the political contestations of what we call the tripartite alliance between workers, students and academic unions. This section also focuses on the collective responses of and internal conflicts within established professional bodies in the country, mainly the Academic Staff Union of Universities, Nigerian Union of Journalists and the Nigerian Bar Association. The dynamics of Nigeria's embryonic NGO community is the topic of section three. Here, the prevailing orthodoxy which accords non-governmental organizations with crucial democratic and mediating functions in civil society is critically assessed in the multiple tiers of NGOs in Nigeria. Giving specific attention to the strong contributions of both the NGO, Women-in-Nigeria, and some of the new human rights and civil liberties NGOs to grassroots empowerment and popular democratic struggles, I however maintain that generally the incipient NGO community has marginally influenced democratic struggles in the country. The concluding section revisits the June 12 elections, the attendant political crisis, military intervention and the continuing popular struggles for democracy.

**SECTION ONE: UNDEMOCRATIC TRANSITIONS: A BACKGROUND
OF THE FAILED MARCH TO NIGERIA'S THIRD REPUBLIC**

The recently aborted political transition programme (PTP) was initiated by the former Babangida regime in 1986, concurrent with the advent of market reforms. Given the tenuous legitimacy of the Nigerian state and the alienation of broad sectors of civil society, aggrieved by declining material conditions and the draconian character of the Buhari regime, the new military administration adopted a human rights posture. The Babangida regime's³ quest for hegemonic control in civil society was also conditioned by the resolve to deepen the anti-working class and anti-popular recovery programme of its predecessor through the adoption of a standard IMF and World Bank SAP. In order to maintain a human rights and democratic demeanour, the government, through the auspices of the Political Bureau set up in early 1986 and headed by Samuel Cookey, launched a national debate on the country's political future. Nigerians were enjoined to participate, as was encouraged in the recently concluded IMF debates. While welcomed, responses were generally poor, particularly in contrast to the vibrancy which characterized the debate on the IMF recovery programme.⁴ The apathy and indifference in civil

³ Initially the Armed Forces Ruling Council (AFRC) 1985-1992 and later reconstituted as the National Defence and Security Council (NDSC) January - August 1993.

⁴ Jibrin Ibrahim, "The Political Debate and the Struggle for Democracy in Nigeria" in *ROAPE*, no.33, 1986, Special Issue on "Oil, Debt and Democracy in Nigeria", p.41-42.

society reflected growing popular dissatisfaction with the militarization of political life and widespread disdain over the military's dictatorial hold on the country's political and socio-economic policies. The general distrust and suspicion of military rule was reconfirmed by the decision of the Babangida regime to pursue the nationally rejected IMF recovery programme, albeit without the loan. The 17-member Political Bureau selected and sanctioned to co-ordinate the national political debate and collate the resultant view points, generally lacked popular appeal, despite the co-optation of prominent members of the Nigerian Left through committee appointments.⁵ Notably, the Bureau found the preference among Nigerians for a two-party system of governance with the proviso that the country adopt a socialist ideology.

It should be made clear that, in spite of the national debate to determine the modality of governance, the PTP was resolutely state-controlled, replete from the onset with conflict, contradictions and crises. Where the grassroots were implored to organize and participate, the state systematically excluded the majority of Nigerians from the transition process. Where the PTP supposedly sought to uphold freedom of expression, freedom of the press and freedom to organize, the state consistently aimed to restrict the political space of popular groupings and muzzle the fourth estate. Where the PTP

⁵ Abubakar Momoh, "The Philosophical and Ideological Foundations of the Transition to Civilian Rule in Nigeria" in B. Caron et al., Democratic Transition in Africa, (Ibadan: CREU, 1992), p.156.

purported a willingness to attenuate the religious and ethnic divide, parochial suspicions and clashes reached heights reminiscent of pre-Civil War Nigeria. Where the programme claimed it would ameliorate the primacy of money in politics, the government's rampant infusion of money into the transition process encouraged the unprecedented use of 'naira politics' in the incessant intra-ruling class contestation to capture state power. Where numerous institutions were created to mobilize and foster political consciousness and a democratic civic culture as the crucial bulwark against state excesses; state repression, political thuggery, violence and assassinations characterized the transition process. Where a free and fair voting process was promised, the art of electoral malpractice and chicanery were taken to new levels. Where the rule of law was to prevail, the government consistently intimidated and manipulated the judiciary and also promulgated over 60 decrees on the PTP alone, often in direct contradiction to its own standing edicts. And where the SAP was to provide a material basis for stability and consensual politics, economic stagnation, mass poverty, political marginalization and predatory rule characterized the eight year transition programme. Overall, the PTP had very little to do with the objective interest of the majority of Nigerians. An overview of the salient features of the PTP will indicate that for the Nigerian ruling classes politics largely remains an investment. Historically incapable of settling

intra-class competition for scarce resources peacefully, the deepening crisis of accumulation served to intensify contestation for state power for the generally unproductive Nigerian ruling classes. Largely blinded by the insatiable urge to preside over state resources, the ruling classes have therefore been unable to incorporate the participation of subordinate groupings in national politics, empower the poor in the redress of declining material conditions or uphold limited civil and human rights.

The limited legitimacy which the Babangida regime might have initially enjoyed increasingly waned with the full implementation of its widely disapproved anti-working class and anti-popular economic recovery programme. The over-regimented and often manipulated PTP, equally weakened state legitimacy in civil society. Like the IMF debate, while enjoining the participation of Nigerians on the determination of the country's political future, the government subsequently rejected popular view points endorsed in the Report of the Political Bureau. For instance, the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) policy paper *Towards a Viable and Genuinely Democratic Political Future: Nigeria's Workers Position* (1986) contributed to the debate and strongly argued for the immediate lifting of restrictions on the participation of organized labour in national politics. Hitherto constricted by successive government bans on the establishment of a political fund for workers, the Congress vehemently demanded the right of workers

to contribute funds to the formation and operations of a labour party it sought to create. Generally compliant to the entire NLC submission, the Bureau recommended that,

a) Nigeria's labour laws should be reviewed in order to unshackle the trade union movement and enable it to play a constructive role in society. b) The NLC and industrial unions should be allowed to establish a political fund, and c) Five percent of the seats in the legislatures of the three tiers of government should be allocated to workers. These seats should be filled through nominations through political parties in proportion to their numerical strength.⁶

The policy paper of Women-in-Nigeria (WIN), *Women and Political Development: Awareness and Mobilization* (1986) also received a somewhat receptive hearing from the Bureau. The paper identified religious and cultural inhibitions, patriarchal attitudes and capitalist relations of production at the root of the persisting marginalization of women from socio-economic and political life. It further argued for the extension of democracy "to include the grassroots majority and the elimination of all forms of exploitation, oppression and subordination."⁷ In turn, the Bureau's Report proposed that,

The full involvement of women in politics is one method of defending women's interests in society. They can participate fully if they are members of the legislative and executive arms of government. For this reason, we recommend the allocation of five per cent of the legislative seats to women in all three levels of government. This five percent seats allocated to women is to be filled by nominations through the political parties...and the formulation of a national policy on women and

⁶ Excerpts of the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) policy statement, "Towards a Viable and Genuinely Democratic Political Future: Nigeria's Workers Position - 1986" cited in Adebayo Olukoshi, "Nigerian Marxist Response to the Formation of the Nigerian Labour Party" in Christian Neugebauer, Philosophie, Ideologie und Gesellschaft in Afrika, (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1991), p.109.

⁷ Altine Mohammed and Bene Madunagu, "Win: A Militant Approach to the Mobilization of Women" in BOAPE, no.37, 1986, p.103

development.⁸

While the Bureau's report narrowed the core policy remedies of the NLC and WIN, the government's White Paper rejected most popular provisions of the Report. On the suggestion that a percentage of legislative seats should be allotted to workers and women, the AFRC dismissed these measures as inconsequential. The government boldly declared its commitment to individual, gender and group equality, but rejected the special allocation of legislative seats asserting such measures amount to reverse discrimination by the state. Also dismissing the recommendation that called for the rescinding of restrictive decrees on trade union's contributions to political funds, the government deemed this measure discriminatory and dangerous. The impetus towards organizing a labour party did however proceed, only after the NLC was reconstituted under state appointed leadership; yet even this ultimately failed with the mass disqualification of political associations which followed. (see below) The AFRC did enthusiastically accept the call for a two party system and the extension of the handover date from October 1990 to October 1992 -- with the caveat 'all things being equal'.

Guided by a timetable, the government adopted a number of measures to create a stable democratic polity. At the economic level, the structural adjustment programme was to provide the

⁸ Excerpts of the Political Bureau's Report in Hussaina Abdullah, "'Transition Politics' and the Challenge of Gender in Nigeria" in ROAPE, no.56, 1993, p.28.

material base for stable governance, while at the political level, numerous measures were established to pave the way for what was expected to be a painless transition to Nigeria's Third Republic. Decree No.19 (1987), was promulgated in order to curtail the participation of certain categories of Nigerians, deemed a threat to the survival of the new democratic order. Indicting 'old breed' politicians for the failure of the First (1960-1966) and Second Republics (1979-1983), public officials in this era, certain military and police administrators, politicians convicted of corruption or other crimes were summarily banned from participating in the transition process.⁹ Expanding the initial edict, the *Participation in Politics and Elections Prohibition* Decree No.25, (1987), also disqualified so-called 'radicals' and 'extremists' from taking part in the PTP.

Keeping a firm grip on the transition process, the government hand-picked a Constitutional Review Committee (CRC) to review the framework of the 1979 Constitution, and on that basis produced a draft. The Constituent Assembly (CA), subsequently formed to debate the draft constitution of the CRC was supposed to represent a cross-section of Nigerian

⁹ The government blamed the failure of the First and Second Republics on the political practises of 'old breed' politicians. According to General Babangida, the old political order was symbolized by "tribalism, rigging of elections, violence and thuggery, the crippling influence of money in politics and the lack of a spirit of compromise and sportsmanship among politicians in the contest for office." With a subsequent ban on old breed politicians and state willingness to infuse money into the transition process, this was expected to deter 'naira politics' and help bequeath a stable Third Republic. (see Tell, August 31, 1992)

society. The 567 member body of the CA was instead comprised largely of local government councillors with 117 members including the Chairman, the Deputy and Secretary appointed by the Babangida regime.¹⁰ The government decreed out of the purview of assembly debates sensitive but important aspects of national life, such as the question of a federalist structure. When the Anthony Aniagolu-led CA submitted the assembly's Report, it recommended the declaration of military rule criminal, the accountability of the presidency for economic action or inaction and state provision of free education and medical care. The government through the Presidential Advisory Committee, however, rejected such popular provisions of the CA's Report.¹¹ The un-elected Babangida regime went on to arbitrarily include and omit areas of the draft constitution, which was later 'ratified' in April 1989.

To facilitate the transition process, the regime also established the National Electoral Commission (NEC, 1987) -- headed by Eme Awa (later Humphrey Nwosu) -- to organize and monitor the electoral process at all levels of government. In November 1991, the government increased the NEC's powers enabling the commission to screen and disqualify candidates without an explanation of its actions. To legitimize the state

¹⁰ Local government council elections were conducted in December 1987 on a non-party basis. LGA Councillors comprised 75% of the membership of the Constituent Assembly, with the remaining 25% of representatives, hand picked by the Babangida regime.

¹¹ Momoh, "The Philosophical".

and its PTP, the Mass Mobilization for Social and Economic Recovery (MAMSER) was set up in 1987 to mobilize the populace and "inculcate in all citizens the values, the habits and the orientation which will lead, without coercion, to the emergence, out of disarray, of a great self-reliant civic society in which justice, duty, responsibility, and commitment to the nation shall hold sway."¹² Under the leadership of Jerry Gana, (later Muhammadu Gambo) a political awareness campaign was launched nationally. As a prelude to the lifting of the ban on political activities, in April 1989 the directorate employed the services of popular musicians such as Majek Fashek, Sunny Okosuns and Dan Maraya Jos, on a nationwide tour to propagate the message of "peaceful, orderly and development-oriented democracy in Nigeria".¹³ Building on MAMSER, the regime also established the Centre for Democratic Studies (CDS) which in part duplicated MAMSER's functions, but also sought to train 'newbreed' politicians in the 'art of governance'.¹⁴

With a constitution in place and institutional mechanisms established, in May 1989, the government lifted the ban on political activities inviting Nigerians to form associations

¹² Muiyiwa Akintunde, "MAMSER: Worms in the Bole" in NewsWatch, October 5, 1992, p.15.

¹³ Akintunde, *Loc.cit.*

¹⁴ The NEC, MAMSER and CDS were the principal institutional measures adopted by the Babangida regimes. Other notables include, the aforementioned DFRRI, BLRD, NCW the Code of Conduct Bureau and the National Orientation Movement.

to vie for the two state sanctioned parties. Despite the rigors of organizing nationally in the short three month time frame allotted, more than thirty political parties were formed in the first few weeks after the rescinding of the ban. The N50,000 non-refundable deposit and the over-regimented and costly documentation stipulated for registration, however, reduced the number of 'qualified' organizations to thirteen.¹⁵ Empowered to screen the applicants, the NEC disqualified all thirteen associations arguing they were fraudulent and controlled by 'old breed' politicians. Indeed many of the political organizations jockeying for recognition to compete in elections were offshoots of the discredited political parties of the First and Second Republic, banned from participating in the transition process by Decree No. 25. However, the mass disqualification of the thirteen associations also prevented the realization of the historical formation of the Nigerian Labour Party (NLP), which sought to give expression to popular social forces, marginalized in the

¹⁵ In the short three month period allotted to form national political associations, independent sources place the total number of organizations formed at over fifty. The over-regimented registration procedure reduced the final number of associations to thirteen at the deadline. The registration requirements essential served to disenfranchise the majority of Nigerians. In addition, to the N50, 000 stipulated, in the three month period, competing associations were required to establish well equipped offices in the then 435 local governments in the country, submit 25 copies of manifestos, provide photographs and personal details on no less than 200 members, and also answer questions with regard to positions SAP -- Read: automatic disqualification if opposed to SAP. Of course, to participate in the associations, the government required members to take a leave of absence from places of work. In the context, of the deepening struggle for daily survival for the majority of Nigerians, this stipulation in particular, and the generality of registration requirements excluded the mass of Nigerians from actively participating in the PTP.

political process since 1960. On the basis of the NEC Report, the AFRC rejected these associations, opting instead to impose two 'grassroots' political parties, the then 'little to the left' Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the 'little to the right' National Republican Convention (NRC). These so-called grassroots parties which 'belonged to everyone in general and no one in particular' were treated like parastatals. The government went on to write their constitutions and manifestos, sanction their choices of candidates and under the pretext of preventing the use of money in politics, funded the two parties, built party headquarters throughout the country, provided politicians with accommodation and sponsored delegates to national conventions in 1990.

Veteran nationalist Anthony Enahoro commenting on the state imposition of the two political parties, expounds on the clear contravention of democratic precepts which the government claimed to be fostering. He observed that,

...it does not seem to be sufficiently understood in some quarters, if it is understood at all, that democracy implies freedom of choice - freedom to argue, freedom to debate, freedom to propose your own solutions to the society's problems, freedom to persuade others to argue with you, freedom to associate with others of like mind, freedom to mobilize public opinion and organize political parties, freedom for such parties to contest. A Nigerian kind of democracy which is deficient in these respect does not deserve to be called a democracy.¹⁶

If Enahoro's illumination of the contradictions in promulgating political parties in a transition process purported to be democratic was lost on the government and the

¹⁶ Enahoro cited in Ademola Oyinlola, "Engineering of the Voodoo Kind" in Tell, Special Supplement: IBB's War Seven Years That Shook the Nation, August 31 1992, p.21

military's higher circles, the political class also accepted this arrangement with little opposition. While it may have been instituted to prevent the infusion of money into politics or perhaps to mitigate intra-ruling class contestation for power, it served to disenfranchise the majority of Nigerians, inhibiting the participation of marginalized social groupings in the transition process. Prominent Nigerian political economist Claude Ake, in his keynote address at the inauguration of the Obafemi Awolowo Foundation, highlighted the implications of the government's decision. Whatever might have been the intention of foisting two political parties on the country, Ake asserts, "the arrangement effectively precluded any chance of positive creative politics."¹⁷ Rather than a voluntary process in which various social forces with a shared vision of how society should be organized, can freely come together and form political parties and on that basis contest for governance, parties decreed into existence, he further asserts,

can only... [lead] to anarchy of ambitions, unrestrained by principles or morality. It cannot be law abiding, it cannot raise issues about how society should be ordered, much less respond to them. It cannot know peaceful political competition, only the way of all against all, where every means is permissible and rights are co-existent with power.¹⁸

From the formation of the sanctioned political parties and the multi-level electoral competitions, to the annulment of the

¹⁷ Claude Ake, "A Confused People", Keynote address at the inauguration of the Obafemi Awolowo Foundation in African Concord, vol.7, no.33, January 1993, p.12.

¹⁸ Ake, *Loc.cit.*

June 12 election and the military's re-intervention in politics, the political class showed a lack of commitment and total disregard for the basic tenets of democracy, while exposing their endearment to democracy simply for its utility in providing an avenue for accumulation. That is why the political class acquiesced to the imposition of the two parties and consistent government tinkering with the transition process, readily abandoning the struggle for democracy in the wake of the June 12 annulment.

To illustrate, the July 1990 national conventions of the two parties were characterized by massive flaunting of wealth, where amidst conference deliberations money blatantly changed hands for support. In the factional jockeying for strategic party positions and leverage in upcoming elections, very little time was spent constructing party platforms which would address critical national issues. A debate on the unabated economic crisis and measures to revive growth and development did not feature prominently in convention discussions. In fact, as hard currency was visibly swapped in the 'politics of settlement', little attention was given to foreign exchange and other constraints faced by productive sectors of the economy. Certainly, the political class gave scant consideration to the impoverishment of millions of Nigerians which theoretically they sought to represent. Instead, the national convention of the SDP and NRC was dominated by intense debates on various zoning formulas supposedly to give

the Nigerian ruling classes some semblance of cohesion. That is, electoral zonal formulas divided the country into regions, and in a power-sharing arrangement among the political elite, potential political offices such as the presidency, the vice presidency and national party chairman, were doled out on the basis of region and invariably ethnicity. Again violating a modicum of democratic rights, Nigerians were expected to choose political leaders not on the basis of past records in public office, history of personal probity, clarity on national issues and constructive measures, nor a history of support for subordinate groups, but rather on the basis of ethnic, regional and religious considerations.

The national conventions also exposed the banality of the government's policy of inundating the political process with money in the hopes of preventing the allure of 'naira politics' among the so-called 'newbreed' politicians it strove to foster. The converse of this policy which sought to curtail the presence of 'old breed' politicians by merely banning their participation in the transition process proved equally naive. Without looking at the deeper contradictions within the political economy, the military government failed to identify the underlying factors that encouraged the ruling classes to invest so heavily in politics. The government also erroneously assumed it could extricate the newbreed politicians from the socio-economic and ideological structures which reproduced incessant intra-ruling class struggles for state power. As the

Nigerian ruling classes still retain a tenuous relationship to production, the state remains an indispensable instrument for capital accumulation and in the context of the crisis of accumulation exacerbated by SAPs, politics is conducted like warfare. Not surprisingly then, the 1987 ban on old breed politicians was ineffective. Surviving the 1989 disqualification of political associations which they mainly controlled, dominant ruling class organizations were simply reincarnated in the two state decreed parties. The old breed politicians openly and actively consulted and sponsored newbreed politicians and managed to create influential blocs in the two political parties en route to taking them over.¹⁹

The elections to local governments (Dec.1990), gubernatorial and state legislature (Dec.1991), and the National Assembly (July 1992), clearly showed that politics in Nigeria had retained the political ills of the First and Second Republics, if not heightening them. In the battle to preside over the state and national resources, the mode of political mobilization of the ruling classes concentrated on 'money politics', and the manipulation of region, religion and ethnicity. Political thuggery, violence, and widespread electoral malpractice characterized the elections at all three levels of government. In the interval of these elections, the government postponed the termination date of the PTP from

¹⁹ Pita Ogaba Agbese, "The Impending Demise of Nigeria's Forthcoming Third Republic" in Africa Today, 3rd Quarter, 1990.

October 1992 to January 1993 and in the wake of the gubernatorial elections rescinded Decree No.25 which banned the participation of old breed politicians in the transition process. In what was then anticipated to be the last stage of the PTP, the presidential primaries of August and September 1992, again illustrated that the SDP and NRC had few notable differences, strikingly similar like "six and half-a-dozen" to use the colloquial. The conduct of candidates and party supporters during the primaries, on the admission of the contestants themselves, raised electoral malpractice to new levels. In the struggle to emerge as the presidential candidate for the respective parties, aspirants used numerous dubious methods to ensure electoral success. These included the 'settlement' of rival aspirants, open disbursement of money in voter queues, the encouragement of multiple voting among supporters, the issuance of fake accreditation cards, the recruitment of underage voters and even the transport of people from neighbouring states to illegally vote in sanctioned state primaries. When 'positive' inducements failed to secure electoral victory, slander, violence and assassinations were readily employed.²⁰ A series of post-voting measures were also utilized such as the over-inflation of election figures and the disappearance of polling station officials, who failed to register ballots at collation

²⁰ Mercy Ette, "How to Rig Elections" in Newswatch, October 19 1992, Onome Osifo-Whiskey, "Wild, Wild Politics" in Tell, February 3 1992, Emenike Okorie, "Presidential Primaries: Malpractice" in Newswatch, August 17, 1992.

centres. This was the type of 'rig thy way' to democratic governance the defunct PTP fostered.

In this fraudulent electoral environment, the NEC suspended presidential primaries on two occasions.²¹ Unable to gain any form of cohesion among competing factions, or enough at least to ensure orderly political succession, the political class expended attention and resources on peace and survival meetings and deliberations for recovering squandered resources, instead of addressing questions of effective and accountable governance, economic revival and the betterment of the living conditions of the poor. While factions in the political class decimated themselves and showed their wanton greed and instrumentalist attachment to democracy, they continued to fall prey to the manipulation of the transition process by the military government. In his recent investigation of post-colonial political development in Nigeria, Julius Ihonvbere advances the argument that the persisting weakness and fragmentation of the ruling classes, the resulting inability to play consensual politics and the submergence of critical national issues to the unadulterated quest for power, made it easier for the Babangida dictatorship

²¹ Presidential primaries were twice annulled in August and September of 1992. The August primaries which were organized around five sessions covering the 30 states in the federation, were postponed after the first leg. Recommenced under a new three round format a month later, they were again postponed after the first round.

to perpetuate its predatory rule.²² In November 1992, the NEC banned all 23 presidential aspirants, dissolved the national executive committee of the two parties, set out a new format for presidential primaries and again postponed the transition date to August 1993.²³ The political class, as had been the case through numerous government manipulation of the PTP, showed little opposition and readily accepted the new arrangement. For popular forces in civil society, however, while recognizing the bankruptcy of the political class and near total irrelevance of the so-called democracy the military government was promoting, viewed in the postponement the continuance of machinations by a military dictatorship determined to succeed itself in power. With the PTP widely contested from the onset, the November 1992 shift in the PTP termination date galvanized social forces steadfastly opposed to the undemocratic transition programme of the Babangida regime. Increasingly, popular grievances over the erosion of living conditions under the SAP were linked to issues of widespread abuse of civil and democratic rights. Hereafter legal and political challenges to the state intensified in what Robert Fatton Jr. has called 'civil society politics of

²² Julius O. Ihonvbere, "A Radical View of Nigeria's Political Development", Chapter contributed to Oyeleye Oyediran, ed., Governance and Development in Nigeria: Essays in Honour of Billy J. Dudley, mimeo: University of Texas at Austin.

²³ The disqualification of politicians from electoral competition, has been a common feature of the PTP. For instance, on the eve of the December 1991 gubernatorial elections, the NEC banned 12 aspirants. Similarly, prior to the July 1992 National Assembly elections, politicians were again abruptly ousted.

protest.'

Workers, organized around the central labour umbrella Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC), linked issues of unemployment, low wages and poor working condition to demands for popular participation in national politics. Market women, in the tradition of resistance dating back to colonialism, protested against the decline in living standards. In the countryside, the pains of the crisis and adjustment on rural producers led to the proliferation of co-operatives and grassroots community development associations (CDAs), comprised significantly of women. At the national level, Women-in-Nigeria (WIN), remained the only vociferous and active women's organizations which mobilized working class and peasant women to redress the class and gender inequalities in the country. The irrepressible National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS) maintained its history of political and militant activism, connecting the deterioration of the educational sector to the character of the state and political economy. Similarly, the Academic Staff of Universities Union (ASUU), struggled against insufficient educational funding, the near collapse of the university system and the poor remuneration for academic staff, all of which combine with issues of autonomy, academic freedom and democratic rights.

Hitherto conservative sectors of the professional middle classes also joined popular democratic struggles in the country. With declining living standards, the closure of

opportunities for upward mobility and the trampling of civic and human rights, established professional associations, like the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) have been radicalized. New intermediate non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have also emerged. Notably vibrant in the human rights sector, NGOs such as the Civil Liberties Organization (CLO), Committee for the Defence of Human Rights (CDHR), National Association of Democratic Lawyers (NADL), Constitutional Rights Project (CRP), Human Rights Africa (HRA) and the Universal Defenders of Democracy (UDD) have actively campaigned in defence of human rights and basic civil liberties. Heightened state clampdown on media houses, the persecution, detention, and the assassination of the first journalist in Nigeria's history, served to strengthen the Nigerian Union of Journalist (NUJ), which remains committed in the struggle for press freedom and democratic rights. Ethnic minorities, particularly social groups in the south-eastern oil communities, escalated their struggles against internal colonization. The Ogonis, represented by the Movement of the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP), for instance, have vociferously agitated against regional inequities in the distribution of power and resources, linked solidly to the environment degradation of the area and transnational domination of the Nigerian oil sector and economy. In response to the deepening socio-economic and political crisis in the country, in November 1991, the Campaign for Democracy (CD) was constituted to

provide an umbrella which unified broad aggrieved and popular sections of civil society. The historical formation of the CD strengthened democratic struggles by providing a political platform to articulate democratic alternatives beyond multi-partyism and statist programmatic transition. The remainder of this chapter takes a closer look at the anatomy of the Nigerian civil society, focusing on the collective responses of various social forces to adjustment and predatory rule. To provide a proper backdrop, the next section begins even if only briefly, with a historical sketch of democratic struggles in colonial and post-colonial Nigeria.

SECTION TWO: ADJUSTMENT, STATIST POLITICAL TRANSITIONS AND POPULAR DEMOCRATIC STRUGGLES IN CIVIL SOCIETY

Stretching back to the colonial period, the Nigerian civic terrain has possessed vibrant organizations which have sought to advance civil and democratic rights, constantly posing a direct challenge to the state. Workers have remained integral to popular democratic struggles in colonial and post-colonial Nigeria. During British colonial rule, trade unions' demands for higher wages, better working conditions and collective bargaining at the workplace inevitably drew workers into wider political campaigns challenging the illegitimate, racist and repressive colonial state.²⁴ Limitations

²⁴ Our brief historical sketch here on workers' struggles in Nigeria and the ensuing discussion of workers resistance to the crisis, SAP and the PTP, concentrates primarily on political contestations at the national level. Of courses workers resistance have been both hidden and overt, individualized

experienced in wartime working class agitations against declining living standards, underscored the initiative by civil service and railway unions to form the Trade Union Congress of Nigeria (TUC, 1943), representing all sectors of labour in the country.²⁵ In the post-war period, the TUC explicitly adopted a political role emerging as an important force in the anti-colonial movement. Widespread strikes, lockouts and demonstrations of the 1940s, highlighted by the 1945 general strike and the 1949 disturbances in the wake of the Iva Valley massacre of 21 miners, rocked the colonial state and polity and compelled constitutional reforms which accelerated the process of decolonization. Whereas the Richards and Macpherson constitutions (1946 and 1951 respectively) sought to reproduce foreign domination by institutionalizing a tripartite division of the country and was vehemently opposed by the TUC and other organizations, the constitutional changes opened the space for political participation and paradoxically hastened the end of colonial

and collective. Section one of this chapter has detailed, workers' individualized responses to economic decline focusing on survivalist strategies in civil society. Under SAPs, collective unionized responses at the workplace include struggles to institutionalize collective bargaining, strikes and demonstrations to disrupt production, among others. For detail case studies on workers' struggles at the workplace in the period of SAPs see: Gunilla Andrea and Bjorn Beckman, "Textile Unions and Industrial Crisis in Nigeria: Labour Structure, Organization and Strategies" in Inga Brandell, Workers in Third World Industrialization, (New York: St Martin's Press for AKUT, 1991), Yusuf Bangura, "The Recession and Workers' Struggles in the Vehicle Assembly Plant -- Nigeria in ROAPE, no.37, 1987, Bangura and Beckman, "African Workers" and Olajide Oloyede, "Surviving in an Economic Recession: 'Game Play' in a Nigerian Factory" in ROAPE, no.55, 1992.

²⁵ Wogu Ananaba, The Trade Union Movement in Nigeria, (Benin: Ethiope Publishing 1969.

rule.²⁶

The TUC entered into informal and formal alliances with student and youth groups, artisans, market women, co-operatives and professional bodies. The central labour body joined forces with the Nigerian Youth Movement (NYM), the radical Zikist Movement and the Nigerian Union of Students and was an initial affiliate of the National Council of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC) which emerged as the leading nationalist party in the country. The formation of the NCNC provided an umbrella for various anti-colonial forces in the country and a platform to strengthen the campaign for a liberal democratic political system. Highly skilled but underemployed indigenous professionals, became increasingly disgruntled with colonial rule and supported popular democratic struggles. For instance, the combative journalism of the indigenously-owned daily newspapers the *West Africa Pilot* and *The Daily Comet* provided a critical voice against the colonial regime. Giving expression to workers grievances during the 1945 general strikes, both dailies were later banned, allegedly for inciting workers' agitation. The illegitimacy of the colonial state, the closure of economic opportunities and the abuses of

²⁶ The major feature of the Richards Constitutions was the introduction of regional assemblies established in the East (Enugu), West (Ibadan) and North (Kaduna) with the federal seat in the Capital Territory of Lagos. Nearly fifty percent of the regional assembly members were hand-picked by the colonial state, with the assembly merely empowered to discuss proposed legislation and make recommendations. The nationalist movement, even its petit-bourgeois leadership viewed the constitutional changes as an instrument of divide-and-rule, but it was later embraced by the Nigerian elite as an arrangement which enhanced the arena of private accumulation. This measure institutionalized regionalism and ethnicity into the body politic in Nigeria and has been reproduced in the post-colonial period.

civic and democratic rights, compelled journalists and other professionals in the country to coalesce around the NCNC, eventually dominating its leadership.

The competing class interests in the NCNC vying for hegemony on the direction of decolonization precipitated a split in the nationalist movement. While radical anti-colonialists generally viewed decolonization as the first step towards the restructuring of the Nigerian state and economy, for the petty-bourgeois leadership of NCNC, decolonization essentially became a means to acquire wealth. Thus, the emerging elites inevitably became hostile to the transformative social project of mass democratic movements and increasingly less committed to the liberal-democratic aims they had championed earlier. That is why, despite initial opposition to regionalist power structures, the NCNC willingly accepted the power sharing arrangement as embodied in the aforementioned constitutions, for it promised enhanced opportunities for accumulation. The incipient ruling classes formed Regional/Ethnic blocs such as the Ibo State Union (East), Egbe Omo Oduduwa (West) and Jamaar Mutanem Arewa (North, later popularly dubbed the Kaduna Mafia), to consolidate regional power bases en route to fierce intra-class contestation for state power. They would constitute the basis of political parties in the First Republic. Along with the colonial state, the emerging Nigerian elite were, however, united in the coercion and suppression of radical elements in

the nationalist movement.

In Nigeria's nascent civil society, popular groupings were organizationally weak, susceptible to opportunism, undemocratic practices and prone to the rising ethnic and regional chauvinism which pervaded the nationalist movement. Between 1945 and 1960, the trade union movement split thrice into competing 'radical' and 'conservative' labour centres on questions of trade union independence, international affiliations and once occasioned by the conflation of personality with issues.²⁷ In the context of increasing politicization of region and ethnicity in this period, seemingly ideological differences on critical issues confronting the trade union movement, such as the NCNC affiliation debates, were often intermeshed with ethnic and regional considerations. A hot bed of 'cold war' politics, discourses on affiliation with international unions was also a divisive issue. Yet, debates were often unguided by principle, but rather based on financial calculations. Disaccord within the trade union movement further enabled the better organized domestic elite to play a determining role in the direction of decolonization. On the eve of political independence, despite internal acrimony, trade unions in the country remained the most organized of the popular groupings in civil society and an ardent voice for the expansion of civic and democratic rights.

²⁷ Ananaba, Trade Unions.

Therefore, beyond the initial euphoria of political independence, the weak and repressive state bequeathed by colonialism lost legitimacy in the civic terrain. The early years of national independence, for popular forces failed to deliver the betterment of material conditions and the democratic participation of ordinary Nigerians. The First Republic (1960-1966) was marred by widespread corruption and chronic instability, as a result of fierce inter-ruling class struggles for state power. Dependent on the state for resources, politics became warfare. Where the loss of an election meant the ultimate erosion of the regional accumulation base, voting malpractice, political thuggery and violence were readily utilized electoral tools. Regionalist political parties coalesced around the United Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA) and the Nigerian National Alliance (NNA) in the elections of 1964, in order to enhance opportunities for their respective areas.²⁸ In the struggle for power, the rule of law, the respect of civil liberties and human rights, were readily trampled upon despite constitutional safeguards. A fragmented civic terrain remained too weak to delimit the

²⁸ In the UPGA, coalition included the NCNC (East), the Action Group, (AG) (WEST) the United Middle Belt Congress and the Nigerian (previously Northern) Elements Progressive Union. The first three parties in the coalition, sought to capture federal state power in order to enhance the arena of accumulation for the elite of their respective regions. They forged a counterpoise against the growing strength of the Northern ruling bloc, represented by the Nigerian National Alliance. The NEPU, (the most radical political organization in this period) was mainly Northern based and provide a platform to agitate against the domination of the Northern aristocracy. The NEPU alliance with the Southern ruling bloc, deemed as 'progressive', was therefore view as strategic.

state and advance democratic rights.

Perhaps a short lived but significant exception was the general strike of 1964 and its immediate aftermath. Although the trade union movement was now split into four rival labour centres, unity was achieved to challenge the encroaching predatory rule of the Nigerian state.²⁹ With the balance of payments crisis of 1964 and the precipitate decline in living conditions of workers and other subordinate groups, the United Labour Congress (ULC), representing organized labour, demanded the review of wage and salary structures in the country. The government dismissed workers demands and instead sought to create a one-party state, while strengthening its repressive apparatus to contain increasing inter and intra-class contestation. The ensuing 13 day general strike paralysed the state and economy, galvanizing broad popular support to demand wage increases, the repeal of a proposed repressive detention act and popular participation in national politics. Typically in this period, professional associations were generally non-participants in the nationwide protest. A privileged middle stratum, some professionals individually joined forces with subordinate groups in confronting material decline and wanton state abuse of civil and democratic rights. Collectively however, organizations such as the Nigerian Bar Association

²⁹ Between 1962 and 1975 four rival labour centre existed in the country, mainly the Nigerian Trade Union Congress (NTUC), United Labour Congress (ULC), Nigerian Workers' Council (NWC) and the Labour United Front (LUF).

and the Nigerian Union of Teachers were principally concerned with the advancement of the parochial interests of their membership, which in this period centred around demands for the indigenization of the public service sector.³⁰

Compelling significant economic concessions to subordinate groupings, the national strike, also served, if only temporarily, to check state encroachment by forcing the retention of the multi-party system and halting the proposed detention act. In the wake of the successful strike action, the NTUC (formerly the TUC) formed the Socialist Workers and Farmers Party (SWAFP, 1964) to compete in the upcoming elections. Seeking to broaden the base of Nigeria's fledgling democracy and give expression to subordinate social forces at the national level, the prospects of an independent political organization for popular groupings in the country was undermined by the splinter Nigerian Labour Party, which broke off from the SWAFP. Beset by constant recriminations, the two parties failed to have an affect on the elections.³¹ The regionalism fostered since the colonial period, in the aftermath of 1964/65 elections, posed a serious challenge to the state and territorial integrity of the country. Intensified intra-ruling class struggles over scarce resources

³⁰ Attahiru Jega, "Professional Associations and Structural Adjustment" in Adebayo Olukoshi ed., The Politics of Structural Adjustment in Nigeria, (Ibadan: Heinemann, 1993), p.100.

³¹ Tajudeen Abdulraheem and Adebayo Olukoshi, "The Left in Nigerian Politics and the Struggle for Socialism: 1945-1985" in ROAPE, no.37, 1987.

and heightened politicization of region and ethnicity deepened political instability which led to civil war in 1967.

The militarization of civil society throughout most of the 1970s was a set-back to popular struggles for democracy. As we discussed previously, the confluence of a successful federal prosecution of the civil war and shift in the country's accumulation base, gave the state the ideological and material resources to realize post-colonial assertions of economic nationalism. To mitigate intra-ruling class competition and provide some semblance of cohesion, the Gowon regime enhanced federal powers through the weakening of the four regions, brought about in part by the repartition into 12 states. The state further sought to provide an enabling environment for domestic accumulation by restructuring the unequal relationship between transnational and local capital. Simultaneously, renewed attempts were made to subordinate labour through co-optation and repression. Tripartite bodies, such as the National Labour Advisory Council and the Productivity Prices and Incomes Boards were formed to control collective bargaining agreements through yearly wage and price guidelines.³² Despite the huge resources released in the oil boom era, to redress the structural distortions in economy, meet basic needs, build enduring democratic foundations and mobilize and encourage the participation of subordinate groups

³² Tayo Fashoyin, "Nigerian Labour and the Military: Towards Labour Exclusion?" in Labour, Capital and Society, vol.23, no.1, April 1990, p.22.

in the process of development, the state relied inordinately on coercion to reproduce ruling class hegemony. A series of decrees was enacted which reinforced wartime stringent labour control. The Trade Union Decree No. 31 of 1973, for instance, prevented the application of unions dues towards the furtherance of political objectives, a matter I have already mentioned above.³³ Promulgating the Trade Disputes (Essential Services) Decree of 1976, the government also enhanced its control of labour by prohibiting strike actions in the strategic oil sector, among others. Striking unions in the oil and banking sectors shortly after the enactment were proscribed and union leaders detained. Some veteran radical unionists such as S. Bassey, W. Goodluck and M. Imoudu were banned from participating in the trade union activities in the country.

While consistently suppressed and unable to check the excesses of the state, popular struggles did force wage concessions in the Adebo (1971) and Udoji (1974) wage and salary awards and further compelled some redistribution of oil surpluses to subordinate groups through the expansion of social services. Retaining an aloofness on critical national issues and the plight of subordinate groups, the collective responses of professional groups were intermittent at best. An exception was the Association of University Teachers (later

³³ Austin Isamah, "Organized Labour Under the Military Regimes in Nigeria" in Africa Development, vol.XV, no.2, 1990, p.90.

changed to ASUU) which joined forces with trade unions in the post-Udoji agitations. Also noteworthy was the massive outcry in the journalist community, when a colleague was barbarically persecuted by the Rivers state military governor for publishing a story on planned strike actions by unpaid school teachers in the state. Deemed embarrassing to the governor, he ordered the reporter's head shaved by a broken bottle.³⁴ This act reaffirmed the extent to which the military regime would go to suffocate opposition in civil society. Despite journalistic protests, for the most part the struggle to advance civil and democratic rights continued to be borne by principally trade union organizations, the National Union of Nigerian Students (NUNS, the student umbrella), radical intellectuals and women's groups. Through the period of Nigeria's oil boom, the political apathy of professional associations persisted as they were generally concerned with capitalising on the expanded public sectors and opportunities provided in multinational corporations. They also provided a pool of skilled labour, which the state utilized in implementing successive development plans.

An enlarged public sector and developing industrial sector, led to an increase in the Nigerian labour force and subsequently to the proliferation of trade unions in the country. By the late 1970s, in response to the heightened

³⁴ Ray Ekpu, "Nigeria's Embattled Fourth Estate" in Journal of Democracy, vol.1, no.2, Spring 1990, p.114.

militancy of workers, the state adopted drastic measures aimed at rationalizing industrial unions and bring them under state control. The Obasanjo regime seized the opportunity to disarticulate the precarious trade union unity forged in 1975, when competing labour centres formed a central labour umbrella to strengthen workplace and broader democratic struggles. The breakaway of the conservative ULC enabled the government to dissolve the newly formed Nigerian Labour Congress, promulgating Trade Union (Amendment) Decree No. 22 of 1978. Giving legal backing to its action, the Decree merged the over 1000 existing unions into 42 industrial unions confederated into the NLC. The government's labour policy, also banned affiliation with international organizations, introduced an automatic wage deduction system to fund unions and initiated labour bureaucracies.³⁵

The electoral victory of radical unionists in the NLC executive undermined government efforts to create a docile and malleable labour movement and again reinforced the determination of workers to realize the democratic right of an independent trade union movement free from state suppression and control. Even though state-imposed, a centralized labour front with branches in every state of the federation, provided a strong platform to advance workers demands. Indeed, the leadership of the NLC was instrumental in working class agitation to institute a national minimum wage in the early

³⁵ Fashoyin, "Nigerian Labour", p.20-21

1980s. However, the new NLC remained vulnerable to state machinations.³⁶ The fragility of the NLC, for instance, was manifest in its tentative response to state massacres of students at the Ahmadu Bello University (ABU) and University of Lagos (UNILAG) during the 'Ali Must Go' protest. The lack of a response to the proscription of the NUNS and detention of student leaders, in addition to the non-participation of the new central labour body in the nationwide protest of broad sections of civil society, is also within this context. Maintaining the delicate unity of various political tendencies within the NLC similarly informed the decision to comply with the 1979 constitutional restriction on trade union participation in national politics.

The brief interlude of the Second Republic (1979-1983), reaffirmed that the Nigerian ruling classes would not play consensual politics, empower ordinary people or build solid democratic structures in the country. Electoral competition remained marred by political thuggery and violence. Public office was simply a means to loot national resources. Debates on critical national issues stayed subservient to the imperative of private accumulation. Amidst increasing external balance of payment difficulties and simultaneous domestic

³⁶ The Shagari regime, for instance, consistently sought to disarticulate workers agitation. During the NLC campaign for a national minimum wage, the government revoked the union dues system and encouraged the formation of an alternative labour centre in the attempt to cripple the trade union movement financially and organizationally. For a detail examination of the NLC in this period see: Dafe Ootobo, "The Nigerian General Strike of 1981" in ROAPE, October - December 1981.

crises of accumulation, the mismanagement of public resources, corruption, and reckless spending on conspicuous consumption persisted. When the Shagari regime finally introduced some 'belt tightening' measures, they were largely shouldered by the working classes, even as the political class continued to enhance its wealth. New political structures and institutions were unable to safeguard the consistent abuse of the limited civic and democratic right enshrined in the 1979 constitution. The legitimacy of the state continued to wane. Popular classes remained vulnerable to state co-optation and suppression. Organizationally weak, repressed and increasingly confronted by the daily struggles for social reproduction, civic associations and popular groups were unable to check state excesses and resist the encroaching predatory rule, which became full blown in the aftermath of 1983 Buhari coup.³⁷

In the short 20 month reign of the Buhari regime, no sector of civil society was immune from state repression, save factions of the ruling classes. With a crisis-ridden economy, the regime adopted an anti-popular programme for economic recovery. Massive lay-offs, onerous taxes, introduction of a wide range of user fees, a ban on strikes and the ruthless crushing of workers agitation were some of the measures introduced to further discipline labour and create an enabling environment for domestic accumulation. A series of decrees

³⁷ For a comprehensive examination of the politics of the Second Republic, see Toyin Falola and Julius Ihonvbere, The Rise and Fall of Nigeria's Second Republic, (1979-1984), (London: Zed Press, 1985).

promulgated, further trampled upon civil and democratic rights. The declared 'War Against Indiscipline', to create a disciplined and sane society, provided the ideological plank to harass and detain workers, peasants, students, radical intelligentsia, women's groups, street traders, journalists and professional bodies, to curtail opposition against the state and its recovery programme. Student unions and medical associations were banned. Protesting lawyers, disturbed by the wanton abuse of the rule of law, were consistently attacked. Alienating broad sectors of civil society, the crisis-ridden state relied on repression to reproduce its tenuous hegemony.

Despite the unprecedented state onslaught against civic and democratic rights, a number of important developments held out promise for the strengthening of popular struggle in the civic terrain. The establishment within the central labour umbrella of the Nigerian Labour Congress Women's Wing (NLCWW) was one such positive and critical initiative. While belated, it gave tacit recognition to the long-history of women's participation in the trade union movement and the explicit expression of the views of radical women unionists and their counterparts, that trade unions inextricably incorporate gender issues in class struggle at the workplace and broader society. Similarly, the emergence of Women-in-Nigeria (WIN) provided an articulate and militant voice in support of both NLCWW workplace agitations and wider challenges to the class and gender character of the state, economy and civil society.

Though constantly confronting opposition, even within the labour and popular movements, WIN remains an integral and front-line agitator for the advancement of civil and democratic rights (see below). The regime's determination to limit political space, together with the continuing economic malaise created the environment of the August 1985 Babangida coup.

THE TRIPARTITE ALLIANCE: THE POLITICAL RESPONSES OF WORKERS, STUDENTS AND ACADEMIC UNIONS TO SAP AND THE PTP: THE CASE OF NLC, NANS AND ASUU.

On coming to power the Babangida regime introduced measures to attenuate the alienation of the state from civil society. After months of the unyielding authoritarianism of the previous junta, the new regime's declared intention to uphold human rights was welcomed in civil society. The ensuing repeal of a number of draconian decrees, the removal of the ban on civic organizations and the mass release of detained public officials, journalists and the leadership of popular organizations was widely praised. To enhance the regime's credibility, the perennial tactic of co-opting radical elements into the government was employed. Some trade union and women's leaders, social critics, outspoken members of professional associations and radical intelligentsia found their way into ministerial positions, the presidential advisory council and a host of directorates, commissions and panels. The regime went further to build hegemony in the civic terrain. Early on, Nigerians were enjoined to participate in

determining the direction of economic recovery and development. Committed to reaching an accord with the IMF, yet cognizant of popular opposition to the IFIs-sponsored market reforms, the government launched the now infamous national IMF debate.

Active campaigns by the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) weeks prior to the national debate, demanding the discontinuation of all negotiations with the IMF on the basis of the hardship which the conditionalities of SAPs would engender, together with the reality of workers resistance to the regime's non-compliance, was the compelling factor which precipitated the seeming receptiveness of the government initiative for popular input. In its policy paper titled *Towards National Economic Recovery -- NLC's Alternative*, the NLC reiterated its opposition to adjustment and offered alternative prescriptions to redress the crisis. Similarly, the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) came out against the SAP. The policy document *How to Save Nigeria*, a blueprint adopted in 1984 by the ASUU, was also presented as an alternative programme for economic recovery. Nation-wide campaigns by NLC and ASUU among others, publicizing the implications of the government's proposed recovery programme, fuelled mounting popular opposition against one-sided 'belt-tightening' measures initiated since the late 1970s. Nigerians refused the government's proposal. The rejection of the IMF package was resolute, encompassing broad sectors of civil

society. Agreeing to refuse the IMF loan, the government nonetheless proceeded with the core policy recommendation of orthodox structural adjustment, now couch as a 'homegrown' programme. Amidst the national debate, the government averted a national strike when the NLC objected to the regime's unilateral decisions to institute wage cuts and freezes in the public and private sectors through the declared 18 month National Economic Emergency period. The retention of Decree No.16 (lay-off of workers without any justifiable reason) and Decree No. 17 (denial of retirement benefits and pension rights to workers) remained a source of increasing concern for the NLC. It became abundantly clear to the Babangida regime that efforts to implement SAP, 'homegrown' or not, would be fiercely resisted by workers and other social forces. To maintain the facade of democracy, while more importantly deflecting attention from its contentious economic policy, the government also opened up the question of the country's political future for national debate. Yet again, popular submissions were rejected.

One social group which vociferously opposed the Babangida regime when many popular organizations were initially receptive, was the National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS). Despite ceaseless attempts throughout the post-colonial period to suppress student groups, they remained steadfast in expressing popular demands around immediate issues in the education sector and the wider society.

Throughout the brief human rights and democratic pretensions of the Babangida government, the NANS maintained the position that the country's political and socio-economic woes cannot be resolved by an illegitimate military regime.³⁸ This philosophy informed NANS continuous opposition to adjustment and the political transition programme. In many respects, the unwavering commitment of NANS to popular democracy contributed to the radicalization of the hitherto conservative ASUU. Indeed, the economic crisis, declining real incomes of lecturers and job insecurity were compelling reasons which encouraged ASUU to mount opposition against the crumbling educational sector, the decaying national economy and the restriction of political space.³⁹ However, the indomitable role students have played in strengthening civil society, in no small measure has also driven ASUU to uphold its social responsibility to confront critical issues facing the country.

The opposition of student groups, academic and trade unions to adjustment and predatory rule, has in turn, been met with consistent state repression. In 1986, for instance, Ahmadu Bello University (ABU) was again the scene of ruthless state violence. The immediate crisis began when university authorities and the government disapproved of students' ebullient participation at the May Day rally in Kaduna,

³⁸ Interview with Segun Maiyegun, former National President of the National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS), Anthony Village, Lagos, January 13, 1994.

³⁹ Jega "Professional Associations", p.102.

organized by the Kaduna State branch of the NLC. Banners and placards abounded condemning the government's so-called 'homegrown' adjustment programme. Coming shortly after the nation-wide commemorative rally of the 1978 students massacre at ABU, the university authorities were further outraged by students' militancy. The ABU administration responded by taking issue with the entrance of male students into female hostels during mobilization campaigns to garner support for the May Day rally. Protesting students boycotted lectures and staged a demonstration against the artificiality of these claims. The mobile police force called in by the university to subdue the peaceful protest led to the massive assault on the participants and the killing of five defenceless students.⁴⁰

In the aftermath, an outraged university community and civil society, vocally led by the ASUU, NLC, and WIN condemned the atrocity. Student protest exploded on campuses throughout the country leading to more carnage at the University of Benin (UNIBEN) and UNILAG. The ensuing establishment of the Abisoye Commission by the military government to investigate the incident was boycotted by the NANS, ASUU and NLC who demanded an independent inquiry and the immediate removal of the ABU Vice Chancellor and the Police Commissioner of Kaduna State. Weakened by the decision of the ABU branch of ASUU to ignore the boycott and participate in the government's inquiry, the

⁴⁰ A.S. Mohammed, "The Aftermath of the Ahmadu Bello University Students' Crisis of May 1986" in ROAPE, December 1986, p.98.

commission proceeded with its fact finding mission and subsequently absolved the police and university authorities from any responsibility for the incident. The crisis would deepen. A nation-wide march planned by the NLC to illustrate worker's outrage and support for students, was aborted by swift state action. Having grudgingly capitulated to workers demands for the reinstatement of the 1982 Minimum Wage Act, which the government sought to abolish a month earlier, the Babangida regime determined to curb further workers' agitation, parted with its democratic pretensions. The AFRC re-instituted the ban on public demonstrations and proceeded to enforce the notorious State Security Decree No.2 (detention without trial) enacted by its predecessor. On the eve of protest, the State Security Service (SSS) arrested and detained the leadership of the NANS, ASUU and NLC and occupied the offices of the latter in all state capitals.

The repressive state response to public outcry illustrated its preparedness to crush opposition to the regime and its contentious economic recovery programme. Reflecting ASUU's increasing militancy, the Babangida government accused the organization of inciting student and worker unrest and promulgated a decree disaffiliating the academic union from the NLC. Crippling university autonomy, a decree was also enacted empowering the state to arbitrarily inspect the finances and curriculum content of higher institutions. University administrations at ABU were implored to dismiss

radical intellectual, for failing to instruct student on what they are paid to teach. The then president of ASUU, Dr. Festus Iyayi, was later terminated from UNIBEN.⁴¹ The NANS was proscribed. Much like the 1978 'Ali Must Go Protest', in order to de-legitimize opposition to a decaying educational sector and national economy, the state dismissed students' militancy as youthful exuberance, sheer adventurism, and lack of home training. The NLC was castigated for getting involved in student affairs, noting that the NANS was not a trade union. The SSS alleged a grand civilian conspiracy to overthrow the government, led by the NLC as the political party, NANS its youth wing and ASUU the intellectual vanguard. Despite unyielding state attempts to disarticulate and domesticate the alliance forged by NLC, ASUU, and NANS, through co-optation, infiltration and repression, they remain central forces in popular campaigns against adjustment and military rule.

One aspect of the adjustment programme, which remains strongly contested by these groups and other national and transnational forces is the question of the removal of oil subsidies. Since the early 1980s, this issue, particularly the alleged massive petrol subsidies, has been at the core of successive stalled negotiations between the Nigerian governments and the IMF. The removal of Nigeria's 'oil subsidy' is one of the prerequisite for IFI funding. Non-compliance with this stipulation, had prohibited the

⁴¹ Jega, "Professional Associations", p.105 -106.

government from receiving IMF Extended Fund Facilities and standby agreements (and its renewal), World Bank SALs, the rescheduling of external debt and had also precluded qualification for bilateral debt reductions, as mentioned in Chapter Two. On one side of the debate is the Nigerian government, via the parastatal Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) and the IFIs, and on the other, the NLC, NANS, ASUU, farmers, and other democratic groups. It is argued by proponents of adjustment that petrol in Nigeria is heavily subsidized because local prices of petrol and petroleum products are well below regional and world market prices. The 1986 Budget, in which SAP was launched, therefore moved to 'get local oil prices right', by nearly doubling the price of a litre of petrol from 20 kobo (cent unit) to 39.5 kobo, said to represent an 80% reduction of the oil subsidy.

As the naira continued to depreciate and the alleged oil subsidy eroded correspondingly, the Nigerian government came under intense pressure from the IFIs and bilateral donors to adjust the price of petrol upwards. Visiting IMF monitoring teams had failed to endorse the country's adjustment programme because of 'slippage in programme implementation', again centred on the question of an oil subsidy. Failing to live up to the performance criteria of the SAP led the World Bank to withhold a US\$500 SAL and the IMF to prohibit further standby arrangements and debt rescheduling, pending government

initiative to redress primarily this concern.⁴² With the impending expiration of an IMF standby agreement, in late 1987 the Babangida regime resolved to deal decisively with the oil subsidy issue. Recognizing the mounting opposition to its economic recovery programme, the Babangida regime initiated a national campaign to soften the civic terrain for the new measure.

In the hope of deflecting civic resistance against the government, the state-owned NNPC (commercialized in 1991) ran advertisements in the national daily newspapers extolling the necessity of the subsidy removal and the developmental 'gains' of higher oil prices. One, entitled *Oil Subsidy Facts*, was widely publicized in the print and electronic media. It argued that:

For every barrel of petroleum used in Nigeria, we lose N65.24, at a conservative \$ to N exchange rate of \$ to N4.00. For the volume of crude oil consumed locally about 290,000 daily, the loss comes to N6.80 billion in one year. We suffer this loss because we sell cured oil at home for N11.75 a barrel instead of N76.99 (abroad). The difference of N65.24 is what is called oil subsidy. If there was no subsidy, this N6.80 billion can be used to make life easier and better for the majority of Nigerians by financing agriculture for more cheaper [sic] food, providing employment outlets, good mass transportation system, medicine and education for children etc.⁴³

Buttressing such arguments, the government maintained that where local oil prices were much higher in non-oil producing African countries, other OPEC nations and advanced capitalist countries, "Nigerians cannot hope to live alone in a fools

⁴² Bangura and Beckman, "African Workers", p.76.

⁴³ S. Ogo Alubo, "Crisis, Repression and Prospects for Democracy in Nigeria" in Scandinavian Journal of Development Alternatives, Special Issue on Nigeria's Political Economy, vol.8, no.4, 1989, p.111.

paradise."⁴⁴ That is to say, Nigeria could no longer afford to offer its populace petrol at prices below those of the international market. These cheaper domestic prices are also blamed for contributing to the smuggling of oil into neighbouring countries.

Nigerians were not convinced by this argument. The NLC, ASUU, NANS and WIN in conjunction with other groups argued that no subsidy exists on petrol or petroleum products. Prominent Nigerian economist Kayode Familoni, asserted that "if the government grants concessions to the producer or seller of the product so that the price being charged to the consumer is below the cost of production, then a subsidy situation exists...[however] such a scenario does not exist in the oil industry."⁴⁵ Supporting this position, Charles Njoku's recent examination of oil price trends under the SAP, maintained that "not only is there no subsidy but we Nigerian's are paying more than we should".⁴⁶ At the time of the government's 1988 propaganda campaign, studies conducted by the Petroleum and Natural Gas Senior Staff Association of Nigeria (PENGASSAN) arrived at a similar conclusion. The central labour organ launched a counter-campaign, mounting

⁴⁴ Femi Olatunde, et al., "Fuel for Protest" in African Concord, vol.7, no.40, 1993, p.17.

⁴⁵ Kayode Familoni cited in "A Recipe for Disorder" in African Concord, vol.7, no.40., 1993, p.16.

⁴⁶ Sunny Ofili, "The Politics of Subsidy" in African Guardian, vol.8, no.4, 1993, p.23.

posters throughout the country highlighting this argument and forcefully exposing the one-sidedness of the government's comparative analysis of world differential oil price levels. Noting the decline in real incomes of ordinary Nigerians, the NLC argued that an accurate comparative assessment must take due cognizance of differential wage levels. Moreover, the NLC argued that proceeds, supposedly earmarked for development purposes (or perhaps more accurately to settle external balances) from the first round of 'subsidy withdrawals', "did not make any positive impact on the lives of working class Nigerians and was never accounted for."⁴⁷ Where the Babangida regime remained committed to sacrifice the living standards of the poor, the General-Secretary of NLC, Lasisi Osunde, asserted that "working class Nigerians were again being asked to subsidize the smugglers and elites who reap huge national resources".⁴⁸ Popular organizations attributed 'resource leakages' in the oil sector to the corrupt practices of a few Nigerians and their foreign partners. Inefficient production, smuggling, the massive mismanagement of the NNPC, over-invoicing and transfer pricing of multinational oil firms were some of the abuses identified by Nigerians requiring immediate government redress.

Not surprisingly, the government was not swayed by the

⁴⁷ Lasisi Osunde cited in Sunny Ofili "The Politics of Subsidy", p.22-23.

⁴⁸ Ofili, *Loc.cit.*

argument of Nigerians and their organizations. State responses to the resistance of popular organizations was quick. In late 1987, the NLC leadership was arrested and detained. The offices of the organization were ransacked. Sensing that these measures might not be enough to disorganize the NLC, the government took further steps to weaken the Congress in order to ensure the smooth implementation of higher fuel prices. The Babangida government seized the opportunity when an internal rift developed within the NLC, occasioned by the controversy surrounding the Benin Quadrennial Delegates Conference of February 1988. In direct contravention of both the NLC's constitution and the government's Decree No.22, a tiny group of unions led by Takai Shammang and the self-styled 'Democrats' attempted to form a parallel labour centre. Failing to remain current on financial contributions to the Congress, the so-called 'Democrats' were constitutionally ineligible to participate in conference proceedings. The conference agenda items included the election of a new executive and the re-affirmation of its policy on the privatization programme and domestic petroleum prices.

Aggrieved by their legitimate expulsion from the conference, the Shammang group alerted the Federal Minister of Labour, Employment and Productivity of a supposed 'Marxist' conspiracy to dominate labour activities in the country. Receiving a receptive hearing from the regime, the breakaway faction would later present their case in court, calling for

the dissolution of the NLC and the subsequent appointment of a sole administrator. Days before the NLC conference, the Shammang group went on to convene a parallel forum and elections, in contravention of Decree No.22 which sanctioned only one labour body in the country. The Benin Conference proceeded, democratically re-electing the incumbent Ali Chiroma and a new Executive Council under the observance of representatives of the Commonwealth Trade Union Council, International Labour Organization, Organization of African Trade Union Unity and Organization of Trade Unions of West Africa, to which the NLC is affiliated.⁴⁹ Delegates also endorsed campaigns against the government's privatization programme and further petroleum price increases. By its inaction, the government gave tacit support to the brewing crisis within the trade union movement. The problems within the NLC provided the government with an opening to domesticate the trade union movement. Under the pretext of tempering labour fragmentation and ideological intolerance, the AFRC intervened and dissolved the democratically-elected executive of the NLC in March 1988. Interestingly, the government further justified its actions by deeming the NLC crisis inimical to the interest of individual workers and to the general detriment of national economic recovery and the PTP. Michael Ogunkoya was appointed the sole administrator to

⁴⁹ For an analysis of the 1988 dissolution of the NLC see: A. Olukoshi and I. Aremu, "Structural Adjustment and Labour Subordination in Nigeria: The Dissolution of the Nigerian Labour Congress Revisited" in BOAPE, no.43, 1989.

oversee the Congress' affairs and enjoined by the government to revise the NLC's constitution and supervise new elections within six months.

Less than a month later, on April 10, Nigerians went to the pumps to discover a 3 kobo (42.0k/L) increase per litre of petrol. Widespread anger over a seemingly insignificant rise in oil prices, in the context of declining real incomes and the inflationary impact of this measure, touched off a nationwide anti-IMF/anti-SAP rebellion. Again, immediate opposition began on the campus of one of the country's universities. At the University of Jos (UNIJOS), the financial implications of rising transport costs, where university hostels are situated between 3-8km from lecture halls, triggered student protest. Students embarked on a peaceful procession to Plateau State Government House to deliver a letter addressed to General Babangida containing their demands. Artisans, market women, commercial drivers and the unemployed joined the march, where upon arrival, the state governor was said to compliment the students' maturity and requested they remain law abiding while awaiting a reply to their concerns. The response was swift. Mobile anti-riot police were summoned and overwhelmed the defenceless protestors at the university with tear gas and other instruments of coercion. The agitation spilled over into the city of Jos, and again the mobile police displayed their force by indiscriminately massacring demonstrators, independently

reported at between 15 and 30. The murder of a nurse attending to the injured intensified popular anger and brought about the participation of nurses in the city, soon joined by tanker drivers, and trade unions. The city of Jos was paralysed and shortly thereafter campuses and major cities through the country were engulfed in widespread protest and work stoppages. Farmers were outraged by the higher transportation costs incurred in the delivery of produce to markets.

Universities across the country were closed down. Student, academics and trade union leaders were arrested and detained. Despite the increasing coercion, the agitation of popular groups spread. With a crumbling economy and deepening crisis of legitimacy, the government was compelled to negotiate with workers. The Babangida regime was, however, caught in the contradiction that "having decapitated the NLC there [was] no umbrella organization to negotiate with."⁵⁰ Key industrial unions later assembled a negotiating team to address the crisis. The Ad-hoc labour committee demanded the restoration of pre-April 10th petroleum prices, the removal of the state-appointed NLC administrator, a review of the government's attitude towards NLC, NANS and ASUU, a review of the massacre in Jos, and the implementation of the Elongated Salary Structure (ESS) introduced in the 1988 budget as part of the proposed SAP relief package. The government agreed on the latter, but remained abysmally slow in implementing the

⁵⁰ Alubo, "Crisis, Repression", p.114.

proposed wage and salary increases. But of course, in spite of the loss of lives and destruction of property, the new oil prices now allowed the government to qualify for multilateral and bilateral aid flows and external debt rescheduling, in line with the anticipated revival of economic growth and development. As the naira continued to plummet, the domestic prices of petroleum continued to rise. Revised upward on five occasions since the introduction of SAP, the price of a litre of petrol increased from 39.5 kobo/litre in 1986, to 42.0 kobo/litre in 1988, to 60.0 k/L in 1989, to 70 k/L in 1991 and N3.25/L in 1993.

THE CASE OF THE NLC

State intervention in the NLC affairs, while failing to produce a docile and malleable trade union movement, illustrates the contradictory forces of co-optation and militancy at work within the trade union movement. Under the incumbency of the new NLC president, Pascal Bafyau, the efforts of the state and capital to placate the leadership of the Congress, juxtaposed by the counter-demands from 'below' for a democratic, accountable, loyal and militant NLC, became increasingly manifest when confronting critical issues at the workplace and in the wider society. For instance, the leadership of the NLC came under criticism by affiliate unions for the paltry SAP relief concessions reached in the 1992 minimum wage negotiations. The Central Working Committee (CWC) of the NLC was empowered to demand a 200 percent increase in

wage and salaries or a reversal to the pre-March naira exchange rate, rent freezes and greater sectoral allocation of foreign exchange to the productive sectors of the economy. However, the accord struck with the government not only reduced the wage increment demanded, but most significantly dismantled collective bargaining agreements. State and local governments were now enjoined to negotiate with independent unions.⁵¹ The agreement essentially enabled the federal government to deflect responsibility for salary reviews and to date the implementation of wage increases continue to vary across states and local government areas in the federation.

The abandonment of core policy positions of the NLC, the open support for the SAP, the advocacy for an extended PTP, and the distancing of the NLC from popular groupings under the Bafyau incumbency, seemed to support the allegation of collaboration with the government levelled against the NLC leadership. For instance, despite workers' agitation against the privatization of parastatals, Pascal Bafyau unilaterally campaigned for the allocation of one seat to the NLC on the Technical Committee for Privatization and Commercialization (TCPC), which oversees the process. A 'receptive' government allotted two seats. The members of the CWC condemned Bafyau's actions internally and publicly, but the loyalty of the NLC leadership continued to remain suspect. In June 1989, the NLC

⁵¹ Yinka Tella, "Labour's agonists: Discontent in the Ranks over Pascal Bayfau's Leadership" in African Guardian, vol.7, no.32, August 31, 1992, p.8-11.

under suspicious circumstances abruptly withdrew an earlier clearance letter enabling the use of its Conference Hall for a symposium. Convened by human rights activists and popular groups, the seminar was to debate *Alternatives to SAP*. The seminar was later aborted, and the convenors, radical lawyer Chief Gani Fawehinmi, social critic Tai Solarin, and veteran unionist Chief Michael Imoudu were among those arrested and detained by the SSS for holding anti-SAP views. Even given this clear abuse of basic democratic rights, the NLC did not condemn the government for this act. The Nigerian Labour Congress Women's Wing, however, strongly criticized the action of the CWC and came out in support of the proposed seminar, arguing it "would be in the best interest of the people of this country that the government should allow people to suggest alternatives to SAP".⁵² Likewise, the NLC leadership distanced itself from the popular protest during the nationwide May 1989 and 1992 rebellions initiated by students. Openly denouncing the anti-SAPs and anti-military government agitations, the leadership of the NLC would later lay claim for the SAP relief concessions emerging from the agitation. Such contradictory tendencies of state co-optation and competing pressures from below for militancy, transparency, and accountability within the NLC, would manifest itself again in the response of the NLC to June 12 pro-democracy protests.

⁵² Kole Ahmed Shettima, "Women's Movement and Visions: the Nigerian Labour Congress Women's Wing" in *Africa Development*, vol.14, no.3, 1989.

(see below)

THE CASE OF THE NANS

A testament to its organizational capabilities and firm democratic structures, the NANS is perhaps one of the few, if not the only, popular organization to consistently and effectively resist state coercion and cooptation. Operating under proscription for most of the last decade, the student body remained resilient and unwavering in its commitment to democracy, human rights and social justice. In its post-1986 ABU crisis review, in which the union was re-proscribed, the NANS officially resolved to disregard any government ban and resist all attempts to suppress student organizations. Reflecting the tenacity of Nigerian students, the NANS maintained "that an undemocratic government cannot be expected to open up the political space, to enable civic groups to organize and agitate freely."⁵³ Not surprisingly then, the NANS has continued to mount opposition against SAP and predatory rule, and has often been the catalyst of popular protests. Undeterred by heightened state coercion in the wake of the April 1988 anti-SAP rebellions, the communique of the NANS 8th annual conference a few months later noted that,

NANS viewed with serious concern the total failure of the SAP imposed on the nation by the IMF and World Bank. Delegates hold that SAP, its components, FEM (inter-bank forex market) privatization and so-called debt equity-swaps are designed by Western countries as part of the conspiracy to subjugate the economic destiny of our country and subject our people to

⁵³ Interview with Segun Maiyegun, January 1994.

perpetual poverty and slavery,⁵⁴

and resolved to launch a countrywide campaign resisting any further increase in petroleum prices. Later that year the NANS issued a six week ultimatum to the government, setting out a list of demands which included,

a) the immediate abolition of the SAP, b) stop (World Bank) rationalization of courses c) abolish examination fees d) increase the funding of education e) stop the invasion of campuses by security agents f) stop the panic closure of universities g) provide free health care for all Nigerians up to the age of 18, women and old citizens in the Third Republic constitution, and h) guarantee free education for all citizens up to secondary school level.⁵⁵

After the ultimatum lapsed, the UNIBEN branch of the NANS organized a seminar on the *Pains of SAPs*. University authorities countered by convening a symposium on the *Gains of SAPs*. Undaunted, students proceeded on a peaceful march "with a mock coffin and green leaves singing 'SAP MUST GO' we are dying of hunger in the name of SAP"⁵⁶ The UNIBEN Anti-SAP processions escalated.

By the mere fact that NANS represented independent student unions in over 114 higher institutions as well as secondary schools, any action taken by the union is usually national in scope and invariably draws the support of various social forces in civil society. Such was the case of the May 1989 Anti-SAP protest. The initial peaceful protest was further fuelled by the murder of 6 students at UNIBEN by the

⁵⁴ Ekeocha and Amidu cited in Kole Ahmed Shettima, "Structural Adjustment and the Student Movement in Nigeria" in ROAPE, 1992, p.85.

⁵⁵ Shettima, "Student Movement", p.86.

⁵⁶ Shettima, *Ibid.*, p.86.

mobile police and military, on a clear 'shoot at sight' directive from the federal government. Concurrently, the widespread allegation that General Babangida was the 3rd richest man in Africa and 7th in the world, further heightened popular anger. The protest spread, engulfing the whole country and involved school children, artisans, market women, farmers, workers and women's associations, joined by human rights groups. Universities throughout the country were closed down. The leadership of NANS was arrested and detained. At the end of violent clashes with the armed forces, over 100 people were killed nationally. In a tacit, yet costly recognition of the deepening impoverishment of Nigerians, the Babangida regime introduced its SAP relief package, which included among other concessions, wage and salary increases and the establishment of the NDE and the Peoples Bank -- alluded to earlier.

Another aspect of the adjustment programme the NANS has consistently resisted, is the rationalization of the university system -- the euphemism for phasing out departments, programmes and courses, downsizing academic and non-academic staff and increasing existing user fees -- under the tutelage of the World Bank. Having led nationwide campaigns for the abolishment of the adjustment programme, the NANS naturally agitated against the adverse consequences of the SAP on its immediate constituency. Therefore the NANS opposed the U.S.\$140 million World Bank loan, accepted by the federal government in April 1990 for a 'Federal University

Restructuring Exercise'.⁵⁷ As an editorial in a Nigerian daily newspaper accurately noted,

...right or wrong, the World Bank and its affiliates in Nigeria are held responsible in no small measure for the nation's economic predicament. We recall the passion, indeed the bitterness, that characterized the IMF debate in 1985 especially with regards to the conditionalities. Between them, the IMF and the Bank have advocated policies that would curtail rather than enhance access to higher education especially in the Third World. Thus any loan from these institutions earmarked for tertiary education was bound to be regarded with intense suspicion if not outright misgivings by the university community.⁵⁸

Indeed, a degree of rationalization is required within the Nigerian university system, particularly with regards to the proliferation of universities (now 31 with consistent clamouring for more) which serve more the political and accumulation ambitions of the dominant classes than educational pursuits. Certainly, a case can be made for the amalgamation of certain universities. However, efforts to produce an efficient and cost effective university system through the policies advocated by the World Bank, merely treat the symptoms of the problems which confront the educational sector in the country. With a clear understanding of the roots of the current educational crisis, the NANS maintained that since the conditions of the education sector are subsumed within the general crisis of the Nigerian state and economy, the redress of the sector's decay must be inextricably linked to the restructuring of the state and economy.⁵⁹ The 9th

⁵⁷ Shettima, "Student Movement", p.89.

⁵⁸ The Guardian cited in Shettima, *Ibid.*, p.90.

⁵⁹ Interview with Segun Maiyegun, January 1994..

annual conference of the NANS therefore took a strong position against the loan. Illuminating the contradictions of the World Bank's conditionalities, the association noted that whereas the stipulations demanded an increase in expatriate staff salaries, they concurrently called for the massive lay-off of Nigerian staff. Challenging the proposed cost cutting measures, the NANS further argued that the policy of phasing out departments and programmes and increasing user fees, amounted to the recolonization of the Nigerian university system by narrowing the content of education while also making it increasingly inaccessible to the majority of Nigerians.⁶⁰ Starting from the campuses of the ABU, agitation against the World Bank loan proliferated to other universities, but they were abruptly halted by the failed Orka Coup of April 1990 and the heightened state clampdown on popular protests in its immediate aftermath.⁶¹

Unable to curb students' militancy and co-op the leadership of their organizations, the Nigerian state has relied heavily on intimidation and coercion to subdue the movement. In the wake of the 1989-Anti SAP riots, the Babangida regime promulgated Student Decree No.47 (Control and Regulation) enhancing the power of the state to ban unions and expel student activists. The edict also limited student unions

⁶⁰ Shettima, *Ibid.*, p.90.

⁶¹ For an in depth and critical look at the failed April 1990 Orka Coup, see Julius Ihonvbere, "A Critical Evaluation of the Failed 1990 Coup in Nigeria" in The Journal of Modern African Studies, vol.29, no.4, 1991.

to individual campuses and made student union membership voluntary, in the attempt to break inter-campus networks and reduce membership. State security agents are ever present on most university campuses. Students and student union leaders are frequently harassed and assaulted. Many student activists have been expelled and rusticated from campuses. Increasingly, the government and university authorities have sponsored organizations such as the *New Breed*, *Third Eye*, and *Peace Movements*, to form a counterpoise to radical unionism.⁶² These unions have launched propaganda campaigns attempting to discredit militant student unions.

One outgrowth of the condition of violence and militarization on campuses is the growing phenomenon of secret cults. From relative obscurity in the 1970s, when alternative student unions were able to curtail their activities, in the pervasive environment of state clampdown on radical student unions, secret cults have mushroomed on every university campus in the federation. Representing a fringe element of right-wing forces on campuses, cults such as the *Black Axe*, *Black Beret*, *Buccaneers*, *Eiye*, *Mafia*, *Pirates* and *Vikings* have nonetheless contributed greatly to the environment of fear, intimidation, thuggery and uneasiness which now exist on campuses. The *modus operandi* of these cults is simply to terrorize the student community. The extortion of money from students is rampant. Exorbitant protection fees ranging from

⁶² Shettima, "Students Movement", p. 88.

N5,000 to N10,000 are levied on students and even lecturers, to avoid attack. The majority of cults are well armed, with the source of weaponry subject to on-going debate.⁶³ Theft and armed robbery on campuses continued to rise. Cult related murders and violence have reached un-precedented proportions. Female students have been particularly vulnerable to gangs of thugs who freely roam Nigerian universities. Incidents of rape have therefore risen. Femi Adedokun, chairman of UNIJOS chapter of ASUU recently noted, that "although it is glaring that cases of rape occurs on campuses daily, it has been difficult to keep good statistics, because most assaults go unreported."⁶⁴

While the government's Student Decree No.47 of 1989, outlaws cults and exacts a penalty of five years imprisonment and N50,000 on offenders, the government and university authorities have done very little to curb the proliferation of cults and their criminal activities. This has contributed to the predominant view within NANS that secret cults are state sponsored and encouraged to disarticulate and subdue radical student unionism. Secret cults openly and actively recruit on campuses, urging students to join without rebuke from university officials. They have grown in strength, such that secret cults now sponsor candidates during student union

⁶³ Chinedu Ezeanah, "Blood Feud on the Campus" in Tell, October 26, 1992, p.19.

⁶⁴ Sam Olukoya, "Cult War" in Newswatch, March 28, 1994, p.13.

elections in hope of taking them over.⁶⁵ Both the ASUU and the NANS have vociferously called on the government to lift the ban on student unions and political activities on campuses, in order to check the rampant criminal activities of secret cults. Since the government and universities authorities have remained unreceptive to these demands and campus security and the police seem powerless by their generally failure to intervene to prevent the rampant killings, rapes and rabid lawlessness of secret cults, student unions have resolved to independently address the issue on respective campuses. The NANS has adopted a policy which called for stronger and militant student unions capable of rebuffing any act of violence on campuses. As the current national president of the NANS, Nasser Ja'far, recently noted "only force and mass action can dislodge secret cults...[who are now] in possession of lethal weapons."⁶⁶ Para-military associations have been formed to protect student leaders and the wider student community, particularly focusing on measures to provide greater security for female students.⁶⁷ Whether or not the secret cults are directly state sponsored, the consistent state suppression of an array of alternative voices has created an environment conducive to the rise and proliferation of cults. While posing a challenge to the NANS'

⁶⁵ Olukoya, "Cult War", p.15

⁶⁶ Olukoya, "Cult War", p.17.

⁶⁷ Interview with Segun Maiyegun, January 1994.

resiliency, heightened cult activities have largely failed to dampen the militancy of student unionism nationwide.

The crisis-ridden Nigerian state has also sought to divert the concrete struggles of the NANS by attributing students' agitation to manipulations by political saboteurs, 'old breed' politicians, banned political aspirants and disgruntled former beneficiaries of the import-licensing system, all bent on subverting the SAP and PTP. For example, a former Minister of Communication under the Babangida regime, reached this conclusion during the April 1988 oil crisis, when he noted that "after all students cannot go on the rampage just because of a 2.5 kobo increase in fuel prices. How many students own cars?"⁶⁸ In the same vein, the root causes of the 1989 student-led Anti-SAP protests was attributed by the federal government to the machinations of Nigerians "who felt the transition to civilian rule could not go without them."⁶⁹ Using the pretext of SAP, students were said to be manipulated in order to cause havoc in the war to destroy government credibility. Despite such opposition to the NANS and the rise of retrogressive organizations on campuses, increasingly in tandem with a growing faction of student groups seeking to simply limit the student agenda to educational issues affecting individual constituencies, the NANS remained the principal student organization. It continued to link issues in

⁶⁸ Shettima, "Students Movement", p.87.

⁶⁹ Shettima, *Loc.cit.* p.87.

the educational sector to wider struggles in civil society. Acting nationally, in spite of an unrecognized apex body, the NANS has remained at the forefront of the agitation against SAP and the PTP, even within the informal tripartite alliance forged with ASUU and the NLC. The May 1992 NANS led nationwide protest, explicitly linked the demand for the abolition of SAP to the resignation of the Babangida junta and the immediate convening of a Sovereign National Conference. In no small measure, the consistent struggles of the NANS in this period was a contributing factor which gave rise to the CD, the broad civil society coalition which emerged in late 1991 to advance the struggle for human rights, social justice, and national self-reliance.

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS IN NIGERIA: THE POLITICAL RESPONSE OF THE ORGANIZATIONS' OF ACADEMICS, JOURNALISTS AND LAWYERS

THE CASE OF THE ASUU

Like the NLC and the NANS, campaigns by the ASUU against the SAP and PTP in the wake of the 1988 Anti-SAP protest has been countered with increasing state attack. With the reality of declining real incomes of the intellectual middle class and the closure of opportunities for upward mobility, ASUU could no longer ignore the unabating crisis of the economy, especially as manifest in the educational sector. The cumulative effect of the crisis, wanton state neglect, the rationalization drive under the auspices of the World Bank, the culture of anti-intellectualism fostered by successive military regimes intermeshed with the current deification of

money, contributed to the dilapidation of the university system and the general rot of the educational sector. The appalling state of university decay is uniform between first generation institutions, such as ABU, Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU, formerly Univ. of Ife), University of Ibadan (UI), UNILAG and the University of Nigeria (UNN, at Nsukka) and those founded in the 1970s and 1980s. The physical infrastructure of campuses has deteriorated. Buildings are decrepit. There is a widespread shortage of lecture halls, office space, student hostels and staff housing. Many of the classrooms have no chairs or most are broken and have been neither repaired nor replaced. Classrooms are so overcrowded that students now stand up to receive lectures.⁷⁰ Students are often compelled to write examinations on the floor. In the faculty of science, laboratories are without equipment or function with outmoded instruments. Available library books were published in the 1960s. It is a rarity to find books published as recent as 1985. Complete and current journals are unheard of. Electricity and water supplies are at best, very erratic. The living conditions of Nigerian students are particularly alarming. Hostels are so congested that finding less than 10 students living in a room designed for two is quite rare. Housing shortages are such that a bed space which

⁷⁰ Yakubu Mohammed et al., "Collapse of Universities: Tower Without Ivory" in Newswatch, Special Supplement on Nigerian Universities, September 21, 1992.

went for N90 in 1979 now costs between N1,400 and N2,000.⁷¹ The material conditions of universities illuminated in brief here, are replicated throughout the polytechnics, colleges of education and medicine and primary and secondary institutions.

Against this backdrop of degeneration, ASUU has vociferously agitated against the gross under-funding of the educational sector, intertwined with issues of declining incomes of lectures, job insecurity and abuse of university autonomy. In 1988, after a prolonged eight month stalemate in its industrial dispute lodged with the government over the non-implementation of the ESS, ASUU together with the Senior Staff Association of Universities, Teaching Hospitals, Research Institutes and Associated Institutions (SSAUTHRIAI) and the Non-Academic Staff Union of Universities (NASU) went on strike. The strike action largely halted teaching activities in tertiary institutions throughout the country. The then Minister of Education and long-time Professor of Cardiology, Jibril Aminu, appeared on national television declaring the ASUU-led agitation irresponsible and unreasonable, warning lecturers that the government would terminate the employment of those not returning to work within 48 hours.⁷² Shortly thereafter the ASUU was proscribed. The former national president Dr. Festus Iyayi, the incumbent and

⁷¹ Mohammed, "Tower without Ivory", p.13.

⁷² Muiyiwa Akintunde and Tony Iyare, "'Ideas, Not the Person, Interest Me'" in Newswatch, Interview with Attahiru Jega, 'Newswatch 1993 Man of the Year', January 11, 1993, p.12.

current national president of ASUU Dr. Attahiru Jega, among other top officials of the union were arrested and incarcerated. Branch officers of the ASUU were harassed and intimidated, forced to submit their passports to the SSS and report daily to security offices. Government's independent meeting with SSAUTHRIAI, led the union to call off its strike action, serving to isolate the ASUU.⁷³ The ASUU was then summoned to appear before the Industrial Dispute Panel, which in turn ordered lecturers back to work before negotiations could commence. After 7 days, the ASUU called off the nationwide strike and reentered fruitless negotiations with the government.

Again in 1991, the ASUU filed an industrial dispute with the government. Learning from the limitations of the 1988 experience, the union broadened its demands beyond bread and butter issues, to now include among its grievances issues of educational sector under-funding, academic freedom and university autonomy. With a two month stalemate in negotiations, in May 1992 the ASUU embarked on a more effective strike action which enlisted the support of NANS, human rights groups and other democratic organizations. The then Minister of Education and professor of education Aliu Babatunde Fanfunwa, denounced the action of his 'colleagues' with the same litany of adjectives used to delegitimize popular demands. The former Vice President Admiral Augustus

⁷³ Jega, "Professional Associations", p.107.

Aikhomu issued a 24 hour ultimatum for lecturers to vacate their university quarters. The ASUU, for the second time in four years was proscribed (the ban on the union was first rescinded in April 1990). A battle-ready academic union, anticipating this manoeuvre from a crisis-ridden state, quickly re-emerged as the National Association of University Teachers (NAUT), rendering the ban virtually ineffective. A desperate government called on traditional rulers to mediate the impasse. Peace talks mediated by the Sultan of Sokoto, Ibrahim Dasuki, brought the two sides back to the negotiation table. An agreement was reached in September 1992 and was generally commensurable with the ASUU's demands. University salary scales and allowances significantly increased. The composition of university councils and the process for appointing vice chancellors were democratized. The growing influence of state agencies, such as the National University Commission and the Joint Admission and Matriculation Boards, in university affairs was curbed. Further democratic demands such as the lifting of the proscription of NANS and ASUU to enable both to organize freely was, however, rejected.⁷⁴ It did not take long for a breach in the September 3rd agreement. Professor of constitutional law, Ben Nwabueze, Secretary of Education in the short-lived Shonekan-led Transitional Council, touched off another fight among his 'colleagues' when

⁷⁴ Tony Iyare and Nats Agbo, "The Gains of ASUU" in Newswatch, September 21, 1992, p.14-15.

in March 1993 he declared the agreement invalid and unbinding on the government. In May, the ASUU went on strike in protest of the abrogation of the accord. Support was again garnered from the NANS, human rights groups such as the Civil Liberties Organization and the Committee for the Defence of Human Rights, who further condemned the government for undemocratically nullifying an agreement to which it was a signatory. To break the strike, the state dismissed students, academic and non-academic staff from certain universities. The ASUU grudgingly called off its strike actions, in consideration of restive students left generally unproductive for over five months. Having aborted the strike under undue duress, the ASUU made it clear to the federal government that actions would recommence if outstanding grievances were not sufficiently redressed.⁷⁵

The persistent of the ASUU in confronting the undemocratic policies in the educational sector and wider society has led to the emergence of a militant and relevant academic union, in the forefront of defending civil and democratic rights and agitating for the improvement of living conditions of subordinate groups. The radicalization of the ASUU, its commitment to delimit state power and the building of meaningful democratic structures which ensure popular participation should not be exaggerated. Like other groupings

⁷⁵ Johah Achema, "Back in Class" in Newswatch, September 20, 1993, p.16. and Moses Omogbonoh, "End, at Last, to a Long Strike" in African Guardian, September 20, 1993, p.11.

in Nigeria's civic terrain, the ASUU remains susceptible to state coercion, manipulation and cooptation. Despite a shift in the balance of forces within the union in favour of progressive elements, the ASUU is particularly vulnerable to state machinations by virtue of the inherent middle class aspirations of its membership. The participation of the majority of Nigerian academics in union activities is minimal at best. With the notable exception of discussions around strike actions, lecturers rarely participate in ASUU. Labelling union leaders 'hot heads', 'radicals' 'subversives' and 'socialists', they show an instrumentalist attachment to the organization, participating only insofar as the ASUU may be able to extract monetary concessions from the state. The majority of the intellectual middle class do not survive on university incomes and therefore do not feel compelled to engage in struggles for wage increases, much less campaigns for university autonomy, academic freedom and broader agitation in defence of human rights and social justice. In fact, the government's 1986 decision to remove the automatic salary deduction for dues to the ASUU, ostensibly designed to cripple the union financially and thus organizationally, was welcomed by many Nigerian academics.

The general disposition of Nigerian intellectuals could be accurately gauged in their social relations with students. Julius Ihonvbere candidly noted, that

...for many, a lecturer has no business fraternizing with students and students cannot have the same struggles with

lecturers. In fact students are only good when it comes to buying useless and poorly worked-out hand-outs which they copy in the secrets of their bedrooms from books written by others. They are generally blind to or unsympathetic to the deteriorating conditions in which students live and study. Over ninety percent of Nigerian academics never go near the student's hostels to see for themselves the conditions of squalor, filth and disease in which their students live and study. [Moreover] female students are simply objects of sex in most cases. There exists gangs of lecturers whose jobs are basically to exchange sex for grades. Issues of sexual harassment are hardly addressed and students have no rights in the majority of the cases. In fact, given the deepening economic crisis female students find it more convenient to exchange sex for grades than spend their time reading; And in an extremely chauvinistic society, sexual harassment is often taken lightly."⁷⁶

Since the so-called enlightened intellectual middle class reproduce the social hierarchies in their immediate theatre of influence, it is not surprising to find a general disinterest towards popular struggles in the wider society among academics. In like manner, the parochialism of region, religion and ethnicity which has characterized national politics in the post-colonial period and continues to inhibit the institutionalization of consensual politics, often enters into the calculation of intellectuals, influencing their participation in the ASUU and positions on critical national issues. It is uncommon to find support for lecturers when the leadership of the union is harassed, intimidated, arrested and/or detained. Not only is collegial solidarity an exception, some Nigerian lecturers have been exposed for actively "spying and reporting on their colleagues and union

⁷⁶ Julius Ihonvbere, "The State and Academic Freedom in Africa: How African Academics Subvert Academic Freedom", Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, St. Louis, Missouri, November 1991, mimeo: University of Texas at Austin, p.24.

leaders."⁷⁷ Therefore, with the ASUU's growing militancy in the wake of the 1988 agitation, the politics within the union has been

characterized by intra-union factional struggles between those who thought that the association was devoting too much of its energy and resources to national politics rather than the specific interests of the members, and those who believed that the relevance of the association was only to the extent that it is perceived and strived to solve the problems of its members in the context of the broader struggles for the resolution of other ongoing national problems."⁷⁸

The general susceptibility of the intellectual middle class to the "politics of poverty" remains a constraint on the organizational capabilities of the ASUU, since even radical elements can be coopted through political appointments. Nigerian intellectuals have continued to serve as a reservoir of skilled labour, easily enticed and readily acceptant of various appointments to commissions, directorates and ministerial posts by even a corrupt and dictatorial military regime. The three former Ministers of Education, Aminu, Fafunwa and Nwabueze, all of which have come from the university community are such examples. While they may not have had a history in defence of civil and democratic rights, nor actively campaigned in the ASUU around issues in the educational sector, on ascending to public office they simply forgot the realities in which they had lived and worked. Rather than attempting to utilize their new found powers and influence to begin to improve the decaying educational sector,

⁷⁷ Ihonvbere, "Academic Freedom".

⁷⁸ Jega, "Professional Associations", p.107.

if not for the majority of Nigerians, at least for their colleagues, they contribute to the reproduction of the general crisis by using public office for their own private accumulation. Despite the contradictory forces at work within the university community and the ASUU, it would seem that under the incumbency of the late Dr Mahmud Tukur, Iyayi and Jega, the ASUU has emerged as an important organ of popular struggles in the civic terrain. The closure of upward mobility and the increasing proletarianization of large sections of the intellectual middle class, while it may lead to increasing opportunism and state cooptation within the ranks of ASUU, may also compel -- as seems to be occurring -- Nigerian academics to actively join the on-going popular struggles for civil rights, democracy and self reliance.⁷⁹

Much like the Academic Staff Union of Universities, other professional associations have seen the material conditions of their members adversely affected by the continuing crisis. Cumulatively aggrieved by the closure of upward mobility, the increasing unemployment and underemployment of professional classes and wanton state arbitrariness, organizations of journalists and lawyers, have similarly been galvanized to agitate both in the interest of their respective constituencies and for the strengthening of the wider civic terrain. Increasingly, sections of the Nigerian press and its

⁷⁹ This section in particular, and the case studies on professional associations in Nigeria, has greatly benefited from the work of Attahiru Jega.

organizations, such as the Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ), have used this medium to struggle in defence of civil liberties and in the interest of subaltern classes. The established association of lawyers, the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA), has also become more principled and openly combative in agitating for an independent judiciary and the rule of law. These professional associations have gained strength with the proliferation of civil liberties and human rights NGOs in recent years. Of course, the mass media has a long history of combative journalism stretching back to the colonial period.⁸⁰ In the face of post-colonial state onslaught on limited democratic rights, the vibrancy of the 'free press' is often cited by neo-liberal analysts of Nigeria's political economy, as indicative of the resilience of the Nigerian civil society.

Throughout much of the post-colonial period, the NBA (formed in the 1950s) and the NUJ (in the 1970s), however, "remained virtually indifferent... to the erosion of the socio-economic well-being and democratic rights of the majority of Nigerians."⁸¹ Indeed, independent private media houses intermittently highlighted cases of state excesses and

⁸⁰ Excluded from the colonial system, journalists such as Herbert Macauley, Nnamdi Azikwe and Anthony Enohoro floated independent news dailies like the *West African Pilot* and the *Daily Comet*. As previously mentioned the indigenous fourth estate was an instrumental medium in providing a critical voice against the colonial regime. It gave expression to workers' agitation and was an important organ in the national liberation struggle, despite constant state attempts to suppress combative journalism.

⁸¹ Jega, "Professional Associations", p.100.

arbitrariness. Yet, the collective response of the NUJ against the pervasive deterioration of social economic and political conditions was minimal at best. Similarly, the NBA generally showed an indifference towards state restriction on limited democratic rights and was largely preoccupied in the 1960s and 1970s with the narrow interests of its membership. Specifically, the overriding concern of the NBA was the advancement of the private legal practises of its constituents. The crisis of the state and economy during the 1980s and widespread hardships from which the middle classes were not immune, however, led to an increasing concern on the part of these organizations about the declining material standards and heightened misuse of state power. The draconian character of the Buhari regime further intensified the struggles of these groupings. During the 20 month reign of this dictatorship, the curtailment of democratic rights, the trampling of any notion of the rule of law and limits on press freedoms reached unprecedented levels. Through Decree No.4., for example, journalists, editors and publishers in any way critical of the government were arrested and detained. The notorious Decree No.2 sanctioned the incarceration of persons deemed subversive by the regime for up to three months without trial. Decree No.3 endorsed the formation of military tribunals to litigate hearings of individuals the state defined as security threats. An aggrieved NBA, under the leadership of Bual Ajibola, boycotted these tribunals because

of the arbitrariness.

The ascendancy of the Babangida junta was a welcomed relief for the much afflicted fourth estate and legal community. There was a general euphoria among journalists when the new regime abrogated Decree No.4. Similarly, the journalistic community was pleased with the presidential pardon of Tunde Thompson and Nduka Irabor, journalists incarcerated for a year for publishing stories which the Buhari regime deemed 'subversive.' The repeal of Decree No.3 was also widely praised. Especially for these communities, the immediate execution of these measures in the early days of the Babangida regime heralded the dawn of a new era which promised to uphold civic and democratic rights. Yet, the regime had retained the sinister Decree No.2. The appointment of Ajibola, the erstwhile champion of human rights as the new Minister of Justice, and other outspoken members of fourth estate into ministerial posts, further served to enhance the government's democratic pretence. As we have shown, this facade was short lived. The tenuously legitimate Nigerian state increasingly relied on the repression of opposition forces in civil society to reproduce itself and to implement the anti-popular adjustment exercise.

THE CASE OF THE FOURTH ESTATE

The media remained an important 'watchdog' in civil society, exposing and criticizing state excesses. The apparent honeymoon between the press and the Babangida regime ended

over the fervent reporting of the government's self-inflicted crisis, occasioned by the 1985 Organization of Islamic Unity Debacle.⁸² While the government did not openly show its disapproval of the media coverage, the attitude towards the press in the immediate aftermath and throughout the eight year junta was more repressive than any previous regime. Even though the state owned the majority of newspapers and until recently all the radio and television networks (the electronic media was partially privatized in 1992), the private media, in no small measure, has provided Nigerians with accurate accounting of events and critical analysis of national and international issues. The popular appeal and quality of these magazines has forced the official print media to enhance its correspondence, such that its proprietor has increasingly become alarmed by critical *exposes*. In 1988, for instance, the then Chief of Army Staff, Admiral Augustus Aikhomu cautioned executive officers of the federal and state media houses that "henceforth [they would] be held responsible for any adverse stories published by their organs...It would be an offence for any of their organs to criticise government policy."⁸³ The critical and independent stance of the private media has also

⁸² In 1985, Nigerians were outraged by the AFRC's unilateral decision to enlist the country as a full member of the OIC, which abrogated the country's seventeen year observer status, the secularity of the Nigerian state, and thereby fuelled religious antagonism in the country.

⁸³ Aikhomu reported in African Concord, August 16, 1988 and cited in Jibrin Ibrahim, "The Transition to Civilian Rule: Sapping Democracy" in A. Olukoshi, The Politics of Adjustment in Nigeria, 1993, p.132.

been met with state reprisals. A combination of oppressive laws such as the Official Secret Act and Defamation Act, extra-legal options like threats, harassment, arbitrary detention, and outright murder, have been utilized by the Nigerian state to muzzle the press.

To illustrate, the Newswatch premises were swarmed and sealed by mobile police in April 1987 when the higher circles were informed of the leading weekly magazine's planned cover story, which provided excerpts from the yet unreleased report of the Political Bureau. The state proceeded to ransack the offices, arrest and detain the co-founders and editors of the magazine, Dan Agbese, Ray Ekpu and Yakubu Mohammed. It froze all accounts of Newswatch Communication Ltd and proscribed the publication of Newswatch for six months.⁸⁴ In May 1988, a mere cartoon in the National Concord portraying the collaboration of the Babangida junta and Western powers in the imposition of the anti-popular SAP, landed the animator Osazuwa Osagi in detention for one week.⁸⁵ Again, the Babangida government disturbed by the media coverage of the failed April 1990 Orka Coup, clamped down on the media and journalists. A number of newspapers such as the Newbreed, Punch and the Vanguard were closed down. The editors of these newspapers and magazines, namely Chris Okolie, Chris Mammah

⁸⁴ Ray Ekpu, "Nigeria's Embattled Fourth Estate" in Journal of Democracy, 1993, p.111.

⁸⁵ Ibrahim, "Sapping Democracy", p.132.

and Chris Okogie (respectively) were arrested and detained. In total,

four daily newspaper and two weekly newsmagazines were shut down by the government for a total of 195 days. Twenty-two journalists, publishers and media workers were detained for no reason other than those connected with their professional duties. Two journalist were arraigned in court on charges of sedition/incitement; three were physically banned by soldiers from performing duties; one had his accreditation to the State House withdrawn; and another was severely beaten by soldiers in the course of work.⁸⁶

A year later, the Guardian Express was sealed up for its coverage of state brutality against protesting students at Yaba College of Technology, in which two students were killed.

Even 'soft sell' magazines have not been immune from state suppression. For example, the printing plates and ten thousand copies of Quality, a magazine from the Newswatch consortium, was seized in December 1992 when the government received an advance copy featuring an interview with radical democrat and lawyer Femi Falana. Unfortunately, this trend would continue. The recently released 1993 report of the NUJ, titled *Violation of Press Freedom in Nigeria*, chronicles the assault on the fourth estate during the Babangida junta. Imbued with words and phrases like *intimidation, arrest, detention, violation of press freedom and the closure of media houses*, the document revealed that in 1993 alone, "88 persons including journalists, vendors and publishers were arrested, questioned and detained. In some cases, two women and children were arrested on account of their husbands' and fathers'

⁸⁶ Olisha Agbakoha, "Loosening Legal and Political Constraints on NGOs: The Case of Nigeria" in R. Sandbrook and M. Halfani, Empowering People, 1993, p.121.

[profession]."⁸⁷ The report goes on to state that although more than twenty journalists were charged under Penal Code 417 through 419,⁸⁸ none were prosecuted. The NUJ concluded that the government never intended to prosecute, but mainly to detain critical journalists and intimidate the community, "because court cases never [proceeded] beyond arguments for and against bail".⁸⁹

One dramatic development in the journalism community which requires further discussion is the 1986 assassination of the co-founder and editor-in-chief of Newswatch, Dele Giwa, and the continuing struggle over seven years later to bring his assailants to justice. The first such incident in the 130 year history of Nigerian journalism, the fourth estate and indeed the generality of Nigerians were outraged by the gruesome nature of the killing. Murdered by a parcel bomb delivered to the Giwa home, the package reportedly had the insignia of the Nigerian Coat of Arms and the inscription from the office of the C-In-C (Commander-in-Chief).⁹⁰ First chastised by SSS agents over a column he wrote critical of the SAP, in the weeks prior to his death, Dele Giwa was again

⁸⁷ NUJ, 1993 Report: Violation of Press Freedom in Nigeria, excerpts cited in Reginald Opara, "Muzzling the Press" in African Concord, April 18, 1994, p.38-39.

⁸⁸ These penal codes are against the publication of 'false' information with the intent to incite dissatisfaction against the government and causing hatred among classes of people with the intent to endanger public peace

⁸⁹ Opara, *Loc. cit.*, p.38.

⁹⁰ Ray Ekpu, "Fourth Estate", p.110.

rigorously and more routinely interrogated and threatened by the SSS and the Directorate of Military Intelligence. Allegedly, Giwa had refused to allow security forces to suppress a story that, if published, could destroy the tenuous legitimacy of the state. While debates continued to rage over the particular expose that posed a threat to the state, the groups at the centre of the agitation for a judicial inquiry, vehemently maintained that Giwa was assassinated for insisting on exposing a narcotic trafficking network which involved the former President, his wife and other members of the higher circles.⁹¹ Indeed, Giwa's personal communication with his lawyer, Gani Fawehinmi, days prior to his death and the government's refusal to hold an inquiry into the assassination, strongly suggests state involvement.

What is of particular importance here is not just the extent to which the Nigerian state will go to muzzle critical journalism, but more importantly the responses of the fourth estate to state onslaught and its implication for on-going democratic struggles. While in the immediate aftermath of Dele Giwa's death, the press was vigilant in its coverage of the circumstance surrounding the murder, efforts to combat the state through the pen, beyond an intermittent revisiting of this issue, were largely unsustainable. Collectively, media organizations did little to challenge the state legally or

⁹¹ Dapo Olorunyomi, "The Giwa Affair" in The News, Special Issue: on Dele Giwa the Untold Story of a Murder, October 25, 1993.

politically. It would not be an exaggeration to suggest that the initiatives to prosecute Giwa's alleged murderer(s) and by implication the advancement of an important struggle for press freedom, have been largely shouldered by Chief Gani Fawehinmi and the organization of the same name. Frustrated by the inability of the Office of Public Prosecutions to secure indictments of the then heads of military intelligence Col. Halilu Akilu and Lt. Col. A.K. Togun, the case was given a boost when in December 1987 the Supreme Court upheld the right of private litigators to try criminal cases not taken up by the state.⁹² Henceforth, the suppression of Fawehinmi's activities intensified. He was regularly harassed, arrested and detained. In June 1988, 500 copies of a book he wrote documenting the circumstances surrounding Giwa's death were seized by the SSS. A year later, Gani was charged and convicted of libel and ordered to pay in excess of N6 million naira to the two security officers. Ironically, the journalism community and the Newswatch family largely stood idly by in this important civil rights struggle. Initial cooperation of the press to strengthen and advance the agitation quickly dissipated. The editorial staff from the magazine consistently sought to divert the line of inquiry Fawehinmi was pursuing, by suggesting alternative stories Giwa may have been investigating. In a recent interview with The News, Gani noted, that from the onset of the case, the Newswatch

⁹² Jibrin Ibrahim, "Sapping Democracy", p.134.

editorial staff "developed hostility towards me and thereafter they disowned what I was doing."⁹³ The press of NewsWatch was enticed by the government, with some editors receiving state contracts. The new marriage between the hitherto antagonistic institutions was further buttressed when the magazine pronounced Babangida 'Man of the Year' in 1988. While the magazine's editors held a number of interviews with the ousted dictator during this period, Babangida was never questioned about the Giwa murder. One of the editors would later become a paid biographer of the life and times of Ibrahim Babangida.⁹⁴

Highlighting the tragic murder of Dele Giwa and its aftermath underscore the vulnerability of the Nigerian press to suppression and co-optation by the state and private proprietors, despite the general proclivity of the four estate to expose state excesses. Undaunted by the economic crisis and state interference, the number of news publications have proliferated. In 1987 alone, the country had 23 dailies, 39 weeklies, 9 vernacular newspapers, 54 magazines, 29 radio stations and 32 television stations.⁹⁵ Yet, it is important for a resilient and combative mass media to not just seek to function as the critical 'watchdog' on state arbitrariness

⁹³ Gani Fawehinmi, "Akilu Is not Innocent" in The News, October 25, 1993, p.21.

⁹⁴ Olorunyomi, "The Giwa Affair", p.28.

⁹⁵ Ibrahim, "Sapping Democracy", p.132.

through the pen, but also to collectively challenge, legally and politically, state attempts to curtail press freedoms. This should be the legacy of Dele Giwa's murder. Unfortunately to date, the NUJ has largely failed to actively support continuing campaigns for a judicial inquiry into this issue, as an integral part of popular struggles for civil liberties and democracy.

THE CASE OF THE NBA

The frequency with which the Nigerian state disregarded any notion of the rule of law in this period and the increasing 'cash and discharge' character of the dispensation of justice, prompted the NBA to take a combative stance in defence of judicial independence. Under the Babangida regime, court decisions were flagrantly disobeyed with unparalleled regularity. While doing away with the rule of law at every turn, the military junta was equally unwilling to abide by its own standing decrees. The regime habitually contravened standing decrees and often enacted edicts retroactively in order to legitimize state arbitrariness and repression. Through jurisdictional ouster clauses attached to decrees, the government was largely able to prevent the litigation of cases in any way related to its 'legal' promulgations. Frustrated by state machinations, in May 1989 the NBA, in an unprecedented action, went on strike in protest over the interference in a court decision by the governor of the then Gongola state.⁹⁶

⁹⁶ Jega, "Professional Associations", p.109.

Met with state rebuke, the new confrontational NBA remained undaunted and continued to challenge state judicial manipulation while routinely coming to the defence of persecuted human rights activists. For example, in 1991 the NBA denounced and protested the government's dismissal of a court order granting bail to student and human rights activists Segun Maiyegun, Femi Falana, Beko Ransome Kuti and Baba Omojola, arrested and incarcerated during the nationwide May anti-SAP protests. The Bar association was further incensed by both the detention of Gani Fawehinmi, for simply representing these activists, and the ensuing refusal of the government to abide by the ruling of Justice Afolabi Balogun, granting Fawehinmi's immediate release.⁹⁷ In 1992, the NBA again came out in support of the same five human rights agitators, now charged with treason after the countrywide anti-SAP/anti-military government protest in May. In protest, the organization of lawyers boycotted court appearances and vehemently called for the resignation of the then Attorney General and former NBA president, Clement Akpamgbo.

A number of factors can be adduced to the NBA's increasing combativeness. In addition to the aforementioned catalytic impact of declining material conditions of Nigeria's middle classes, the emergence of a plethora of civil liberties and human rights NGOs, in many ways galvanized this body. It

⁹⁷ Stevie Waidor-Pregbagha, "Human Rights: Celebrating the Supremacy of Might" in Tell, August 31, 1992, p.26-29.

was largely the previous conservatism of the NBA which prompted the formation of organizations such as the Civil Liberties Organization (CLO) and the Committee in Defence of Human Rights (CDHR). In turn the steadfast agitation of these groupings fuelled a movement within the NBA campaigning for an accountable and principled association committed to the rule of law, human rights and social justice. The election and unanimous re-election of Alao Aka-Bashorun to the presidency of the NBA in 1987 and 1988 was a clear manifestation of this yearning. Under the incumbency of Aka-Bashorun, the association actively campaigned "against Decree No.2; against government arbitrariness and interference in the dispensation of justice in the country; on issues of human rights; and against the Structural Adjustment Programme".⁹⁸ With the balance of forces seeming to shift towards progressive and democratic lawyers, the state intensified efforts to foster an acquiescent legal body. Every annual national executive committee (NEC) election since the late 1980s has been bitterly contested, with the state consistently seeking to determine its outcome.

At the 1989 annual conference and NEC elections, for instance, the government mobilized huge resources, to use for the displacement of 'radical' and 'extremist' elements, it deemed to have captured the leadership of the NBA. Throughout the country, it therefore, sponsored lawyers to attend the

⁹⁸ Jega, "Professional Associations", p.109.

conference with all expenses paid, in order to garner support for their preferred candidates. While the two-term limit of the incumbent president Aka-Bashorun had expired, thus making him ineligible to compete, the character assassination of the outgoing president carried out by the state media weeks prior to the conference, intensified once it had convened. The speeches of both the Attorney General (AG) and Chief Justice of the Federation condemned the Aka-Bashorun 'style' leadership and lamented how the 'august body' had been damaged under his tutelage. The reported government candidate Charles Idehen, emerged as the new president. Throughout his tenure he sought to promote dialogue rather than confrontation between the NBA and the government.⁹⁹ Allegations of cooptation and financial improprieties against Idehen continues to reverberate among members of the Bar.

The intensification of intra-union contestations plunged the NBA into a crisis at the controversial 1992 Port Harcourt annual conference, from which it has yet to recover. Ironically, the convention organized around the theme *Towards a Stable Third Republic* saw the yearly NEC elections marred by 'naira politics', electoral rigging, the manipulation of region and ethnicity, political thuggery and the violence which all have historically dominated the content and character of electoral politics and was so glaringly exhibited

⁹⁹ Jega, "Loc.cit.", p.109.

in the so-called newbreed politics of the now defunct PTP.¹⁰⁰ The opposition which the NBA continued to mount against judicial interference, heightened the challenge to the new leadership under Priscilla Kuye, who emerged as the president of the NBA in early 1992.¹⁰¹ The government was said to have thrown its full support behind Bashir Dalhatu in order to counteract the growing militancy of the Bar. A familiar candidate, Dalhatu had been the recipient of state patronage for over two decades. Under the Babangida regime, he was among the few privileged Nigerians hand-picked to serve on both the Constitutional Review Committee and the Constituent Assembly. At the conference, addresses by both the then AG Clement Akpamgbo and Chief Justice Mohammed Bello denounced the increasing combativeness of the NBA and by implication the Kuye ticket. The seemingly ideological conflict which pitted 'radical' against 'conservative' factions was complicated by the manipulation of region and ethnicity. Public utterances of then Governor Saleh Michika of Adamawa State, stating that a Northern must emerge as the Bar's next president, further fuelled antagonisms.¹⁰² Ethnic and regional calculations

¹⁰⁰ Yinka Tella, "As the Court Pleases" in African Guardian, August 24, 1992, Arthur-Martins Aginam et al. "When Learned Men Fight" in African Concord, September 14, 1992, Ademola Oyinlola, "Fury, Fists and Fiasco" in Tell, September 14, 1992. Yinka Tella, "Battle of the Wigs", August 31, 1992.

¹⁰¹ Priscilla Kuye became president (first woman) of the NBA in early 1992, four months after the incumbent Clement Akpamgbo, was appointed the Attorney General of the Federation.

¹⁰² Arthur-Martins Aginam et al. "When Learned Men Fight" in African Concord, September 14, 1992, p.31.

rather than ideology, legal merit and/or history in defence of the rule of law, largely determined the alignment and realignment of forces within the associations. For instance, many legal practitioners with Southeastern (Igbo) origins, supported the preferred government candidate from the North. Aggrieved by the NBA's principled demand for the resignation of Akpamgbo under Kuye's leadership months earlier, an alliance with Dalhatu was said to check the Yoruba (Southwest) affront against the Igbo AG. Many Southeastern lawyers were therefore prepared to sacrifice the NBA's legal and human rights gains under the incumbent president to defend Akpamgbo in the AG office, in spite of the escalated onslaught on the judiciary during his short tenure.¹⁰³

Allegations and counter-allegations were vociferously exchanged by the two camps, insinuating financial indiscretions and the fraudulent accreditation of voters. Commenting on the conference, the coordinating secretary of the Constitutional Rights Project, Chuma Nwosu, noted that from the onset "tension was palpable all over and people were just talking elections, elections and elections. There was a complete absence of issues such as [would] be expected of a body like the NBA."¹⁰⁴ Sensing the probable explosiveness of an election, a group of lawyers led by Femi Falana sought and

¹⁰³ Ademola Oyinlola, "The Case Against Akpamgbo" in Tell, October 11, 1993, p.20-22.

¹⁰⁴ Ademola Oyinlola, "Fury, Fists and Fiasco" in Tell, September 14, 1992, p.13.

obtained an interlocutory injunction from the Port Harcourt High Court preventing any member or officer of the organization from "dissolving the offices of the national officers or from conducting any elections of officers,"¹⁰⁵ pending further judicial deliberations. While the injunction halted the elections, fractions of the conservative faction, led by J. Okonkwo unilaterally formed a caretaker committee, serving to contravene the anti-dissolution court order. A panel led by Chief Rotimi Williams was however, later set up by the incumbent NEC and empowered to recommend measures to strengthen the Bar, in order to resolve the crisis and prevent its recurrence.

The controversial Port Harcourt conference clearly highlights the vulnerability of the NBA to state interference, regional and ethnic manipulation and the sheer opportunism of some of its memberships. While the NBA had actively agitated in defence of the rule of law, the country's legal practitioners paradoxically failed to maintain this rudimentary democratic precepts in the electoral competition within the Bar. Though all NEC offices are financially unremunerated, the level of exposure, access to state contracts and potential for class ascendancy has given rise to all sorts of opportunists jockeying for posts in the NEC. For example, both Attorney Generals under the Babangida junta, Ajibola and Akpangbo, were former NBA presidents. Even the

¹⁰⁵ Aginam, "Learned Men", p.35.

erstwhile human rights campaigner, Ajibola and outspoken critic of the Buhari junta, was easily coopted by the Babangida government, only to contribute to the unparalleled assault on the judiciary. He has since been elevated to the bench of the International Court of Justice at the Hague. In the context of constricting avenues for upward mobility and the precariousness of many private practices, the NEC posts are widely sought after. Democracy and accountability may increasingly be dismissed in power contestations, making room for the politics of region and ethnicity within the Bar. While the report of the Williams panel recognized these constraints, and aptly recommended among other things, that incumbent presidents neither seek or accept any government appointments¹⁰⁶, the NBA must go further to democratize its internal structures in order to remain relevant in civil society struggles for democracy and social justice. The principled agitation of most incipient human rights and civil liberties NGOs may contribute to this process. Nigeria's nascent NGO community is the topic of the next section.

SECTION THREE: NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS, CIVIL SOCIETY AND DEMOCRATIZATION IN NIGERIA

Above, we have highlighted the colonial and post-colonial development of trade unions, student movements and professional associations and the contemporary intensification

¹⁰⁶ Yinka Tella, "NBA: A New Beginning?" in The African Guardian, February 1, 1993.

of social struggles for civil and democratic rights. The 1980s has also given rise to a plethora of informal and formal non-governmental organizations seeking to empower grassroots communities. Of course, many of these organizations have their antecedents in the pre-colonial and colonial period. In various pre-capitalist social formations, associations and institutions emerged to protect collective interests. Age-grade associations, for example, were the mechanism through which community needs and problems were addressed and communal projects implemented. These traditional mechanisms formed the basis of the various ethnic welfare associations that emerged during colonialism and provided a defence against the colonial state and amenities in the absence of social safety nets. The colonial era also led to the proliferation of first generation international NGOs (INGOs), which were primarily welfarist and relief oriented. Largely made up of missionaries, who hitherto facilitated the penetration of colonial capital through their 'proselytizing' endeavours, the activities of various Christian mission such as, the Methodist, American Baptist, Scotland and Anglican Missions in the areas of food provision, shelter, and medical and education services also provided a rudimentary social safety net for the poor majority. Offshoots of international relief organizations, like the Red Cross society also emerged to provide some minimal relief

measures.¹⁰⁷

In the post-colonial period, indigenous community development associations (CDAs) also mushroomed. Most of these associations were ethnic based self-help organizations, village assemblies, welfare groups and town unions, undertaking development projects and programmes to improve living conditions in the countryside. For instance, infrastructural development in the area of roads, schools, community centres, churches and hospital construction were often initiated by CDAs. Services rendered also enabled the unemployed to cope, helped to send students to higher institutions and provided assistance to the widowed. Other forms of CDAs included market women's associations, farmers cooperatives, youth associations and social clubs. One such grouping is the multiple informal thrift and credit associations which are variously called *esusu*, *adashi*, *bam* in different parts of the country. They function essentially as 'mobile banks' providing members with loans and credit facilities to finance the education of children, pay medical bills, as well as access to investment capital for agrarian activities and start-up funds for informal small-scale enterprises.¹⁰⁸ The importance of CDAs is not simply

¹⁰⁷ M.I. Okunola, "Historical and Future Projections of Nigeria's NGO Situation", Paper delivered at the NGO Leadership Training Workshop, Ibadan, May 19-23, 1993.

¹⁰⁸ Dele Oluwa, S.Bamidele Ayo and Bola Akande, "Community Development Associations" in Local Institutions and National Development in Nigeria, (Ile-Ife: Obafemi Awolowo University Press for the Research Group in Local Institutions, 1991).

utilitarian. They also reflect the pervasive sense that personal individuality is defined in relation to ones ethnic group. Town unions and village assemblies have largely displaced the state as they also serve as organs of community governance and adjudication. Though internal hierarchies do exist, these forums function democratically based on cultural values of co-operation, community solidarity and seek to protect the collective interests of local constituencies.

The oil boom years of the 1970s which left the rural area greatly neglected, further fuelled the formation of CDAs. Successive national development plans contributed marginally to the betterment of material conditions in the countryside. State programmes such as Operation Feed the Nations and the Green Revolution, together with World Bank-sponsored Integrated Rural Development Programmes also failed to improve the lives of rural dwellers. With negligible state contribution to rural social welfare, the bulk of rural dwellers have no loyalty to the state. Since it was (and continues to be) the ethnic community which largely assisted in providing access to resources for agrarian activities, health care, education and the development of infrastructure, therefore ethnic identity often superseded national identity. As Claude Ake recently noted, "the state in Africa, is uncaring and most ordinary people experience it as a hostile force...much of the development that has occurred, resulted

not because of the state, but in spite of it.¹⁰⁹ For example, post-civil war Southeastern Nigeria has been reconstructed mainly by the endeavours of CDAs. The majority of rural dwellers have therefore come to rely heavily on CDAs to provide social welfare and catalyze local community development.

The widespread hardships and mass suffering experienced in the 1980s also led to the proliferation and growing importance of CDAs. Despite optimistic expectations from proponents of market reforms, that the rural sector would benefit from trade and exchange rate deregulation, the impoverishment of the majority of rural dweller continued unabated. The impact of various state programmes to mitigate rural poverty, such as DFRRRI and BLRD, have been negligible, as the CDAs remain the principal mechanism to cushion socio-economic exigencies. An array of new formal NGOs have also emerged in recent years. Regional and national in scope, they are said by some neo-liberal analysts to be modeled on the democratic precepts of the CDAs and act as a conduit between grassroots organizations and the state. For instance, intermediate NGOs provide technical and material support to CDAs and in turn make policy representation to government on their behalf. Since the late 1980s, CDAs and intermediary NGOs (indigenous and international) have become the new panacea for Africa's developmental and democratic problems in the 'policy

¹⁰⁹ Ake, "Rethinking" p.38.

world' of the IFIs and donor communities. It is maintained that the proliferation of NGOs reflects the vitality of the rural grassroots and the novel and creative survivalist strategies which have emerged to cope with material decline. Strongly embraced by multilateral/bilateral agencies and neo-liberal analysts, NGOs are commended for their comparative advantage over an inefficient and bloated African state in the facilitation of micro-development. Within the context of the on-going neo-liberal market reforms, recovery and development in Africa in the 1990s for the IFIs now requires good governance, empowerment, participation and greater public accountability.

Integral to the new African agenda for democratic developmental are NGOs. They have been accorded the critical 'watchdog' role which is to ensure government transparency and accountability. The prospects of state delimitation is emboldened by the activities of NGOs through their capacity to empower vulnerable groups and catalytic part in strengthening civil society.¹¹⁰ Michael Bratton, whose work on NGOs in Africa has become influential, argues that NGOs promote a democratic political culture and "by building independent organizations at the community, regional and national levels, NGOs in Africa have already helped to pluralize the institutional landscape."¹¹¹ It stands to reason then that

¹¹⁰ World Bank, *LTPS*, p.61-62.

¹¹¹ Michael Bratton, "Government-NGO Relations", p.585.

NGOs can potentially reconcile the disjuncture between what Peter Ekeh has called the civic public and primordial public realms of civil society.¹¹² That is to say, NGOs through conscientization and mobilization campaigns may foster harmony between individualized civic rights and communal or social collective rights. While degenerating, the principles of group rights, cooperation and social responsibility is still strongly embedded in the collectivist relations, culture and traditions of rural communities. Incorporating these principles into the democratic project takes cognizance of the specificities of Nigerian and African social formations and the need to tailor democracy to the prevailing realities. Rather than retaining an urban-based and ruling class character, which historically has mechanistically implanted Western institutional frameworks to safeguard civic and democratic rights, NGOs may help incorporate indigenous cultural values and practises into the democratic project. Then they may be able to firmly draw the bulk of grassroots organizations into the on-going popular democratic struggles by building "links horizontally and vertically into mass movements that will provide organized countervailing powers to the state."¹¹³ It is this category of intermediate non-governmental organizations that is of particular interest here. The remainder of this section

¹¹² Peter P. Ekeh, "The Constitution of Civil Society in African History and Politics" in B. Caron et.al. Democratic Transitions in Africa, 1992.

¹¹³ Alan Fowler, "Agents of Democratization", p.334.

provides a sketch of Nigeria's NGO community then takes a closer look at the democratic impact of NGOs.

Unlike other countries in Africa, notably in the Eastern and Southern sub-regions, formal indigenous NGOs in Nigeria are weak and a very recent phenomenon. Equally distinctive is the relative absence of INGOs in Nigeria, which is attributed to the country's resource endowment and the mirage that the huge oil surpluses, statism and economic growth of the 1970s translated into equitable distribution of wealth during the oil-boom years. The new NGOs vary in areas of endeavour and mode of activities. Vast numbers of service-oriented NGOs are in existence, such as the National Council of Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A., Islamic Youth League, The Boys/Girl Guide Movement, National Council of Disabled Persons, International Social Service, the National Council of Social Services (NCSS), World Council for the Blind, Lions, Rotarians and Zontas. Several of these NGOs predate the 1980s and are generally off-shoots of INGOs. The notable exception is the National Council of Women Societies (NCWS). Formed in 1959, NCWS serves as an umbrella organizations for non-political women's NGOs and has branches in all states of the federation. Typical of its nationwide programme, the Oyo State Branch provides adult education and training and a range of social, recreational and vocational activities. The community hall established by the NCWS makes free space available for women in the state to house cottage industries. The core objective of the Council is to promote

'good citizenship' among women and enhance their participation in social and community activities.¹¹⁴

Development-oriented formal NGOs, in contrast, are newer phenomenon and include a wider range of women's NGOs such as the Community Women and Development (COWAD) and the Country Women Association of Nigeria (COWAN). Both organizations emerged in the wake of the 1981 OAU conference on the African crisis and resultant state initiatives to encourage CDAs and intermediate NGOs. Formerly the Committee on Women and Development, a unit of the Ministry of Social Development, COWAD began in 1982 as a government agency sanctioned to examine women's role in development, strengthen women's participation and foster harmonious NGO-Government relations. In 1989 COWAD became a voluntary development-oriented NGO seeking to improve the socio-economic conditions of rural women and to promote their general welfare.¹¹⁵ Unlike the genesis of COWAD, the Ogun State-based COWAN (1982) was non-governmental from its inception, but shares the same goal of empowering rural women and improving living conditions. Both COWAN and COWAD, attempt to enhance women's access to services and productive inputs. They pursue an array of community development projects and programmes from health and child care

¹¹⁴ Interview with Chief (Mrs) Soyeye, Oyo State Branch President of the National Council of Women's Societies (NCWS), Agbowo, Ibadan, Oyo State, January 17, 1994.

¹¹⁵ Interview with Ms. M.A. Feyisayo, National President of the Community Women and Development, Agbowo, Ibadan, Oyo State, January 18, 1993, and COWAD Nigeria Tenth Anniversary Brochure, 1993.

services, food crop production and processing, education and training, cottage industry promotion, and revolving loan schemes which provide credit facilities to small-scale women entrepreneurs.¹¹⁶ COWAN and COWAD are currently based in Southwest Nigeria (the former Ondo State and the latter Oyo and Osun state), yet resolved to form branches throughout the federation. Others development-g geared NGOs include among others, the Farmers Development Union, Ideke Co-operatives and the Food Basket Foundation International.

At the level of international NGOs, one of the few and oldest INGOs in post-colonial Nigeria is the Canadian-based CUSO (originally known as the Canadian University Service Overseas), which began its operations in 1962. The first generation of CUSO-Nigeria focused almost exclusively on technical assistance to the educational sector in the form of training teacher and placing expatriate co-operant in secondary schools. Geographically, CUSO's activities were concentrated in Northern Nigeria, reflecting the educational needs of this region -- a by product of uneven development. The crisis of the 1980s, cut-backs in government's educational sector spending and the resultant lay-offs of indigenous secondary school staff, compelled CUSO to transform its programming to now support the development of informal

¹¹⁶ Chief (Mrs) Bisi Ogunleye, "Country Women Association of Nigeria: A Background" in NAVDO NEWS, vol.1, no.1, 1993, p.6. see also Chief (Mrs) Bisi Ogunleye, "The Empowerment of Rural Women: The Experience of Country Women Association of Nigeria" in Sandbrook and Halfani, Empowering People.

enterprises in 1985. Mediated through CDAs, in the interval between 1985 and 1987 CUSO engaged in micro-development projects providing financial and material resources to small-scale entrepreneurs. As formal indigenous NGO's emerged, CUSO provided administrative and financially assistance to these organizations and entered into collaborative programming. With depleting financial aid allocated from the Canadian International Development Agency (the source of 80% of CUSO funding), CUSO has reduced its activities considerably in recent years. From four regional offices (North-Kaduna and Kano, East-Calabar and West-Ibadan), CUSO now co-ordinates its Nigerian programme from its only remaining office in Ibadan. The new thrust of CUSO, concentrates on networking and coalition and capacity building with other Nigerian NGOs.¹¹⁷

A number of research centres have also emerged, specifically to act as a resource base for NGOs. They include the Institute for African Alternatives (IFAA) and the Women's Research and Documentation Centre (WORDOC). IFAA-Nigeria, is a branch of the London based apex-body, formed in 1987 to facilitate participatory research and enunciate alternative policy prescriptions to the current African crisis. The regional office was established in 1991 and some of its activities include educational training programmes for women's cooperatives, trade union officials and unemployed youth. As

¹¹⁷ Interview with Ms. Eva Murray, National Director of CUSO-Nigeria, Iyaganku GRA, Ibadan, Oyo State, December 16, 1993.

a policy research and advocacy centre, IFAA mainly organizes workshops, seminars and conferences on themes such as the debt crisis, SAPs and democratization.¹¹⁸ In the same vein, WORDOC is a fairly new national institute for research, training and the dissemination of information on gender issues. WORDOC was launched in the aftermath of the 1985 NISER Conference on Women and Development, in recognition of the urgent need to collate and coordinate research activities on women in the country. WORDOC has sponsored various research projects on women in Nigeria and periodically convenes workshops addressing gender and development issues. The centre also holds seminars to train NGOs on the drafting of project proposals. Currently, WORDOC is coordinating a national research project on women and agriculture, seeking to document women's productive activities in the agrarian sector, in order to ascertain the differential policy implications on women in various parts of the country.¹¹⁹

Another category of NGOs which has proliferated in the last few years is environmental groups. Indeed, a number of environmental non-governmental organizations such as the Nigerian Field Society, Forestry Association of Nigeria (1970), Ecological Society of Nigeria (1973), Nature Club of Nigeria (1980) and the Nigerian Conservation Fund (1982) have

¹¹⁸ Interview with Prof. Bad Onimode, national director of IFAA-Nigeria, University of Ibadan, Oyo State, December 10, 1994.

¹¹⁹ Interview with Prof. Bolanle Awe, Chairperson of WORDOC, Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan, Oyo State, December 10, 1993.

been in existence for sometime. Yet, most of these organizations, individually or collectively, had little influence on increasing public awareness around environmental issues nor much of an effect on government policy in this area. The combination of increasing global concern for sustainable development, together with the accelerating environmental degradation in Nigeria has hastened the growth of NGOs and environmental activism in the latter half of the 1980s. The adverse ecological consequences of the macro-economic regime of adjustment, the continued devastation of oil communities and the increasing dumping of toxic waste in the country have heightened popular awareness and concern for environmental issues. Highlighting the ecological impact of adjustment, the communique of a recent NGO conference on *SAP and Nigerian Environment*, noted that the unregulated emphasis on cash crop and food production has failed to improve the lot of farmers' in spite of the massive environmental degradation and loss of bio-diversity engendered by increased acreage. The closing statement also illuminated the disastrous ecological consequences of the unfettered drive towards creating local sources of raw materials. Condemning the blanket liberalization of trade, the communique maintained that the mass dumping of *tokumbos* and engines was leading to an increased discharge of noxious gases and other pollutants into the atmosphere. Together with the creative strategies adopted by ordinary Nigerians to cope with deepening impoverishment,

the NGO conference concluded that the intensified exploitation of natural resources since the inception of the SAP was unsustainable.¹²⁰ The list of new environmental NGOs, notably include the Nigerian Environment Study Team (NEST, 1987), Nigerian Environmental Society, (NES, 1987) Nigerian Society for Environmental Management and Planning (1987), and the Green Croc Foundation (GCF).

The increasing environmental degradation of riverine and oil communities has also spawned the formation of environmental NGOs. In recent years, the plight of Nigeria's oil communities has received international attention from the United Nations Human Rights Commission as well as human rights and environmental NGOs such as Africa Watch, Amnesty International and Greenpeace.¹²¹ The heightened struggle by minority groups for power and equitable resource allocation, led by the Movement of the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) and the newly formed Ethnic Minority Rights Organization of Africa (EMIROAF), headed by Ken Saro-Wiwa, has linked agitation against internal colonization to the ecological degradation, largely caused by the indifference of transnational oil companies in consonance with the Nigerian

¹²⁰ NEST, text of the conference on Sap and the Nigerian Environment cited in the NEST Forum, vol.2, no.1, January-March, 1993.

¹²¹ Kenneth B. Noble, "Atop a Sea of Oil, Nigerians Are Mired in Misery" in New York Times, September 9, 1993.

state.¹²² Not only have pollutants destroyed water sources, aquatic life, forests and agrarian lands, but the emission of air and water borne toxins have contributed to rising incidents of skin rashes, allergies and diseases. NGOs such as the Friends for the Preservation of the Delta Environment (FEPEN, 1992), were established in direct response to the degradation of oil communities.¹²³

Lastly, the ever present ecological consequences of the activities of "toxic merchants of death", was largely unbeknownst to most Nigerians until the 1988 Koko debacle which brought the issue of toxic waste dumping and environmental degeneration to public attention. The small rural community of Koko in Delta state (formerly a part of Bendel State) in close proximity to the obscure port of the same name, was the recipient of the 10,000 tonnes of toxic waste dumped by an Italian businessman. Using the Nigerian based-Iruekpen Construction Company, which he claimed to represent, he argued that the company had decided to 'diversify' its operations by installing a dump for toxic and

¹²² Space does not permit an in depth analysis of the struggles for minority rights and resistance of ethnic minority communities to intensified repression by the Nigerian state. For further investigation see: Sylvester Olumhense, "The Ogonis March to Protest their Neglect by Government" in Tell, February 1, 1993, Eniola Bello et al., "Angry Oil States: Renewed Protest for Better Deal" in African Concord, August 24, 1992 and Adegbenro Adebajo et al., "This is Genocide" in Tell, January 31, 1994.

¹²³ Interview with Prof. Sotonye Amakiri, national secretary of the Friends for the Preservation of the Delta Environment, Port Harcourt, Rivers State, January 7, 1994.

noxious gases.¹²⁴ By no means an isolated incident, Koko was only the first publicly covered incident in Nigeria and has replicated episodes throughout the sub-region and other parts of the continent. In fact, the now infamous internal memo written by a World Bank Vice President, Lawrence Summers, which sought to give economic credence to the export of Western toxic waste and dirty industries to 'vastly under-polluted' African and the Third World countries, gave tacit recognition to a long established tradition of environmentally hazardous World Bank sponsored development projects to the South.¹²⁵ While the combined response from the Koko community and national and international bodies forced the removal of the toxic waste dump by the Italian and Nigerian governments, burgeoning indigenous environmental NGOs were generally non-participants in the agitation. The Koko saga did however, increase public awareness on environmental issues and contributed further to the formation of NGOs.¹²⁶

¹²⁴ For an in depth and insightful analysis of the Koko toxic waste saga, and state and community responses see: Julius Ihonvbere "Environmental Degradation and Community Responses: A Study of Environmental Consciousness in Koko, Nigeria", Paper presented at the Workshop on Whose Knowledge Counts: Relations Between Formal and Informal Institutions and Resource Users, co-hosted by the Social Science Research Council, New York, and the Council for Economic and Social Research in Africa, Dakar, January 18-21, 1992.

¹²⁵ Tunde Akingbade, "Toxic Wastes Are Coming" in African Concord, Special Report, November 30, 1992.

¹²⁶ The Koko saga and clear absence of an environmental policy, compelled the Nigerian government to promulgate the Harmful Waste (Special Provision) Decree No.42 of 1988 (banning the importation of toxic waste) and Decree No. 58 of 1988, establishing the Federal Environmental Protection Agency (FEPA) as the governmental environmental monitoring and enforcement body. The government is also signatory to U.N. Basel Convention of 1989, which attempts to protect countries from the dumping of hazardous waste. Dissatisfaction with the protection rendered for African countries under the U.N. convention led to the 1991 Bamako Convention, which seeks to tighten the

The NEST is perhaps the most active and vociferous among the emergent environmental NGOs with a far-reaching programme which seek:

1. To collect basic and comprehensive information and data on the status of the Nigerian environment; 2. To investigate and document additional areas of potential hazards, with a view to identifying gaps in knowledge and promoting specific projects that may arise in the course of study; 3. To analyze patterns of human behaviour, social relations and cultural preferences as these effect the environment; 4. To stimulate debate and help intensify awareness in Nigeria of the environmental consequences of our socio-economic activities; and 5. to place at the disposal of all relevant groups and government, information and perspectives which could assist in the formulation of policy for rejuvenating and conserving the Nigerian environment.¹²⁷

In its short existence, the NEST has gone a long way to document areas of environmental degradation, including issues of desertification, deforestation, soil erosion, decreasing bio-diversity, oil and aquatic pollution.¹²⁸ The NEST functions as an advocacy agency to increase public awareness on environmental issues through seminars, workshops and popular conscientization campaigns. It is one of the few NCOs which has sought to bring the message of environmental awareness to the grassroots, using the training of school teachers and learners at all levels and the sponsoring of Waste Generation and Management Workshops in various local

loopholes in the former.

¹²⁷ Ademola T. Salau, "Address from NEST" in D.U.U Okali ed., The Nigerian Environment: Non-Governmental Action, Proceedings of the NEST Workshop, UNILAG, October 1989, (Ibadan: Intec Publishers for NEST, 1991).

¹²⁸ To date NEST has produced several books, research reports and workshops which notably include (1991) Sustainable Development in Nigeria's Dry Belt: Problems and Prospects, (1991) Nigeria's Threatened Environment: A National Profile, (1991) The Nigerian Environment: Non-Governmental Action and (1992) The Challenge of Sustainable Development in Nigeria. The NEST also publishes a quarterly newsletter titled NEST Forum, which disseminates information on the environment and development and also serves as a mechanism to network and build NGO networks inside and outside the country.

government areas throughout the federation, as the vehicle to do so.¹²⁹

Given the various activities of the NGO community in Nigeria, efforts have been made to form both sectoral and national apex bodies in order to co-ordinate activities and enhance cooperation. In the environmental sector, for example, the Nigerian Environment and Development Network (NEDNET) was founded by 12 groups in late 1992. A loose coalition of environmental NGOs, the new umbrella seeks to organize a truly national workshop on the environment and development, and transform the network into an effective lobby group for achieving equitable national development.¹³⁰ Similarly, CUSO has launched an endeavour to form a coalition with a sectoral range of NGOs who share a commitment to social justice, are considered democratic in structure, sensitive to gender issues, and adopt a participatory research approach in their activities. The resultant seven member alliance which coalesced to establish the Nigerian Participatory Action Research Network (NIPARN) in early 1994, while still embryonic, reflects the efforts towards greater NGO cooperation.

The most far-reaching initiative within the NGO community to build coalitions was the formation of the Nigerian

¹²⁹ Interview with Ms. Rita Ayaegbu, Programme Assistant of the NEST, Bodija, Ibadan, January 18, 1994.

¹³⁰ D.L. Umali, "NEDNET is Born" in NEST Forum, October-December, 1992, p.11.

Association of Voluntary Development Organizations (NAVDO) in 1987. Spawned by the formation of the continental NGO apex body, the Senegal-based Forum of African Voluntary Development Organizations, NAVDO seeks to unite all NGOs in the country under one umbrella in order to forge a collective NGO voice on national issues. Comprised of both intermediate NGOs and CDAs, since its 1991 national NGO conference held in Kaduna (capital of Kaduna state) NAVDO has sought to give the body more cohesion and coherence by establishing 11 sectoral apex organizations delineated by areas such as health, women, youth, environment, human rights, social and humanitarianism, community development, cooperative development, culture, children and education. The conference also resolved to form a Nigerian NGO Consultative Forum to further strengthen the efforts of NAVDO. The central body has convened workshops and seminars for the purpose of training NGOs on effective leadership skills. It also publishes a quarterly newsletter NAVDO NEWS to further facilitate communication within the sector. One project NAVDO is currently pursuing in this direction, is the establishment of a "computerized information data bank on VDOs, NGOs, bilateral and multilateral Agencies, donor organization, etc. for the benefit of VDOs in Nigeria and their benefactors".¹³¹ Seeking to strengthen intra-NGO networks, NAVDO also aims to serve as the liaison between governmental and intergovernmental agencies and donor

¹³¹ NAVDO Brochure, Ojoo, Ibadan, Oyo State, 1993.

communities, in order to ensure vertical and horizontal dissemination of information. Also forging continental and extra-continental NGO alliances, NAVDO remains an affiliate with the African NGO apex body FAVDO, and represented the Nigerian NGO community at the 1991 International Conference on Popular Participation held in Arusha, Tanzania, which was widely attended by African and International NGOs. Recently, NAVDO along with the NCWS, NEST, and NCSS were part of the Nigerian NGO delegation which participated in the May 1993 (Banjul, The Gambia) workshop convened by the Commonwealth Liaison Unit to discuss ways to improve collaboration among NGOs in the sub-region.¹³² Given the increasing continental linkages between NGOs and efforts towards greater networking nationally, it is instructive to investigate the response of the Nigerian NGO community to the SAP and their impact on the democratization process in the country. While the newness of the NGO community limits a comprehensive treatment of this inquiry, I critically assess the general dynamics of NGOs, SAPs and democratization in Nigeria below.

The underlying assumption of NGOs 'grassrootness', based on the widely held view of NGOs as the conceptual embodiment of the interest of local communities and the agents of civil society, has led to the growing uncritical support for NGOs. Their operations are ascribed with grand developmental and

¹³² Interview with A.Y. Yahaya, Administrative Secretary of NAVDO, Ojoo, Ibadan, Oyo State, December 17, 1993.

democratic potential for poverty-stricken, underdeveloped and predatorily governed African and Third World countries. Indeed, there are many NGOs in Nigeria which have contributed to poverty alleviation through micro-development projects. Income-generation and job creation projects, training programmes for the unemployed and revolving credit schemes for rural farmers, have given vulnerable groups and grassroots communities access to resources as the Nigerian state continues its retreat from the social reproduction of the poor. Similarly, in some cases NGOs have made efforts to join forces and raise the consciousness of rural dwellers and communities. While NGOs may have become indispensable allies to the Nigerian grassroots in their daily struggles for survival and may catalyze empowerment, their encouragement and support must be tempered with critical appraisal. That is to say, it is necessary to take due cognizance of the capacity of NGOs to achieve the ascribed role of empowering ordinary people and strengthening civil society as well as the contradictory forces of state co-optation, local and transnational elite domination, corruption and parochialism within the NGO community.

While widely anointed the defenders of civil society, NGOs in Nigeria have largely failed to live up to the democratic billing they are now accorded. In order to share ideas and information, maximize resources, enhance the prospects for empowering the grassroots, influence public

policy and strengthen on-going democratic struggles; networking, collaboration and coalition building is generally recognized as important, if not crucial for a relevant national and transnational NGO movement. Yet, despite efforts to strengthen institutional frameworks, the NGO community in Nigeria remains weak, fractionalized and largely suspicious of building coalitions. The majority of intermediate NGOs, even when based in the same city or region of the country, operate side by side largely unaware of what the other is doing.¹³³ The extent of co-operation seems to be centred on a mutual understanding between NGOs to accept invitations to conferences and present papers. Beyond participation at these forums, very few concrete endeavours are jointly pursued. To be sure, many NGOs hold that escalating costs and poor communication facilities in the country continues to militate against greater cooperation. The unreliability of postal services and telecommunication systems together with prohibitive costs has constricted the activities of individual NGOs, not to mention collaborative initiatives. Yet, the logic of fostering greater NGO networks is also to minimize costs and the duplication of activities in the environment of constricting resources. Cognizant of these limitations, our research however, suggests that in many cases the desire of NGOs to maintain privileged access to resources dictates their degree of linkage with other groups.

¹³³ M.I. Okunola, "Nigeria's NGO Situation", p.4.

One such example is found with the NCWS, the long-standing umbrella body for women's NGOs. The recipient of annual federal government subventions and the officially recognized non-governmental women's organization, the Council is acknowledged in ruling class circles as the 'premier' women's organization in the country and is often the accepted women's voice on national issues. Given the relative access of the Council to state resources and decision making, a feeling of prestige and indeed condescension exists within the largely middle-class leadership of the organization. Commenting on the proliferation of NGOs, the Oyo State branch coordinator of the NCWS, while recognizing the drawbacks of non-cooperation within the sector, nonetheless adopts a paternalistic attitude towards nascent women's NGOs, stating that "results will ultimately come through us [the council]."¹³⁴ Instead of articulating areas in which the Council may be able to foster linkages with new NGOs, the state coordinator rather implies that the agenda and activities of NCWS can meet the practical and strategic gender needs of the majority of women in Nigeria. Indicative of the suspicion in forming NGO alliances, Charles Akindiji Akinola's recent presentation on the inhibitions on broadening interrelationships among NGOs, further supports this argument. He notes, that NGOs often have a negative attitude towards cooperation because:

¹³⁴ Interview with Chief (Mrs) Soyegbe, Oyo State Branch President of the NCWS, January 1994.

i. the self interest on the part of the NGO leadership sometimes brings to the fore the issue of who takes credit for joint achievement, ii. in some quarters interrelationship is viewed as dependency... others see cooperation as tantamount to compromising organizational identity, focus and principles iii. fear sometimes exists that the NGO might be losing their "exclusive" funding base to other organizations involved in interrelationships, and iv. fear also exists that interrelationship might lead to the loss of personnel to the other organizations.¹³⁵

The inability to network is starkly manifest in the fragility and organizational weakness of the seven year old national NGO umbrella body. Many of the NGOs interviewed appear on the official NAVDO list as an affiliate, but were generally unaware of NAVDO's existence or only vaguely familiar with its operations. An amalgam of intermediate NGOs, (transnational and national) and an array of CDAs, an interesting debate has emerged on the issue of the relationship of independent NGOs/CDAs with NAVDO. Certainly fruitful, the debate which initially raised questions on the autonomy of NGOs to the apex body also extended the discourse to issues of membership autonomy within intermediate NGOs and CDAs. While unclear how these pertinent questions were resolved within NAVDO, the issue of NGO/CDA autonomy remains a reverberating theme within the NGO sector and has militated against attempts to foster greater collaboration.¹³⁶

The lack of cohesion within the NGO community can be further attributed to the fact that NAVDO first emerged at the

¹³⁵ Charles Akindiji Akinola, "Broadening Institutional Interrelationships: An Agenda for the Nigerian Voluntary Development Sector", Paper presented at the Workshop on NGO-Government Collaboration: A Critical Appraisal, organized by the NAVDO, Ibadan, May 20-21, 1993, p.9-10.

¹³⁶ Akinola, "Broadening", p.10-11.

national level and then sought to spread throughout the sector. Given that the formation of the apex body was inspired by a resolution adopted in 1987 by FAVDO, rather than a bottom up process in which networks developed from the grassroots to eventually crystallize into a national body, the top-down process of NAVDOs advent and ensuing efforts towards consolidation may also account for the pervading suspicions and non-collaboration of most NGOs. However, it is interesting that the Nigerian government and international agencies seem to be playing the predominant role in fostering NGO networks. The 1991 Kaduna Conference on NGO-Government Cooperation was co-sponsored by the Nigerian government and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The communique noted that "the workshop was the climax of efforts and initiatives by the government and the UNDP to promote understanding among NGOs."¹³⁷ While government motives were unclear to NGO participants, most NGOs in attendance agreed that such collaboration should not result in their exploitation or colonization.¹³⁸ What is equally obscure however, is how the NGO community seeks to prevent state cooptation, particularly when one of the 10 resolutions adopted specifically enjoined the "government [to] help promote inter NGO collaboration by

¹³⁷ Charles Akinds, "NAVDO Holds Leadership Workshop" in NAVDO NEWS, vol.1, no.1, p.1.

¹³⁸ Agbakoba, "Loosening Legal", p.123-124.

facilitating and supporting networking among NGOs."¹³⁹ Potentially an invitation for cooptation, Akinola pointedly asks, "who should really take the primary responsibility for promoting inter NGO collaboration? Is it the Government? What should be the specific roles of NGOs themselves, apex organizations like NAVDO or the Government in this regards?"¹⁴⁰ (emphasis mine)

Yet, the current mythology surrounding NGOs assumes their autonomy from the state and a subsequent status as the critical 'watchdog' in civil society. Despite the paradox that Nigerian NGOs increasingly depend on government subventions and official aid, it is also ironic that the Nigerian state plays such a prominent role in fostering NGO collaboration. In some respects this is not surprising. In 1988, the Babangida regime, seeking to control the burgeoning NGO sector, adopted the Company and Allied Act compelling NGOs to register with the federal government in order to have access to state resources. The decree established a number of stringent criteria for government recognition. For instance, the government required:

...organizations which operate on a national basis [to] have...branches in at least more than half [the] total number of states in the federation and the organizations (presumably that operates at the state level) shall have branches at least in more than half the total number of Local Government Areas of the state.¹⁴¹

¹³⁹ Akinola, "Broadening", p.11.

¹⁴⁰ Akinola, *Loc.cit.*, p.11.

¹⁴¹ Okunola, "Nigeria's NGO Situation", p.6.

While some intermediate NGOs may have clear national objectives and aspire to broaden activities countrywide, with very few exceptions, Nigerian NGOs (self-titled as national) have been unable to meet this criteria. The same policy also indicates the government's intention to establish a national body for the promotion and co-ordination of voluntary organizations -- if not control. To further buttress legal measures to control this growing sector, NGOs are required to register with the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The cumulative impact of these measures enable the Nigerian state to monitor and control the blossoming of NGOs more effectively. For example, the Babangida regime used the registration process to frustrate the official recognition of NGOs critical of the regime. Such was the case with one of the leading human rights organization in the country. Since its formation in 1987, the Civil Liberties Organization (CLO) has been denied state recognition, in spite of having met all stipulated criteria.¹⁴² While the government may have failed to foster a completely subservient NGO sector, the obligatory non-political status required for NGO registration has largely contained critical individual or collective responses from the NGO community on its on-going adjustment programme and the PTP.

Very few NGOs in Nigeria have challenged the wanton abuse of state power, the repression of popular groups or the

¹⁴² Agbakoba, "Loosening Legal", p.123.

extroverted model of development. At best, NGOs in the country have highlighted the socio-economic impact of SAPs on vulnerable groups and environmental implications in various fora, but have rarely politically contested the policy direction of adjustment or predatory rule. In fact, some NGOs such as the NCWS publicly supported the dictatorial Babangida regime, its undemocratic transition programme and embraced the neo-liberal market reforms. The pro-government posture of the NCWS on critical national issues has earned the organization the popular nickname 'AGIP' meaning 'Any Government in Power'.¹⁴³ NGOs have largely been non-participants in the intensified democratic struggle in the country. The majority of NGOs did not take a public position against the annulment of the June 12 elections and even remained on the sidelines throughout the pro-democracy protests that engulfed the country in its immediate aftermath. Most NGOs have also failed to forge even informal alliances with civic associations and mass democratic movements and are poorly represented in the broad civil society coalition merged in the Campaign for Democracy.

The responses of most NGOs to building networks with other social forces in order to advance civic and democratic struggles, range from openly dismissive to a general apprehension on compromising the non-political status they are accorded for official recognition. The representative of

¹⁴³ Abdullah, "Gender in Nigeria", p.33.

NAVDO, for instance, noted that while the organization valued democracy, it was felt that efforts by the CD centred around carrying placards and chanting slogans, and was therefore an ineffective mode of challenging military dictatorship. Instead, NAVDO perceived itself to be more constructive in advancing democratic struggles, citing "we are closer to the government, we know how to sensitize, we know how to lobby, we know how to play our advocacy role more effectively than holding placards and going on the streets."¹⁴⁴ The point here is simply not a matter of different strategies nor NAVDO's simplistic relegation of the political programme of the CD to mere banner waving. What is important to note, is that while the CD and its allies have consistently challenged state repression, the corrupt and decadent character of the ruling classes, the impoverishment and marginalization of majority of the Nigerians and in no small measure have contributed to the empowerment of ordinary people, NAVDO, though prepared to dismiss these efforts, has done very little to conscientize and mobilize the grassroots towards challenging predatory rule and growing inequalities in the country. As noted earlier, the agitation of workers, students, women, academics and their organizations, at the core of popular contestation against the direction of economic recovery, compelled the state to concede some minimalist measures to protect vulnerable groups from the 'pains' of adjustment. Again, it is the platform of the CD

¹⁴⁴ Interview with A.Y. Yahaya, December 17, 1993.

which has served to check state abuses, seeking to hold the political class and the government accountable to the grassroots. Mobilizing broad sectors of civil society it was the organizational leadership of the CD, as we discuss later, which forced the eight year Babangida dictatorship out of office. A study on the NGO community in Nigeria and Ghana, recently conducted by Eboe Hutchful, shows that with the exception of NGOs involved in human rights activities, "many organizations self-consciously defining themselves as NGOs, had either completely abstained from any involvement in the political transitions going on in their countries or had no clear idea what role to play."¹⁴⁵ Hutchful attributed the ambivalence of several NGOs towards pro-democracy struggles to a perception that multiparty politics will disrupt existing NGO-State networks and may have negative ramifications for future NGO activities. Whereas military juntas are principally interested in controlling the upper echelons of the state and have largely failed to penetrate the grassroots, Hutchful also maintained that NGOs, (even those self-titled 'popular') perceived party politics as a threat to their operations and predominance over the local political space.¹⁴⁶

Opportunism and increasing corruption in the Nigerian NGO sector cannot be down played. The unabating crisis, in conjunction with the increased visibility of NGOs has provided

¹⁴⁵ Schmitz and Hutchful, Popular Participation, p.29.

¹⁴⁶ Schmitz and Hutchful, *Loc.cit.*, p.29.

opportunities for self-interested individuals seeking personal riches and self-aggrandizement. The current romance with NGOs seems to have given legitimacy to several sophisticated '4-1-9' operations, where the ability to write good proposals and make state and external contacts can garner resources assumed to be earmarked for the empowerment of the grassroots. The leadership and membership of the majority of intermediate NGOs are middle-class, often "subsist by cultivating privileged links with and funding from the state and donor agencies (both of which encourage an apolitical posture)."¹⁴⁷ In a recent conference on the theme Building Community and Civic Associations in Africa, Tade Akin Aina, makes a similar assertion on Nigeria's NGO community, noting that while some NGOs "might be concerned with popular empowerment, others are concerned with realizing their leaders' professional, humanitarian, and political goals and ideals outside the immediate grip of the government."¹⁴⁸ The organizational structure of most of these NGOs are hierarchical. Several of the NGOs in the country revolve around one predominant leader. The evolving of a participatory, transparent and democratic internal structures has not been a priority for many NGOs. Such an undemocratic environment increases the susceptibility of NGOs to opportunism, corruption, and state cooptation.

We have been particularly critical of the embryonic NGO

¹⁴⁷ Schmitz and Hutchful, *Loc.cit.*, p.29.

¹⁴⁸ Akin Aina, "Empowering Environmental NGOs", p.141.

community in Nigeria. It may be argued that our analysis must recognize the constraints which newness engenders in evolving a democratic NGO movement dedicated to popular participation, social justice and national self-reliance. Taking due cognizance of the infancy of the sector, these limitations are highlighted lest intellectual dishonesty masks the potential of a non-combative NGO community to contribute to the reproduction of the country's underdevelopment. Some NGOs as mentioned, have made consistent efforts to empower the grassroots, build networks with other NGOs and have joined broad popular civil society alliances, serving to strengthen on-going democratic struggles. Our research mainly suggests, that in general NGOs have contributed marginally to pro-democracy movements. Moreover, we note that the current romance with NGOs has also given rise to several NGOs posing as friends of the grassroots. The general 'non-political' approach taken by most NGOs towards their activities may render NGOs mere agents in reproducing state and ruling class hegemony. Though undertaking grassroots humanitarian, welfare and development projects that assuage conditions of poverty, NGOs have generally failed to challenge the structural roots of underdevelopment. Together with the increasing reliance of NGOs on state subventions and official aid -- whether the latter is channelled directly through donor agencies or mediated by way of INGOs -- an uncritical NGO community may be reduced to third millennium missionaries, merely mitigating

the social costs of the accumulation project of national and transnational capitals.

MILITANT WOMEN'S NGOs: THE CASE OF THE WIN

One NGO, however, that remains integral to popular contestations for democratization in the country, is the group, Women-in-Nigeria (WIN). Since its formation in 1983, WIN has set out to "organiz[e], women to fight for their full social and economic rights in the family, in the workplace and in the society in general, as a necessary part of the continuing democratic struggles to create and develop a just society for all."¹⁴⁹ In the tradition of hidden and overt, individualized and collective indigenous feminist resistance dating back to the pre-colonial period, WIN maintains a militant approach to the mobilization and conscientization of women in challenging patriarchal and class domination. Therefore quite unique from most, if not all, women's and popular organizations, WIN adopts a political ideology which recognizes the interconnection between gender and class in the emancipatory struggles of women and oppressed groupings in the country. Differing from the majority of NGOs, WIN actively confronted the dictatorial Babangida regime and in particular the government's contentious SAP and PTP. From the inauguration of the national IMF loan debate, WIN in alliance with other popular groups campaigned against the adverse consequences of the recovery programme on the Nigerian

¹⁴⁹ Mohammed and Madunagu, "WIN: A Militant Approach", no.37, p.103.

economy, the majority of women and other subordinate groupings. Similarly, WIN was at the fore-front of popular opposition to the regime's undemocratic transition to Nigeria's Third Republic and also challenged the various discriminatory policies of the now defunct state legislatures.

To illustrate, in early 1992, WIN mobilized women's organization in Katsina State to petition against a bill introduced in the House of Assembly that proposed to expel all unmarried young women from the state. In clear violation of the 1989 Constitution, the United Nations Universal Declaration on Human Rights and the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights, -- to which Nigeria is a signatory -- WIN was outraged by the subsequent passing of the bill. WIN called on all women's organizations and popular groups to speak out against this retrogressive policy that violated the basic constitutional rights of women to exist free from discrimination based on gender and marital status. WIN also challenged the new legislation in the courts. Similarly, in Delta State WIN initiated campaigns to protest the defeat of a bill abolishing female circumcision. A commentary on the type of democracy which was under construction, state legislators resolved to protect their own narrow interests, rather than legislate against this cultural practise that engenders physical and psychological health problems on young girls and women. While calling on the Delta State House of Assembly to repeal its decision, WIN continued to promote

campaigns to heighten public awareness on the dangers of female circumcision and gender discrimination.¹⁵⁰

The emergence of WIN marked a significant advance for civic and democratic struggles in Nigeria. Through the leadership and agitation of WIN, gender issues are increasingly being recognized by trade unions, civil associations, mass movements and NGOs as central to democratic struggles in the family, at the workplace and in the wider society. For example, the existence of an independent and militant women's organization has strengthened the workplace agitations of the Nigerian Labour Congress Women's Wing (NLCWW). Indeed, the historically male dominated trade unionist movement remains suspicious of the ten year old NLCWW. The NLC continues to resist the incorporation of issues affecting women at the workplace and broader gender issues into its agenda in confrontations with the Nigerian state, local and transnational capital. In 1985, WIN lamented the apparent reluctance of the NLC to rally around women's issues. Noting that the hostile environment towards gender issues led to women's general apprehension to participate in trade union activities, WIN vehemently called on the NLC "to become -- contrary to their present practice -- more sensitive to [women's] problems, more ready to protect their rights and

¹⁵⁰ Text of a Press Conference addressed by the national co-ordinating secretary of Women-in-Nigeria (WIN), Mrs. Glory Kilanko at the NUJ Social Centre in Somolu, Lagos, October, 27, 1993.

more willing to accommodate their needs."¹⁵¹ Former chairperson of the Lagos State Branch of the NLCWW (1988-1992) and the current national president of WIN (1993-) Glory Kilanko, recently commenting on her four years incumbency, similarly observed that there was an "obvious determination of the men not to let go or give any room for women to articulate issues that exclusively concern women workers, which they alone ought to decide how best to address...."¹⁵²

In spite of these constraints, the NLCWW with WIN's support continues to struggle around issues of equitable remunerations and benefits, training and promotion, maternal leave allowances, child-care facilities, sexual harassment and sexual and marital discrimination at the workplace and in trade unions. To strengthen its organizational capacity, the NLCWW has sought

- i. the formation of a women's wing in all 42 industrial unions,
- ii. the constitutional recognition by the NLC, iii. allotment of seats to women in important Congress organs such as the Central Working Committee of NLC and iv. the launching of Women Workers Charter of Demands.¹⁵³

Networking with the NLCWW, WIN has augmented the activities of the women's wing by establishing WIN chapters in various trade unions. To date, WIN has chapters in trade unions in Bauchi, Benue, Delta, Kaduna, Plateau and Lagos State. Entering in joint programming with the NLCWW, particularly in education,

¹⁵¹ Kilanko, "Feminine Industry", p.4.

¹⁵² Kilanko, *Loc.cit.*, p.4.

¹⁵³ Shettima, "Women's Movement", p.96.

WIN also encourages the participation of market women's associations and other women's organizations.¹⁵⁴ WIN continues to maintain that such collaboration of women workers with women's organization in the broader civic terrain will not only strengthen workplace women's agitation, but also gender struggles, and by implication democratic struggles in the wider society. However, the activities and organizational capabilities of the NLCWW has been inhibited by the absence of constitutional protection in the Congress and its financial dependency on the NLC. These factor largely precipitated the recent setback in the struggles of women workers. At the 1993 delegates conference of the NLC, the Congress resolved to change the status of the NLC women's wing to a women's committee. According to Kilanko, this shift constricts the organizational autonomy of women workers and reproduces male domination of the NLC.

The financial limitations confronted by the NLCWW are also faced by WIN and has negatively affected its ability and organizational effectiveness. In its eleventh year of existence, WIN has conducted a series of workshops, seminars and national annual conferences on specific themes such as Women in the Family, Women and Education, Women and Health, Women in Rural and Urban Areas, Child Abuse, Violence Against Women, Women and Politics and Women and the Transition to

¹⁵⁴ Interview with Glory Kilanko, National Co-ordinating Secretary of the WIN, Yaba, Lagos, January 12, 1994.

Democracy. These national forums are paralleled at the state level and serve to heighten public awareness on women's issues. Often collating conference proceedings for publication, the lack of financial resources has inhibited the wide distribution of these materials. In addition to workshops, seminars and educational campaigns, WIN also operates health clinics in some states, provides legal aid for women and has launched a number of community development projects such as the Bomo Income Generating Project in Kaduna State and a Rural Revolving Loan Scheme in Kano State. Again, the inadequacy of funding has limited the sustainability and expansion of these initiatives.¹⁵⁵ Moreover, the lack of financial resources has impinged on the effective co-ordination of WIN's activities from the local to the national level, since the group continues to operate without a national secretariat. While striving to establish national and state headquarters, WIN currently functions from the personal offices of incumbent officers. Given its radical and pro-people orientation, state subventions and resources has not been forthcoming to alleviate these financial obstacles. To be sure, determined to retain its organizational autonomy, WIN has made a conscious effort to refrain from obtaining state funding. Similarly informed, WIN until recently resisted funding from donor communities. Resolved to prevent any undue

¹⁵⁵ Hajara Usman, "Win in Nigeria: Issues, Problems and Prospects" in R. Sandbrook and M. Halfani ed., Empowering People, p.123-124.

influence on its operations WIN however, closely scrutinizes funding sources to ensure that no strings are attached. By and large, WIN depends on membership dues, donations and the sales of publications to fund its projects and programmes. Added to the above, the increasing hardships and intensification of women's work in the workplace and in the household has made voluntary work arduous on women WINners. Since all WIN posts function on a part-time basis, the handling of administrative work and monitoring of projects and programmes, often cannot receive adequate attention.

In addition to these largely material constraints, pervading patriarchal notions continue to undermine the WIN project and have intensified with WIN's heightened activism and gender conscientization campaigns. With the persistence of gender hierarchies in the state and civil society, gender attitudes and perceptions propagated by the ruling classes and imbibed and reproduced by women and oppressed classes, make it difficult to mobilize women and popular groups to agitate for gender and democratic rights. This is manifest in the regional weakness of WIN and its inability to find allies in civil society around gender issues. For example, WIN is often perceived as an urban middle class organization. Indeed, the majority of WIN chapters and all 21 state branches are based in urban centres. Reflecting, the strong constituency from the academic community, WIN also has chapters in most universities and polytechnics in the country. A rural and regional

imbalance persists. Particularly glaring in the predominantly Islamic Northern Nigeria, WIN is organizationally weak, largely due to the pervading religious and cultural belief (though not specific to this region) such as the practice of purdah (the seclusion of women) that restrict women's activities. Conscious of these limitations, WIN since its inception has taken steps to broaden the base of the organization to include poor rural women. The organization has sought to mediate and articulate the view of local women's organizations on critical national issues. During the 1986 national debate on the country's political future, WIN was perhaps the only NGO to take concrete steps to involve the rural grassroots in the democratization process by holding a series of workshops in English and Indigenous languages. Throughout the defunct transition programme, WIN called for "the expansion of democracy to include the grassroots majority; and the right of all to participate in the control and management of the country's economic resources."¹⁵⁶

To redress the unevenness in the organizational capabilities and strength of regional state branches and chapters, WIN has sought to target projects and/or programmes within specific locales and regions in order to increase its visibility and mobilize women. In response to the rampant rise in the cases of Vesico Vaginal Fistula (VVF) and Recto Vaginal

¹⁵⁶ Glory Kilanko, "WIN and the Democratic Project", Paper presented to the conference on Expanding Nigeria's Democratic Space, at the Nigerian Institute for International Affairs, December 15-17, 1993.

Fistula (RVF) particularly in the North, WIN has aimed to strengthen the branches and chapter in this region. The cultural and religious tradition which seeks to control women's sexuality by favouring the forced and early marriages of young girls, has led to an increase in maternal death and incidents of VVF/RVF. The weakness of the pelvic bone in young girls, causes the shattering of the vaginal membrane from the urethra and sometimes the rectum during child birth. Consequently, an affected young girl or woman loses control of her bladder and/or stool causing excretion to leak through the vagina.¹⁵⁷ WIN currently operates a number of health clinics for VVF/RVF patients, in collaboration with other women's groups and state governments in the North. It has also launched public awareness campaigns around the physical and psychological health dangers of this cultural practise. However, WIN has largely been unable to gain support from popular groups to strengthen agitation around the VVF/RVF issue. Although there exists cross membership of WINners in student, civic and human rights associations, most popular and democratic organizations in Nigeria, as Hussaina Abdullah recently noted have "refused to form an alliance with WIN on gender issues".¹⁵⁸ Allying with popular groups in on-going

¹⁵⁷ Gabriel Agbonika, "Hope for VVF Patients" in African Concord, February 21, 1994. See also: Dan Ede, "Man Made Affliction" in African Concord, July 27, 1992 and Gbenga Amusan, "Dying Mothers" in African Concord, Special Report on maternal mortality, July 20, 1992.

¹⁵⁸ Abdullah, "Gender in Nigeria", p.36.

democratic struggles, WIN has consistently struggled to heighten awareness within broad-based coalitions on the interconnectedness of gender and class in the popular democratic project.

CIVIL LIBERTIES AND HUMAN RIGHTS NGOS: THE CASE OF THE CLO

The emergence of numerous civil liberties and human rights NGOs in recent years is another promising development in Nigeria's NGO community and perhaps the most clear indication of the growing strength of Nigeria's civil society.¹⁵⁹ These NGOs notably include the Civil Liberties Organization, (CLO) the Committee for the Defence of Human rights (CDHR), the Constitutional Rights Project (CRP), the Gani Fawehinmi Solidarity Association (GFSA) the National Association of Democratic Lawyers (NADL), and the Universal Defenders of Democracy (UDD), and are mostly led and comprised of young professionals -- mainly academics and lawyers. Organizations like the CLO and the NADL, were formed by increasingly restive and frustrated younger members of the NBA, then seeking to evolve a credible and active alternative to the history of conservatism of the established body of lawyers. Broadly, human rights NGOs have contributed to democratic struggles in the country through legal challenges to the Nigerian state and numerous popular awareness and legal rights education campaigns in civic society. The CLO (1987) is

¹⁵⁹ Julius Ihonvbere and Timothy Shaw, "Comparative Governance: Nigeria", Forthcoming chapter contributed to W.P Shively ed., Comparative Governance, (McGraw Hill, 1994).

the oldest and most active of these groupings. In its short existence, the CLO has evolved an 'impact litigation' programme aiming to "address novel points in public interest litigation with a view to sharpening popular awareness of the potential of the law protecting its rights".¹⁶⁰ To strengthen this initiative, the CLO launched an 'impact journalism' campaign. Pursued in collaboration with the sections of the fourth estate, the joint programme seeks to disseminate information on the objective of the CLO and its courtroom activities.

Through persistent litigation and publicity campaigns, the CLO compelled the state to amend the notorious State Security Decree No.2 of 1984 (detention without trial) which remains an often utilized 'legal' weapon to repress popular sectors of civil society. Symbolic of the CLOs agitation, in 1990 the Babangida regime also released to Olisha Agbakoba, CLO president, one of the "then...longest serving (over five years) detainees, [Monday Ogbanna]".¹⁶¹ On another front, the CLO has also been successful in forcing the state to initiate prison reforms. The closing of the horrific Ita-Oko island prison and the commission of a Prison Reform Committee in September 1990 were directly precipitated by the CLO's efforts (the prison has since been re-opened). Recently, the CLO has

¹⁶⁰ Olisha Agbakoba, "Human Rights Groups and Legal Aid in Nigeria" in Sandbrook and Halfani, Empowering People, 1993, p.41-42.

¹⁶¹ Agbakoba, "Human Rights", p.43.

mounted investigations into suspicious killings, by publishing reports which list victims that have died mysteriously while in police custody. The organization has sought to reinvoke the long standing, yet, unenforced Coroners Law, with the aim of convening public inquests. Collectively, these initiatives have in no small measure contributed to combating state arbitrariness.

Seeking to conscientize and mobilize the grassroots, the CLO and other Human Rights NGOs have undertaken civic education campaigns to "attack the ignorance that predisposes people and their society to the violations of their rights and, thus, to empower them to take their respective destinies into their own hands."¹⁶² These programmes, like much of the NGO community, continue to be hamstrung by the lack of financial resources. With the combative posture of most human rights NGOs, they are largely non-recipients of state subventions. However, the low level of coordination between NGOs also inhibits resource maximization -- through the duplication of programmes -- and thus further constrains organizational effectiveness. The inability to build participatory networks horizontally and vertically, between NGOs and the grassroots leaves human rights NGOs prone to opportunism and state cooptation. The recent appointment of long-time human rights activist and democratic lawyer Olu Onagoruwa, to the position of Minister of Justice and Attorney

¹⁶² Agbakoba, "Human Rights", p.42.

General in the Abacha junta is a case and point. Devoid of sound democratic structures and a mass base, the largely middle class leadership of these NGOs, even its radical elements, remain susceptible to the 'politics of poverty and settlement'. Cognizant of these limitations, the November 1991 initiative to form the Campaign for Democracy (CD) as a mass democratic front is probably the single most important development for popular struggles in recent years. Uniting human rights NGOs and broad sections of civil society under one umbrella, the CD has given expression to marginalized social forces in the country.

Contradictions abound in Nigeria's nascent civil society. We have tried here, to move beyond the limitations of much of the emerging literature on civil society and democracy in Africa, which often treats the civic terrain as an undifferentiated and unproblematic whole. By concretely analyzing in this chapter, the dialectics of state and civil society and focusing on the histories, contradictions, constraints and limitations of trade and student unions, women's organizations, professional associations and the incipient NGO community, we can now properly assess the impact of the civic terrain on the prospects for democracy in Nigeria.

SECTION FOUR: THE ANNULLED JUNE 12 ELECTIONS AND CIVIL SOCIETY POLITICS OF PROTEST

In the continuum of popular contestations for civil and democratic rights which date back to the colonial period, pro-democracy struggles swept the country in the aftermath of the cancellation of the June 12, 1993 elections. Civil society's unparalleled democratic outburst was an immediate response to the deepening economic woes and the sharpening of contradictory impulses of state suppression of limited democratic rights, in a transition process purported to be the politically inclusive and stable antecedent for the Third Republic. Notwithstanding popular reservations about the precarious and largely non-participatory political structures that emerged from the statist PTP, expectations were generally high that the military regime would leave political office in January 1993. When the presidential primaries were nullified in November 1992 and the expiration date of the PTP was yet again shifted to August 1993, the chasm between the state and civil society widened. It became clear to popular forces that the Babangida junta was determined to perpetuate its rule. Henceforth, 'IBB MUST GO' campaigns intensified, propelling the Nigerian state into its worst post-civil war legitimization crisis. Indeed, the formation of a twenty-nine member civilian dominated Transition Council, chaired by Ernest Shonekan, gave the regime a semblance of legitimacy and the impression that the PTP was still on track. Through the reconstitution of the AFRC into the NDSC and the announcement of a new timetable,

the Babangida regime was temporarily able to attenuate its hegemonic crisis. True to form, the political class accepted the new arrangement, with little opposition to this latest manipulation of the democratic process. While enjoying for months, at public expense, the luxuries of the Nicon Noga Hilton and Sheraton hotels in the federal capital territory, Abuja, it never occurred to the senators and assembly-persons that they were dealing with a 'Military Political Party' bent on clinging to power. Simply welcoming the opportunity to contest for political office in the bicameral legislature,¹⁶³ the ensuing inauguration of the National Assembly was enough to convince the political class of the government's commitment to the PTP. It was not surprising therefore that new and old breed politicians alike, easily acquiesced when the national assembly was rendered legislatively impotent. A new state edict stripped the assembly of legislative power by establishing restricted areas and subjecting all policy prescriptions to a final review by the military dominated NDSC and of course, General Babangida -- the highest law-making body.

Though inaugurating the National Assembly and forming a Transitional Council, the legitimacy of the state among popular sections of civil society continued to wane. Given the

¹⁶³ After much internal acrimony within the political class on the zoning formulae for political seats in the upper house of the National Assembly, Iyorchia Ayu and Albert Legogie of the SDP emerged as the senate president and deputy senate president (respectively). In the House of Representatives, Agunwa Aniekwe and Rabi'u Musa (also of the SDP) were elected speaker and deputy speaker (respectively).

consistent tinkering with the PTP, on the whim of a regime which readily contravened its own edicts, these initiatives generally did not convince Nigerians that the military would voluntarily relinquish power. The intensification of campaigns by anti-democratic forces agitating for a four year extension of the Babangida regime, only reaffirmed widespread suspicion that the General was harbouring a 'hidden agenda' to succeed himself in power. Groups such as the Association for Better Nigeria (ABN), the Third Eye, Committee of Elder Statesman and the Committee of Concerned Citizens, represented the same conservative faction of the ruling class which had dominated Nigerian politics for three decades. At the vanguard of this movement, the ABN, led by Arthur Nzeribe, was in fact state sponsored and enjoined to create *Organized Confusion* in the PTP, to use the words of Abimbola Davis, a high ranking member of the organization. Such a tumultuous environment would thus enable the government to rationalize yet another extension in the name of safeguarding democracy.¹⁶⁴ The CD, human rights associations and other democratic groups, resolved to launch a mass action campaign as the only recourse in removing the dictatorship from power. A combination of massive state

¹⁶⁴ On the admission of Abimbola Davies, a high ranking member of the infamous ABN, General Babangida and top government officials orchestrated a plan to destabilize the transition process and sponsored and funded the ABN as its chief organ. The organization's principal ideologue, Arthur Nzeribe would later admit to this relationship and plan with the ex-dictatorship. see: Abimbola Davis, "Coups against the Civilians: My Role, My Regrets", Text of press statement printed in the African Guardian, July 26, 1993. see also Ademola Oyinola, "ABN: An Association to Bascardise Nigeria?" in Tell, July 5, 1993. and "The Grand Strategy" in Newswatch, (Part 1 of an interview with Arthur Nzeribe, December 20, 1993.

oppression and the capitulation of the political class to state designs, however curtailed these campaigns before they began in earnest.

For example, a planned 'Vigil for Democracy', organized by the CLO, was repressed by police and security forces in late 1992. In the same period, a conference convened by the CD to launch a nationwide signature campaign to support demands for the termination of military rule on January 2, 1993, was disrupted by the security forces. The clampdown continued on every popular section of civil society. A symposium organized by the CLO on *Taxation and Women's Legal Rights* was quickly suppressed by the armed forces. On the same day the National Assembly was installed, mobile police seized the venue of another seminar on *Human Rights in the Third Republic*, convened by the CLO. On December 10 the locale for a conference organized by CDHR to mark a declared Human Rights Day, was scaled off by security forces before it had commenced.¹⁶⁵ The state and university authorities continued to expel students from tertiary institutions, particularly after the 28th NANS Senate Session which had resolved to protest the extension of the PTP nationwide. The assault on the fourth estate escalated; numerous copies of magazines, such as *Quality*, were seized by security forces. Critical journalists were harassed and intimidated. The indiscriminate

¹⁶⁵ Ayodele Akinkuotu, "The Crackdown Begins" in *Tell*, January 4 1993, p.10-11.

wave of arrest and detention of the leadership and rank of file of pro-democracy groups continued. Some human right activists were arrested while distributing 'Babangida Must Go' pamphlets and posters. A printer, Panaf Olakanmi was arrested by SSS agents and accused of printing seditious material in his workshop.¹⁶⁶ To further paralyse the pro-democracy movement, the government sought to foster exploitable contradictions within the ranks of these forces. For example, posters titled, *Gani Fawehinmi for President* purportedly issued by the CD and CLO were widely circulated in major urban centres, designed to foment internal tensions.¹⁶⁷ Implying that the two democratic groups had resolved to unilaterally foist Fawehinmi into the presidency, the desperate attempt by the state to divide opposition forces failed.

The Nigerian state also promulgated a number of decree to prevent any legal challenge to the regime. This was in direct response to a complaint filed by the CD at the Lagos High Court challenging the latest postponement to the PTP. A clear indication of a panicky and desperate regime, Femi Falana noted, that "if the Attorney-General of the Federation had done his home work, he would have discovered that there are over 60 decrees containing such ouster clauses which have

¹⁶⁶ Danlani Nmodu, "There is No Transition", Interview with Femi Falana in *Tell*, January 4 1993, p.14-15.

¹⁶⁷ Nmodu, "No Transition", p.15-16.

never enabled the regime to cover up its illegal actions."¹⁶⁸ Undaunted by these legal obstacles and heightened state repression, the CD was prepared to continue its campaign to depose the Babangida junta. In a recent interview, the President of the CD, Beko Ransome-Kuti, recalled that "long before June 12, as far back as last year (1992) we had been trying to mobilize all kinds of Nigerians because of our belief that Babangida was not prepared to leave office."¹⁶⁹ However, the CD's proposed nationwide campaign was thwarted by the inability to gain support from the political class and in particular disqualified presidential aspirants who readily accepted the new turn in the PTP. With a reworked timetable and a seemingly innovative procedure to conduct the presidential primaries, called 'Option A4', the transition process proceeded.

Despite widespread concerns that the new system to elect presidential candidates had a built in proclivity towards *naira* politics, the NEC vehemently maintained that the self-dubbed 'Option A4' de-emphasized the use of money, encouraged grassroots participation and checked electoral rigging. The NEC-sanctioned procedure produced an incredible 288 aspirants at the Ward round within a four-tiered system to elect the presidential flagbearer of the respective parties. With the

¹⁶⁸ Nmodu, "No Transition", p.15.

¹⁶⁹ Beko Ransome-Kuti, "Abiola Not Organized" in The Newsw, December 13, 1993.

winners rising through successive rounds at the Local Government Areas (LGAs) and State levels, a reduced field of 62 candidates representing one NRC and SDP contestant from each of the 30 states and federal capital territory now vied for the presidential candidacy at the national party conventions.¹⁷⁰ The respective elections were conducted without a major crisis and were generally devoid of the electoral chicaneries characteristic of the two aborted primaries. To be sure, voting contests remained a 'cash and carry affair'. The political class still devised novel ways to manipulate the election processes and yet managed to avoid the explosiveness of the previous primaries. One such strategy, utilized by wealthy aspirants, sought to eliminate at the Ward rounds possible rivals at higher levels of competition.¹⁷¹ Through a process of cross-elimination, dominant political factions sponsored alternative candidates in Ward elections. So even though each Ward election was supposed to be autonomous, affecting only party members in that Ward, in practice several presidential aspirants faced opponents from other Wards. Dominant power-brokers in other ridings strategically backed candidates in various Wards to defeat candidates viewed as a potential threat at the LGA, state and

¹⁷⁰ Godwin Agbroko, "The New Agenda" in Newswatch, November 30, 1992, p.14-16. Wale Akin Ains, "Will Option A4 Work?" in African Guardian, February 1, 1992.

¹⁷¹ Edwin Madunagu, "Problems and Prospects (Part 3)" in The Guardian, April 29, 1993, p.23.

national levels. However, upon winning the client would remove him/herself from the race, thereby facilitating a less competitive race for the patron at the next electoral round. This strategy was replicated at the LGA and state levels. For example, multi-millionaire Alhaji Bashir Othman Tofa, who finally emerged as the NRC's national candidate, is said to have ensured the defeat of Aminu Wali (Kano) and former head of state Yakubu Gowon (Zaria), through the use of this method. Similarly, Alhaji Mohammed Goni is alleged to have entered the crowded race simply to terminate the presidential ambitions of Baba Gana Kingibe in the Maiduguri Ward of Borno State. However, Goni lost the Ward round of elections and Kingibe later emerged as the Vice-Presidential running-mate to MKO Abiola on the SDP ticket.¹⁷²

Less than 36 hours before the presidential elections the ABN filed and obtained an interlocutory injunction from Justice Bassey Ikpeme in Abuja High Court, restraining the NEC from holding elections on June 12, contrary to State Decree 13 (1993) which prevented the judiciary from halting any elections.¹⁷³ The government pressured the NEC to respect the illegal judicial decision and to thereby cancel the upcoming elections. However, internal and external responses to the latest attempt to confound the PTP was swift. The Director of

¹⁷² Madunagu, "Problems", p.15.

¹⁷³ Steve Osuju, "The Night Judgement" in African Guardian, June 21, 1993, p.11-13.

the United States Information Service in Nigeria, Michael O'Brien, issued a statement on behalf of the U.S. government stressing that another extension of the elections would be totally unacceptable. An offended Nigerian government, conveniently objecting to external interference in domestic arrangements, ordered the immediate expulsion of the United States Information Service and withdrew the accreditation issued to eight American diplomats to observe the elections. With the government's room to manoeuvre constricted by the U.S. threat, even a seemingly independent declaration from the NEC scuttling the elections could no longer conceal state machinations. Hence, the regime grudgingly accepted, if only temporarily, to stay on course. On June 12, Nigerians finally went to the polls and overwhelmingly voted MKO Abiola (SDP) over Bashir Tofa (NRC) as the civilian president for the Third Republic. The electoral victory of Abiola was unofficially confirmed by June 14, when all results from the country's 110,000 voting centres, -- made available to the two parties, the major media organizations, the Nigerian Election Monitoring Group (NEMG), the International Observer Team (IOT), and other local and foreign electoral observers, -- projected he had won a significant majority. The NEC officially disclosed the results of only 14 states and the federal capital territory, in partial deference to a number of interlocutory injunctions halting election pronouncements. The NEC declared MKO Abiola the winner in 11 of 14 states and the federal capital

territory, but suspended the announcement of the remaining results.¹⁷⁴ Nationally however, independent publications from domestic and foreign media, observer bodies and democratic groups like the CD, did show that Abiola won outright in 19 states of the federation and Abuja. Scoring the mandatory one third vote in 28 of the 30 states, the nation-wide tallies gave the SDP 58.4% (8.3m) and the NRC 41.6% (5.9m) of the 14.2 million votes cast.¹⁷⁵ On June 26, the regime confirmed the widespread allegations of a 'hidden agenda' that had followed its eight year transition programme. Insinuations days earlier of a major policy change by the Information Secretary, Uche Chukumerije, were now verified by the President. In a nationwide broadcast, the Babangida regime cancelled the results of the presidential election, suspended the NEC, banned the two presidential aspirants and abrogated Decree No.3, Decree. 52.(1992) and Decree No.13 (1993) all guiding the transition to civil rule. Henceforth, the Nigerian state and civil society were embroiled in a grave and dangerous political crisis.¹⁷⁶

In his nationwide broadcast on June 26, General Babangida lamented over the 'un-envisaged' turn in the transition

¹⁷⁴ Joseph C. Okoroji, "The Nigerian Presidential Elections" in *ROAPE*, 1994, p.126.

¹⁷⁵ Abiodim Adenji, "A Huge Joke" in *African Concord*, July 26, 1993, p.13.

¹⁷⁶ Adenji, "A Huge Joke", p.12-19. see also Fred Ohwahwa, "Babangida's New Agenda" in *African Guardian* July 5, 1993.

process, but maintained that the government's latest intervention was consistent "with the avowed commitment of the administration to advance the cause of national unity, stability and democracy."¹⁷⁷ After much diversion into a self-praising review of the regimes record in power, self-pontification gave way to the official explanations for the annulment of the June 12 election. The General made enormous claims surrounding electoral malpractice and the widespread use of money, the manipulation of the NEC through financial inducements, conflict of interest between the presidential aspirants and the government, the manipulation of ethnicity by the president-elect, and the intimidation of the judiciary by vested interest in the country.¹⁷⁸ Specifically highlighting the abuses, General Babangida acknowledged that much of these breaches of the electoral process were known to government prior to the June 12 elections and included:

- i. a) allegations of irregularity and other acts of bad conduct against the presidential candidates, b) proof as well as documented evidence of widespread use of money during the party primaries as well as the presidential elections, c) evidence available to the government put the total amount of money spent by the presidential candidates at over N2.1 billion, thus undermining the electoral process, d) a huge array of election malpractices virtually in all the states of the federation before actual voting began; ii.a) authenticated reports of election malpractice against party agents, officials of the NEC and also members of the electorate, b) proof of manipulation through offers and acceptance of money and other forms of inducements by officials of the NEC and members of the electorate, c) evidence of conflict in the process of authentication and clearance of the presidential candidates; iii. moral issues involving cases of documented and confirmed

¹⁷⁷ Ohwahwa, "Babangida's New Agenda", p.19.

¹⁷⁸ Onome Osifo-Whiskey and Ayodele Akinkuotu, "A Dance on the Precipice" in Tell, July 19, 1993, Anthony Enahoro, "No Case for Fresh Elections" in Tell, July 19, 1993.

conflict of interest between the government and both presidential aspirants which would compromise their position and responsibilities were they to become president; iv. MKO Abiola won block votes in Southwestern (Yoruba) states and as such would end up being a Yoruba president and encourage a "campaign of divide and rule amongst our various ethnic groups"; v. the courts had become "intimidated and subjected to the manipulation of the political process and vested interest" and "the entire political system was in clear danger".¹⁷⁹

Given the regime's legacy of manipulating and prolonging the transition process, there was little doubt among Nigerians that Babangida's pronouncements were yet another attempt to rationalize and perpetuate his dictatorial rule. After all, the regime which maintained an authoritarian hold on the transition process, consistently showed not just complicity, but also an active involvement in reproducing the financial waste, corruption, violence and other abuses that have historically plagued national politics and electoral competitions.

The General's broadcast, fraught as it was with contradictions, still shocked most Nigerians and baffled even interested observers of Nigerian politics. Astounded by the regime's latest assault on the transition programme, Beko Ransome-Kuti, asserted that,

we knew...the man was treacherous. But we also assumed that he had some self-respect and would not openly lie to the nation and the world. It is a reflection on his poor leadership qualities if he was in this country, was aware of the so-called breaches, but decided to let the nation waste so much money and time before annulling the elections. These are mere afterthoughts.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁹ Compiled from Julius Ihonvbere, "The Generals Take Over Again: Explaining the Abacha Coup and The Remilitarization of Politics in Nigeria", mimeo: University of Texas at Austin, and Osifo-Whiskey and Akinkuotu, "A Dance".

¹⁸⁰ Beko Ransome-Kuti cited in Ihonvbere, "The Generals".

As we have detailed above, the PTP from the onset was infused with state revenue and had been plagued by political thuggery, violence, electoral chicanery and the prevalent use of money. Beyond the periodic and often opportunistic banning of political aspirants, the government did little to discourage these rampant abuses. In fact, the Babangida regime gave implicit support to these malpractices, since at no point did it arrest and indict known members of the political class who readily contravened decrees guiding the transition process. More importantly, the regime strongly contributed to the reproduction of the culture of 'settlement' and the warfare character of ruling class politics, since it had resolved to limit the participation of ordinary Nigerians in national politics. By banning and repressing so-called 'radicals' and 'extremists' from the PTP, the state discouraged the political participation of social forces which had the greatest propensity to halt the manipulation of ethnic, regional and religious cleavages and the wanton infusion of money in electoral contestation for power. The totality of these actions and inactions strongly suggests a conscious attempt by the state to foster an environment of chaos and disarray in order to provide an excuse to legitimize the extension of the PTP and thus its own power.

The last stage of the reconstituted PTP, which commenced in late 1992, further supports this conclusion. For example, when human rights and civil liberties organizations among

others groupings denounced the decision to adopt Option A4, noting that it invited the use of money, the government maintained that the new electoral mechanism would dissuade corruption and pave an immutable path to the Third Republic. Yet, when reports on the conduct of presidential primaries at the Ward, LGA and State rounds substantiated popular claims that Option A4 was no more than Auction A4 or Option 4-1-9, the government remained silent in the face of documented incidents of electoral abuses. Furthermore, in the aftermath of the Jos (SDP) and Port Harcourt (NRC) national conventions, in which the respective party presidential posts were auctioned to the two multi-millionaires Abiola and Tofa, the government remained quiet amidst reports from its security forces detailing wanton impropriety. At no point prior to its post-election broadcast did the Babangida regime even condemn these electoral violations, nor the convention activities of its erstwhile supporter Arthur Nzeribe. The leader of the ABN and the *IBB-Must-Stay-Four-More-Years* campaign, who openly claimed to have used over N100 million to participate in the bazaar, went uncensured at a time when Nzeribe and both presidential aspirants should have been arrested and indicted for contravening PTP decrees. When national presidential campaigns began in earnest, the state accepted the widespread use of money, and indeed, actively encouraged it. Rather than seeking to ameliorate these abuses by at least introducing laws limiting campaign expenditures, the state facilitated the

process with its donation of N80 million of national revenue to each of the aspirants only days before the elections.

The general resistance of ordinary Nigerians to mortgaging their votes to the highest bidder, made General Babangida's allegations of election day malpractice untenable. By and large the polling stations nationally were devoid of the malfeasance which historically characterized Nigerian elections. The IOT, the government-sponsored NEC, MAMSER, CDS and NEPG, the CD and other local and international monitoring groups were all united in the adjudication of the June 12 election as the freest and fairest in the country's history. Even the official spokesperson of the Army, Brigadier-General Fred Chijuka, described the elections as 'free, fair, peaceful and successful.' The scores of sanctioned and unsanctioned observer groups commended the NEC and the Nigerian electorate for the conduct of the elections. As Ihonvbere noted,

the NEC pronounced it the very best elections it had conducted thus far. The international Observer Team had praises for the NEC, the parties, candidates, security forces, and noted in particular the "maturity and decency" of the campaigns. The [Nigerian] Election Monitoring Group (NEPG) which had been set up by the government to oversee the elections also declared that it was "administered...with meticulous precision." It commended the NEC for its "diligent, dutiful and in the main, patriotic" handling of the exercise. To the NEPG, the June 12 elections was devoid of the "pathologies of previous electoral commissions" and this was a positive sign "for the future of elections in Nigeria." The Director-General of the Government supported Centre for Democratic Studies also declared that the "elections was the best the nation had and should be accepted." The Chairman of the Campaign for Democracy noted that "the elections were very orderly. It was a vote for the presidential candidate as well as a clear demonstration of the resolve of Nigerians that they would not give Babangida the excuse he wanted to derail the transition to democracy."¹⁸¹

¹⁸¹ Ihonvbere, "Generals" p.10-11.

In addition to the falsity of a financially and materially induced electorate, from all documented accounts the government's charges of a manipulated and 'hijacked' NEC are therefore also unsubstantiated. If at all, it was the regime - - from the sacking of Eme Awa through to the eleventh hour attempt to coerce the NEC and Humphrey Nwosu into cancelling the presidential elections -- that curtailed any semblance of autonomy the NEC might have initially enjoyed. Equally comic, was the General's moral indignation over the probable compromise of the integrity of the presidency, adjudged by the conflict of interest between government and both aspirants. To begin with, President Babangida and the AFRC/NDSC -- its total mismanagement of the economy under its so-called 'homegrown' SAP, its institutionalization of nepotism and corruption, and, its unparalleled trampling on civic and democratic rights -- had long since destroyed the tenuous credibility of his office and legitimacy of the Nigerian state. Indeed, it was well known in Nigeria that both multi-billionaires had long been beneficiaries of inflated state contracts, kickbacks and donations among other dubious practises that continue to drain scarce national surpluses towards private ends. Where access to the state remains the principal avenue of accumulation among large sections of the ruling class, it is not surprising that the two candidates had built up extensive networks with the regime. Predictably then, the emergence of Abiola and Tofa as party presidential aspirants, is as Anthony Enahoro

suggests,

the natural consequence of the moral decay promoted by squalid policies and practices, over a period of more than seven years, where policies and programmes of inordinate donations, "settlement" inflated contracts, oil transactions, extra-budgetary payments, etc, all now culminate in an electoral process tailored specifically to produce billionaire candidates.¹⁸²

But for all its incursion on the autonomy of the NEC, the regime said nothing publicly months earlier when the NEC screened and cleared the candidacy of Abiola and Tofa for the June 12 elections. Moreover, to introduce the 'ethnic card' in the struggle to reproduce its tenuous hold on state power, at the historical moment when Nigerians *en masse* refused to succumb to the politics of region, religion and ethnicity, clearly exhibits the bankruptcy and desperation of the government. The June 12 elections were remarkable in the geographical spread of the SDP victory and statistically debunks the government's claim of the exclusive Yoruba candidacy of MKO Abiola. Even if the electoral results from the core Southwestern (Yoruba) states of Lagos, Ogun, Ondo and Osun were removed from the national SDP tally of 8.1 million votes, the SDP still won outright in other states of the federation and Abuja. Perhaps the most insidious of the General's allegations which outraged most Nigerians, was the regime's new found concern for the independence of the judiciary and the rule of law. Under the Babangida regime, the use of judiciary ouster clauses in military edicts became

¹⁸² Enahoro, "No Case for Fresh Elections", p.25-26.

legendary. The readiness to contradict its own decrees and contravene well over 60 decrees on the PTP alone, cannot be said to exemplify any respect for the rule of law. The regime without much hesitation consistently sought to co-opt and suppress the militancy of the numerous human rights groups struggling against state arbitrariness. The unparalleled repression of popular groups, its retention of the notorious Decree No.2, and the unprecedented levels of state-sponsored murders under its tenure, are but a few examples which further show the government's disregard for the rule of law and judicial independence. The NDSC after all, sat by quietly while the illegally functioning ABN, banned by the Lagos High Court from taking part in the PTP, sought to judicially derail the transition programme only 36 hours before the June 12 elections. Having provided translucent excuses to rationalize the annulment of the elections, General Babangida's nationwide broadcast also introduced a new transition programme which maintained August 27 for the transfer of power to an elected civilian government, but was replete with pitfalls which virtually ensured its failure.

In announcing a fresh electoral process to have commenced on July 31, the NDSC also took measures said again to ensure the emergence of a patriotic, honest, and visionary leadership. The criteria for presidential aspirants included, an age restriction of no less than 50 years; candidates who believed, "by act of faith and practise, in the corporate

existence of Nigeria; have no prior record of crime; possess no "record of personal or corporate business interest that conflict with the national interest; and, must "have been a registered member of either of the two political parties for a least a year prior to the election."¹⁸³ By the short time period involved -- where primaries, nationwide presidential campaigns and national elections were all expected to be conducted in a four weeks period -- this would have certainly ensured the extension of the programme. The new standards for choosing presidential aspirants served to divide the political class and was enough to provide the regime with some space towards resolving the impasse in its pre-determined direction. For example, the age stipulations which eliminated the candidacy of Tofa, aggrieved his close supporters but was of little or no consequence to the NRC, who simply welcomed the opportunity to compete for power in fresh elections. In a similar manner, factions within the SDP jockeyed positions to capitalize on the new arrangement. Indeed, the bulk of the membership of the SDP initially maintained a commitment to the sanctity of the popular mandate. Moreover, a seemingly progressive faction of the SDP, led by the president-elect, would continue to agitate for the sanctity of June 12 elections. But for some powerful factions within the party, particularly the Shehu Yar'Dua led 'Patriotic Front', the new stipulations were compatible with its aspirations, viewing the

¹⁸³ Osifo-Whiskey and Akinkuotu "A Dance", p.17.

prospects of new election as another opportunity to strengthen factional positions in contestations to lead a new government. Theoretically though, the one year membership criterion -- which eliminated the mandate of the president-elect and the SDP -- disqualified all members of the political class. Having in November 1992 dissolved the NEC of both parties while simultaneously stipulating a re-registration drive, the regime seemed to have been 'unwittingly' producing an uncontested election, since even the longest serving member of either party could not meet this requirement at the time of the General's broadcast. In furtherance of the desperate ploy to divide the political class, the NDSC lifted the ban on the 23 presidential aspirants only months earlier barred for improprieties and criminal acts then deemed inimical to true democracy in Nigeria. Now comfortable with the democratic credentials of these candidates, the NDSC inclusion of these aspirants also fuelled internal conflicts within the political class.

Though showing a general proclivity towards an acceptance of new elections, the political class did temporarily oppose the government's abrogation of the June 12 mandate. Within the ranks of the military, opposition also mounted over the latest NDSC manoeuvre, in an apparent concern over the battered image of the institution. A number of high-ranking officers sought voluntary retirement, citing the government's mis-handling of the political impasse. Even long-time supporters of General

Babangida, such as Col. Abubakar Umar, resigned in protest of the annulment. Undaunted by the protestations among factions of the ruling class, the NDSC presented the political class with a 72 hour ultimatum to either participate in new elections or accede to an Interim National Government. Both options would clearly terminate the June 12 mandate and perpetuate the junta since new elections would prolong military rule, while the ING path would have led to the dissolution of existing political structure. The initial NRC stance, demanding fresh elections and the SDP's maintenance of the inviolability of June 12 elections, soon gave way to a mutual acceptance of the government's ING option. A joint statement by the national executive council of the SDP and NRC, only two weeks after the annulment, stressed the resolve of both parties to co-operate fully with the Babangida dictatorship to solve the political crisis. To be sure, the June 12 mandate continued to be contested by factions of the political class, in spite of this declaration. But by and large we highlight the internal competitions within and between the political and military factions of the ruling classes to illustrate quite clearly the largely opportunistic responses of the higher circles to the PTP, through the disregard for the rudiments of democracy in both the build up to and immediate aftermath of the historic verdict of the June 12 elections. In a typical response through successive state abuse on the transition process, the political class simply

looked for the easiest arrangement that promised enhanced access to the state and its resources. While the ruling classes tried to sort themselves out, popular sectors of civil society struggled fiercely to uphold their sovereign right to elect the country's leadership and more importantly, to have a determining impact on the impasse and Nigeria's political future. The nationwide civil disobedience rallies that followed the cancellation of the elections was unprecedented in Nigeria's history and far surpassed the political mobilization witnessed on the eve of national independence.

THE AFTERMATH OF THE JUNE 12 ELECTIONS AND COLLECTIVE RESPONSES IN CIVIL SOCIETY

In a recent article examining civic responses to Nigeria's failed march to the Third Republic, Sakah Mahmud argued that the strong support for MKO Abiola and the intensity of struggles to defend the June 12 mandate can be interpreted as parochial, since democratic forces had steadfastly maintained an opposition to the PTP. The inconsistency in principles Mahmud suggested, is one of the major weaknesses of the emerging human rights NGO sector, which continues to diminish the credibility of these groups and the ability to mobilize and empower the grassroots in defence of civic and democratic rights.¹⁸⁴ Obviously, Mahmud is right to suggest that a wavering stance on critical

¹⁸⁴ Sakah Mahmud, "The Failed Transition to Civilian Rule in Nigeria: Its Implications for Democracy and Human Rights" in Africa Today, 4th Quarter 1993, p. 93.

national issues by pro-democracy forces will constrict their ability to strengthen civil society and evolve meaningful participatory political structures, a point we return to in the conclusion of this exposition. However, his scant reading and interpretation of civic responses to the aborted June 12 elections, misses the historical significance of the electoral verdict and the consistency in popular agitation to uphold the sanctity of the elections. The June 12 election was not simply a choice of governance between Abiola and Tofa or the SDP and the NRC. It has been forcefully argued in this exposition, that the state-created parties had very little noticeable differences. At the level of mutual disinterest on critical national issues, the paucity in policy prescriptions advanced to resuscitate the economy, the warfare character of intra and inter-party politics, the improbity of party and candidacies, and in the general indifference towards the economic plight and political marginalization of ordinary Nigerians, the NRC and the SDP were strikingly similar. Rather than a contest of parties and presidential aspirants, Nigerians went to the polls to choose between the continuance of a corrupt and dictatorial military junta, or the ineptitude of the political class. Confronted by the choice of a political class that has repeatedly shown an interest in democracy only insofar as it conforms with the opportunity to enhance state and resource access, and a military autocracy determined to extend its rule indefinitely, the Nigerian populace opted to throw out the

military junta, but without choosing the political class. That is to say, in the first instance, Nigerians were firmly resolved to demilitarize politics and strengthen civil society by resisting the allure of election day monetary inducements and similar incentives to engage in acts of political thuggery and violence, which would have surely provided the junta with an easier pretext to extend, if not abrogate the PTP. In the second instance, the overwhelming electoral support for MKO Abiola, which cut across region, religion and ethnicity, showed a sophisticated discernment between contestants, without actually endorsing the president-elect or the SDP.

To be sure, Abiola was solidly identified with the higher circles. Through successive regimes, Abiola had built up extensive networks with the state and had accumulated heavily from lucrative yet unproductive activities. Widely alleged to have sponsored the Babangida junta in 1985, Abiola known to have amassed huge wealth through his personal and business relationship with the former dictator. Furthermore, it is also acknowledged that MKO Abiola had developed dubious partnerships with transnational capital. As Chairman of International Telephone and Telegraph for Africa and the Middle East, Abiola further cultivated international connections. Seemingly impressive during this tenure, Abiola was acclaimed in these circles for his tenacity, though he largely failed to improve telecommunication services in

Nigeria -- in spite of a lucrative N400 million contract.¹⁸⁵ Together with Abiola's history of indifference towards the plight of the majority of Nigerians and lack of experience in public office, he was generally felt to be an inappropriate candidate for the office. Despite these liabilities, Abiola convincingly defeated Tofa, largely because the latter to most Nigerians represented the entrenched ruling class interest which had presided over the state and undermined the nation's stability, economy and development for personal gains over the last thirty years. Moreover, Othman Tofa was felt to be the least likely of the two presidential aspirants to confront the Babangida dictatorship if in fact (and indeed when) the sovereign right of Nigerians was undermined by the junta. This is mainly why Nigerians supported the Abiola candidacy on June 12.

Popular groups supported the sovereignty of Nigerians to elect a president without deviating from their opposition to the PTP, as Sakah Mahmud suggested. Since the annulment of the election was merely a continuation of the types of contradictions which had characterized the transition process, it followed that democratic forces resisted the latest attempt to derail the PTP and repress civil society. For popular groups, as Segun Maiyegun asserted, "every socio-political occurrence or event in society will present opportunities for

¹⁸⁵ Julius Ihonvbere, "Prospects for Democracy in Nigeria" in Peace and Democracy News, vol.vii, no.2, 1993/4, p.26. see also: Odia Ofeimun, "June Twelvvers Dilemma" in The News, June 12, 1993, p.25.

popular and mass organizations to agitate and increase the level of support and aid in the conscientization of ordinary Nigerians."¹⁸⁶ The defence of the June 12 verdict was then a struggle to uphold the sovereignty of the Nigerian people, expand the democratic space and mobilize ordinary Nigerians, and not simply a campaign to enthrone MKO Abiola. The organized responses in civil society to the cancellation of the elections were swift. The NLC's statement on the political impasse rejected the annulment of the elections and implored the junta to "avoid a senseless crisis by releasing the remainder of the results."¹⁸⁷ The NLC further maintained "that Nigeria cannot afford another presidential election with its attendant wastage, apathy, controversy, lack of faith and credibility,"¹⁸⁸ and warned that workers and trade unions would challenge the legitimacy of the military by a set of strike actions.¹⁸⁹ Similarly, WIN called on Nigerians to shun another poll or the ING option in defence of the sanctity of the June 12 results which transcended ethnic or religious leanings. In a press statement after the annulled elections, WIN noted,

that never in our history from colonial rule to present times has our collective intelligence been subjected to such insults.

¹⁸⁶ Interview with Segun Maiyegun, January 1994.

¹⁸⁷ NLC's official position on the June 12 elections cited in Adeniji, "A Huge Joke", p.17.

¹⁸⁸ Adeniji, "A Huge Joke", p.17.

¹⁸⁹ Adeniji, *Loc.cit.*

By his own admission General Babangida closed his eyes to alleged corruption and electoral malpractice by the two presidential candidates allowed them to emerge from the election primaries, embark on a long and costly campaign spending public and personal funds, allowed over 14 million Nigerians to queue under the rain and sun to vote, only to turn around to give self serving reasons why he should perpetuate his personal dictatorship.¹⁹⁰

The ASUU, Human Rights NGOs, other professional associations and democratic groups made similar pronouncements and enjoined Nigerians to defend the rudiments of democratic rights. The 30th Senate Session of the NANS also condemned the government's cancellation of the elections. The Association of Nigerian Authors (ANA) called on Nigerians to mount and sustain internal pressure to force the military out of power. In like manner, press releases from the NBA and its national president, Priscilla Kuye, denounced the government's gross abuse of the constitutional process by annulling the June 12 poll, and warned of a nationwide court boycott by the association until full electoral results were publicly released.¹⁹¹ Speaking on behalf of the CLO, Abdul Oroh, the Executive Director, viewed the cancellation of the June 12 elections as a deliberate assault on the Nigerian people and a clear violation of the right of Nigerians to select a leader of their choice. The CLO representative further maintained that the cancelled election "is a sinister and diabolical attempt by a power-hungry despot and a small clique of

¹⁹⁰ WIN, "WIN and Campaign for Democracy" in WIN Newsletter, April-December 1993, see also WIN press release on the annulment of the June 12 elections issued on June 27, 1993, p.6.

¹⁹¹ Dave Aite-Oshoribhor "Lawyers Boycott of Courts" in African Guardian, July 26, 1993, p.13.

fascists, who are bent on destroying the Nigerian nation to satisfy [themselves] and to misappropriate its resources,"¹⁹² and appealed to Nigerians to make the country ungovernable in order to throw out the junta. New groupings like the Association for Democracy and Good Governance in Nigeria (ADGGN) -- a group of ex-dictators, supposedly reformed militarist and several prominent members of the political class, -- initially insisted on the inviolability of the June 12 elections. The Movement for National Reformation (MNR) led by some veteran nationalist and progressive members of the political class also condemned the government's latest affront to Nigerians.

Under the umbrella of the CD, popular groups launched three successive nationwide demonstrations and civil disobedience rallies in July and August of 1993. The first round of political mass action organized between July 5 to 9, received widespread popular support. The CD in alliance with the CLO, issued and distributed several statements calling on,

1. the students, workers, youth...to mobilize their communities for mass rallies and protest marches to the State and LGA Secretariats demanding that they transfer their allegiance and support to the civilian president elect. 2. Pull down and destroy all the pictures and symbols of Babangida and his regime. Make bonfires and form barricades. Lock up all gates leading in and out of streets and neighbourhoods, block all roads with heavy objects like concrete blocks, abandoned cars, buses, etc to make the roads impossible to move about and to prevent police from stopping the protest. 3. That in support of this action all workers should stay away from work, market women and traders should lock up their stalls, tanker drivers, taxi drivers and commercial vehicle drivers should stay off the roads for a period of one week in first instance and subsequently whenever such solidarity actions are necessary. 4. That MKO

¹⁹² Abdul Oroh cited in anon. "On June 12 We Stand" in Tell, July 29, 1993, p.22.

Abiola should immediately name his cabinet and for his government. 5. Nigerians, Africans and other lovers of democracy worldwide should take part in any other appropriate measure deemed necessary to make the country ungovernable for the Babangida regime.¹⁹³

The week long mass protests rendered Nigeria near ungovernable and was a direct result of the organizational leadership of the CD and its allies. Posters and hand bills were distributed nationwide. A World Cup qualifying match at the National Stadium in Lagos days prior to scheduled mass action, provided pro-democracy groups with the opportunity to distribute leaflets and publicize the campaign to the well over 80,000 people in attendance.¹⁹⁴ Several meetings were held between the CD, its 42 affiliates, and other democratic groups to gain support for the protest. The CD and especially the WIN "mobilized women country-wide, including grassroots women, market women, artisans and the unorganized sector to participate in the mass protest."¹⁹⁵ Before and consistently through the CD-led campaign, pro-democracy groups sent a number of special messages to participants. The CD made the clear distinction that the "protest was not for Abiola as an individual though at the moment he represented the democratic

¹⁹³ CLO, "Time to Throw Out Babangida", leaflet issued by the Directorate of Campaigns and Organization of the CLO, June 29, 1993.

¹⁹⁴ Bolaji Adebisi et al. "June 12: The Peoples Fury" in Citizen, July 12-18, 1993, p.20.

¹⁹⁵ Osa Director, "We Shall Fight Abacha", Interview with Glory Kilanko, National Coordinator of Women-in-Nigeria, in Tell, May 30, 1994, p.24.

desire of Nigerians who gave him the popular mandate,"¹⁹⁶ but rather a protest to prevent the continuation of collective suffering under a corrupt and dictatorial military junta.¹⁹⁷ The call to uphold the June 12 mandate was solidly linked to on-going demands for a broad-based Sovereign National Conference (SNC) as a forum to openly debate and tackle the country's extant social, economic and political issues, and the mechanism through which Nigerians would decide on the future of governance. In addition, people were "warned not to loot or burn public or private properties and to note that the struggle was not between North or South or between ethnic or religious groups or political parties... [and] Nigerians were implored not to attack fellow Nigerians from other parts of the country."¹⁹⁸

The nationwide demonstration was most effective in Southwestern Nigeria and Lagos state in particular. The regional imbalance in the protest has led many to view the pro-democracy campaign from a narrow perspective. It was maintained that the predominance of the civil disturbances in this region was largely a consequence of the ethnic background of MKO Abiola, rather than a principled rallying point for the advancement of democracy. Indeed many of the organizations which the June 12 crisis gave birth to were motivated simply

¹⁹⁶ Ihonvbere, "The Generals", p.16.

¹⁹⁷ Ihonvbere, "The Generals", p.16.

¹⁹⁸ Ihonvbere, "The Generals", p.15-16.

by ethnic calculations. Invariably, these groupings were organizations of the higher circles and aspiring members of the middle stratum, who viewed the political ascendancy of Abiola as an opportunity to enhance access to state power. But the primary reasons why civic protests were concentrated in the Southwest can be attributed to the organizational weakness of the CD in other parts of the country. Additionally, with Lagos remaining the economic and commercial nucleus of the country with a more developed civil society in this locale, it is not surprising that Lagos was the epicentre of the nationwide protest. Most major cities and towns, from Lagos to Kaduna and from Benin to Aba, were paralysed by the demonstrations. In Lagos commercial activities grounded to a near halt. Banking and other strategic sectors of the economy were reduced to a stand still. Barricades and bonfires lined several core streets and highways. Commercial vehicles were sparse on Lagosian roads. Private vehicular traffic barely moved on intra and inter-state roads. *En masse*, workers stayed away from their places of employment. Market places were deserted. A mass rally organized by the CD at Obafemi Awolowo Way was attended by several thousand Nigerians. Placards abounded carrying messages such as 'IBB MUST GO', 'IBB STOLE OUR VOTE', 'ENOUGH OF MILITARY RULE' and 'INSTALL ABIOLA NOW'. Mock coffins bearing the inscription 'IBB IS DEAD' were also commonplace. Several visible symbols of the regime and the

Nigerian state were destroyed.¹⁹⁹ The mass action gained critical support from the legal community. Numerous branches of the NBA in the Southwest initiated a boycott of the courts and resolved to stay away until the June 12 verdict was officially announced. Chapters and branches of the Bar in Kwara, Rivers and Kaduna state, and Abuja, soon joined the boycott action.²⁰⁰ Concomitantly, the June 12 faction of the SDP, led by Abiola and Kingibe filed a legal suit in Lagos High Court, which sought a judicial verdict nullifying the government's abrogation of Decree 13 and 52 guiding the PTP and the presidential elections.²⁰¹

Mounting internal pressure on the Babangida regime was augmented by external responses, from the Nigerian diaspora in the West and the international community. Associations of Nigerian nationals in Britain, such as the International Movement for Democracy in Nigeria (IMDN), issued several declarations calling on the Nigerian government to release the June 12 results and to immediately execute the investiture of Abiola as president. The IMDN also organized protest rallies at the Nigerian High Commission in London, said to have been

¹⁹⁹ Adebisi et al. "The Peoples Fury", p.20. See also: Osifo-Whiskey and Akinkuotu, "A Dance".

²⁰⁰ Dave Aite-Oshoribhor, "Cost of Protest" in African Guardian, July 26, 1993, p.15.

²⁰¹ Okey Ekeocha, "A Legal Tangle" in African Guardian, July 26, 1993, p.18.

comprised of over 2,000 participants.²⁰² Condemnation of the annulled elections also reverberated through Nigerian communities in the U.S. Groupings such as the Organization of Nigerian Citizens (Baltimore, Maryland), Organization of Nigerian Nationals (ONN, Dallas-Forth Worth, Texas) and the Organization of Nigerians in the Americas (ONA, Houston, Texas) launched similar protests, which further gave crucial support to the activities of the CD at home.²⁰³ Underscoring the apparent commitment to human rights and democracy from the international community in recent years, many global bodies and Western government's condemned the June 12 crisis in Nigeria. The British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd, described the annulment as 'bad news' and an unfortunate attempt to 'subvert democracy' by "people at the top in Nigeria who decided some time ago that they didn't want to leave hold of the levers of power."²⁰⁴ The U.S. State Department characterized the political developments in Nigerian "as outrageous". Commenting further, the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Africa, George Moose, asserted that "the regime's so-called 'managed transition' to democracy is dead, the victim of a military clique unwilling, in the final analysis,

²⁰² Osifo-Whiskey and Akinkuotu, "A Dance", p.13.

²⁰³ Biodun Lapedo, "Nigerians in the U.S. Accuses Embassy of Misinformation on June 12 Elections", first published in The Baltimore Sun, June 23, 1993 and reprinted in The Guardian, July 2, 1993, see also: Ihonvbere, "The Generals", p.18.

²⁰⁴ "Nigeria Deserves Better than this, says Hurd", text of BBC interview with British Foreign Secretary, Douglas Hurd, reproduced in The Guardian, June 25, 1993, p.3.

to let the people exercise their sovereign right."²⁰⁵ He later depicted the ING option as "a stalking horse", simply a means for perpetuating the military dictatorship.²⁰⁶ The Canadian, French, German and Japanese governments also lent their voices to the growing international condemnation, calling on the government to release the election results.²⁰⁷ In the same vein, the Commonwealth Secretary-General, Emeka Anayoku, described the cancelled polls as "a serious set back to the cause of democracy."²⁰⁸ In another stern reaction to the political crisis in Nigeria, the Commonwealth Human Rights Advisory Commission issued a brief statement condemning the annulment of the elections and strongly recommended to the Commonwealth Heads of Government to disallow the attendance of General Babangida at its annual summit later that year.²⁰⁹

Public utterance from Western governments in the wake of the General's June 26 broadcast, were soon followed by diplomatic and military reprisals and the threat of economic sanctions in the ensuing weeks. Within 48 hours of the NDSC

²⁰⁵ Text of a press statement of U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Africa, George Moose, reprinted as "The Military Must Hand Over" in Tempo, August 30 1993, p.23.

²⁰⁶ Moose, "The Military" p.23.

²⁰⁷ Ima Nibodo, "The New Transition Game" in African Guardian, July 5, 1993, p.23 and Kunle Oyatomi, "Canada Sanctions Nigeria's Military" in Vanguard, Saturday Special August 21, 1993, p.1.

²⁰⁸ anon., "U.S., Britain List Sanctions Against Stifling of Democracy" in The Guardian, June 25, 1993, p.1-2.

²⁰⁹ Kayode Soyinka, "Slap on the Wrist" in Newswatch, July 26, 1993, p.39.

announcement voiding the election results, both Britain and the U.S., imposed military sanctions on the country. The British Foreign and Commonwealth Office quickly announced the cancellation of training programmes for members of the Nigerian Armed forces, withdrew existing military cooperation offers, suspended financial assistance to the Nigerian War College, denied entry visas to members of the armed forces, the national guard, state security and intelligence officials and their families, and in addition rescinded the special status on visa applications from officials of the federal government, state government, and parastatals. While ruling out a complete freeze on economic assistance to Nigeria, the British government withheld a pending L14.5 million aid package.²¹⁰ The European Community in response to the British action and pressure, also suspended military cooperation, placed restrictions on visas from government officials and pledged to impose stronger sanctions in light of new developments in the political crisis.²¹¹ Taking similar actions, the U.S. government expelled Nigeria's military attaches in the U.S. and recalled its own from Nigeria, froze a \$22.8 million aid package and threatened to freeze the accounts of military officers in the U.S. and Europe -- estimated at several billion dollars -- until power was

²¹⁰ anon., "Stifling of Democracy", p.2.

²¹¹ Soyinka, "Slap on the Wrist", p.39.

handed-over to a civilian government.²¹² To register its disdain for the military junta, the Canadian government also suspended the training eligibility for the Nigerian military and police and stayed the visit of military personnel from the latter, to International Strategic Studies Institutes in Canada.²¹³

With intensified external and internal pressures, the crisis-ridden Babangida regime relied increasingly on cooptation, deceit, manipulation and inordinately on repression to disarticulate popular and opposition forces in order to resolve the political impasse. Within the NLC, for example, the June 12 crisis and ensuing response of the Congress, sharpened and manifested the competing pressures of state cooptation and militancy from below. The passive response of the NLC to the CD-led nationwide protest is indicative of persisting state infiltration of the central labour body and the cooptation of its leadership, particularly since the 1989 dissolution and reconstitution of the Congress under state control. While the Nigerian state managed to render the NLC politically impotent during the nationwide protest, independent sectoral unions and state branches in the Southwest, in addition to those in Abia, Anambra, Akwa-Ibom, Cross Rivers, Delta, Enugu, Imo and Rivers state, condemned

²¹² anon., "US, EEC may Freeze Military Officers' Account" in The Daily Champion, July 8, 1993, p.1.

²¹³ Oyatomi, "Canada Sanctions" p.1, 5.

the apex body and resolved to remain a relevant force in determining the direction of political developments in the country.²¹⁴ In like manner, the moribund NDSC doled out monies to prominent members of the political class, traditional rulers, and also attempted to bribe some pro-democracy activists in its desperate attempt to build hegemony in civil society. Several members of state legislatures throughout the federation, were 'settled', and in many cases induced to introduce and pass resolutions -- as in Katsina, Kaduna and Bauchi State -- calling on the Babangida regime to stay in power. The dying regime also resorted to the often efficacious strategy of ethnic and regional manipulation. In a two-pronged approach, the NDSC tried to pit the ruling classes from different regions and ethnicities against each other and also sought to disarticulate popular forces by portraying the pro-democracy movement as sectarian. In the first instance, the regime bribed members of the Eastern bourgeoisie and enticed them with further financial support to run in fresh presidential elections and thus abandon any commitment to defend the June 12 mandate of their so-called Western arch-rivals. Harkening back to post-independence and particularly pre-civil war ethnic suspicions between East and West, the regime further attempted to lure Eastern elites in

²¹⁴ Osifo-Whiskey and Akinkuotu, "A Dance", p.16.

support of the regime and its predetermined designs.²¹⁵ While the promise of enhanced access to state power and resources was enough to enamour the opportunistic and conservative faction of the Eastern elite towards the regime -- even if it meant reproducing largely artificial social cleavages -- state efforts to exploit the ethnic divide was met by fierce collective resistance from even elite factions from this region.²¹⁶ In the second instance, the regime mobilized the state-controlled media -- mainly the Nigerian Television Authority, the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria, the Daily Times and the New Nigerian -- and augmented its resources with a N30 million subvention in order to buttress campaigns aimed at portraying the pro-democracy movement as ethnically motivated. While using the electronic and print media to dissuade Nigerians from supporting the CD and its activities, the government is alleged to have also sanctioned and funded the formation of rival human rights grouping to endorse the extension of the PTP.²¹⁷

In the main however, the government depended on the coercive arm of the state to resolve its self-created crisis

²¹⁵ Ademola Oyinlola, "Babangida's Death Game: Now Plays the Ethnic Card" in Tell, August 2, 1993, p.10-13.

²¹⁶ A meeting of prominent members of the Eastern (Igbo) elites, convened by Sam Mbakwe, Ralph Obioha and Ezekiel Izuogu, resolved to stand up against the annulment of the June 12 elections and resist Babangida's machinations. See Josh Arinze, "Coups Against the People" in Tell, August 16, 1993, p.12.

²¹⁷ Akin Adesokan, "His Master's Double" in Tempo, August 16, 1993, p.18-19.

and reproduce its tenuous hold on power. The CD-led nationwide non-violent protest was brutally crushed by the armed forces and mobile police, on a clear shoot-at-sight directive from the then Secretary of Defence, General Sani Abacha. In many cities armoured tanks were rolled out to confront protestors. The newly created National Guard of the Babangida regime was deployed to major urban centres nationwide. State authoritarian responses to the July protest left over 200 protesters dead.²¹⁸ As usual, the SSS used Decree No.2. to arrested and detained pro-democracy activists, student leaders and journalists, such as Gani Fawehinmi, Femi Falana, Beko Ransome-Kuti, Segun Maiyegun, Mike Ozekome, Ken Saro-Wiwa and Yinka Tella, and chased countless others into hiding. The secretariats of the CD, CLO, the CDHR and the NADL were routinely raided and besieged by security forces, often arresting office assistants and harassing their families. The emergency 30th Senate Session of the NANS, (held in Enugu) convened to deliberate student responses to the political impasse, was also disrupted by security agents. Over 25 students were reported by the student body to have been seized and detained by police en route to the meeting.²¹⁹ The journalist community was also subjected to heightened state clampdown. Numerous media houses, which included the National

²¹⁸ Osifo-Whiskey and Akinkuotu, "Dance", p.16.

²¹⁹ Ody Chukwube, "NANS Calls for Release of its Members" in Daily Champion, July 8, 1993, p.6. See also: anon., "The Students have Spoken" in African Guardian, July 26, 1993, p.8.

Concord, African Concord, Abuja Newday, The Sketch, The Punch, and Ogun State Broadcasting Corporations were sealed off by the SSS for allegedly publishing articles inimical to the PTP, while the premises of the Tell and Quality were regularly raided. The recently launched critical weekly magazine the NEWS was likewise proscribed and thousands of copies of the maiden edition of the affiliated weekly, Tempo, were seized. In the desperate attempt to muzzle the press, the NDSC even sacked the editors of the political desk of the state-owned Daily Times, again for writing stories allegedly favourable to pro-democracy forces. Several journalists, editors and their families were harassed, dismissed, arrested and/or detained for similar reasons. In the cases of the Daily Champion, the proprietor Emmanuel Iwuanyanwu, a long-time supporter of the Babangida regime, terminated the employment of the newspapers' managing director, editor, and political editor for publishing an article alleging, as the title read, *the US, EEC may Freeze Military Officers Accounts*, in protest over the June 12 annulment. In perhaps the greatest assault on the fourth estate since the colonial period, the regime introduced a number of retrogressive press decrees to produce a monolithic media under statist control. For example, the Newspaper and Magazine Decree No.48 of 1993 (Proscription and Prohibition from Circulation) empowered the state to ban or seize copies of any publication which the authorities deemed as hostile to the PTP. Seeking to effect further state control

of the mass media, the regime promulgated Newspaper Decree No.43. which compelled proprietors to formally register publications with the government and made mandatory the notification of appointed of editors to security forces. In typical fashion, both press edicts of the NDSC were made retroactive to legitimize the proscription and/or seizure of the aforementioned publications.²²⁰

State heightened clampdown on civil society intensified popular struggles for human rights and democracy. Again, it was the organizational leadership of the CD which gave popular groups and ordinary Nigerians direction in responding to the deepening political crisis. Strongly objecting to the government's attempt to now form an ING, deemed as another attempt to perpetuate the transition process, the CD organized two successive nationwide protests in August 1993 to force the regime out of power. The second round of civic demonstrations was launched to coincide with the August 27th termination date of the military junta. Learning from the limitations of the July mass action, which led to the massacre of over 200 people, the CD enjoined Nigerians to stay away from work, marketplaces, schools and to remain off the roads in certain towns and urban centres. The apex body for pro-democracy forces made strong efforts to strengthen its organizational

²²⁰ Tunje Asaju, "War Against the Press" in Newswatch, August 2, 1993. Mercy Ette, "The Big Noose" in Newswatch August 30, 1993. Delu Ogunade, "The Noose" in Newswatch, August 30, 1993. Gbile Oshadipe, "The Hammer Falls" in Tempo, August 30, 1993.

capacities and mobilization outside the Southwest.²²¹ Civic actions were generally effective. With the balance of forces shifting towards radical elements in the NLC, trade unions came out more forcefully in support of the pro-democracy campaigns. Pressure from state branches and powerful independent unions, such as the strategic National Union of Petroleum and Natural Gas Workers (NUPENG), compelled the apex body to issue an ultimatum to the federal government, demanding the investiture of a constitutional government based on the June 12 elections by the August 27th or face nationwide strike actions.²²² Major urban centres across the country were desolate from the CD action. To prevent any further extension of the PTP, millions of Nigerians stayed away from work, registering their protest over the intransigence of the junta. Commercial and civic activities again ground to a halt. The country became increasingly ungovernable for a regime which rapidly lost any credibility among the populace.²²³ A radicalized civil society insisting on the enthronement of

²²¹ Interview with former CD, General-Secretary, Chima Ubani, "We Shall Confront Babangida Again" in Tempo, August 16, 1993, p.16.

²²² Toye Iyare, "Labour's Threat" in Newswatch, September 6, 1993. see also Chinedu Offor, "Labour Picks Up the Gauntlet" in African Guardian, August 30, 1993. Chinedu Offor, "Labour for Democracy" in African Guardian, September 6, 1993. Despite another state attempt to fractionalize the NLC by threatening to make union affiliation to the central labour body and union dues voluntary, most independent trade unions remained vigilant, and were resolved to even bypass the wavering stance of the NLC leadership to struggle in defence of the June 12 mandate.

²²³ T. Iyare, "Storm of Protest" in Newswatch, August 30, 1993. S.Osuji, "Power of Passive Protest" in African Guardian, August 23, 1993. Kenneth B. Noble (1993) "Millions of Nigerians Stay Home in Protest" in New York Times, August 13, 1993. AP, "Lagos Brought to a Halt as City Heeds Strike Call" in The Toronto Star, August 13, 1993.

democratic rule, augmented by growing external opposition, constricted the political manoeuvrability of the Babangida regime and forced General Babangida to relinquish power on August 27. In his valedictory speech, the General's cited his 'personal sacrifice to step aside' in order to "provide the nation with a new face to complete the...final transfer of power to a democratically elected President."²²⁴

The so-called 'new face' came in the form of a 32 member Interim National Government. Headed by the former chairman of the Transitional Council, Ernest Shonekan, comprised of some military notables and mainly hand picked by the exiting junta, the new governing body -- though civilian dominated -- was all too familiar to Nigerians. A divided and opportunistic political class, by and large accepted the ING and dispensed with the June 12 struggle. In turn, the political class sought to capitalize on the new arrangement by jockeying for political posts in the ING.²²⁵ The ING option did not solve the political malaise, nor attenuate the legitimization crisis of the Nigerian state. The inaugural period of the ING was greeted with widespread condemnation from the international community and a cross section of the Nigerian civil society. The ascendancy of the ING also renewed nationwide strikes and

²²⁴ Text of an address by General Babangida printed as "Enough is Enough" in Tempo, March 17, 1994. see also Kenneth B. Noble, "Nigerian Ruler Cede Power to Civilians" in New York Times, August 27, 1993.

²²⁵ While resisting a last minute attempt by General Babangida to intimidate the National Assembly into accepting his headship of the ING, the political class jockeyed for posts in the ING, rather than supporting the inviolability of the June 12 elections.

mass demonstrations, although short-lived and less effective than their predecessors. Indeed, the regime was able to disarticulate pro-democracy forces through the introduction of some popular measures. For instance, a compromised NLC leadership, which only grudgingly accepted to embark on the political action to install a constitutional government, easily capitulated on this demand when the Shonekan government offered some tentative economic concessions to trade unions in the country.²²⁶ The regime went further to build hegemony in civil society. Some detained political activists and journalists were released from detention. The regime reached an agreement with the ASUU on its five month old strike action, which then paved the way for the reopening of most universities. Moreover, the ING announced that an 'appropriate' bill would be initiated in the National Assembly for the repeal of all laws muzzling the press, and also set up a panel to investigate the annulled June 12 elections.

Notwithstanding popular praise of some of these measures, the ING still faced a serious crisis of credibility. The worsening of the already grave economic predicament concomitant to the political stalemate, and the inability of the ING to grapple with the unabating socio-economic downturn, deepened the legitimization crisis of the new government. From

²²⁶ A unilateral decision to call off the political strike action by the NLC leadership, who settled for economic concession around a tentative agreement of the ING to retain the domestic price of petroleum (it would be later abrogated) was met with widespread condemnation from independent trade unions, particularly the strategic NUPENG.

the inception of pro-democracy protests in the wake of the June 12 annulment, through to the early weeks of the ING, the impact of the political crisis on the declining economy is said by leading Nigerian economist to have cost the country over N2.45 billion daily.²²⁷ The banking sector faced a serious liquidity squeeze. Depositors withdrew their funds from banks at unprecedented rates. Demands for foreign exchange escalated. Disturbed by the political uncertainty, transnational capital scaled back investments considerably and converted their funds into hard currency. With the diminishing financial confidence in the naira, the small percentage of Nigerians with substantial savings also converted their monies into hard currency to forestall or minimize long-term losses. Nigerians and foreigners fleeing the country added to the demands for foreign exchange. With increasing financial withdrawals by depositors and shortfalls in exchange needs, several banks tottered on near collapse. Capital flight caused by the political crisis put enormous pressure on the exchange rate in the parallel market. While the official exchange rate hovered around N22 during this period, the autonomous market rate drastically depreciated to N45 from an average of N30 prior to the June 12 crisis.²²⁸ Of course, for the those few Nigerians with access to foreign

²²⁷ Chinedu Offor and Prince Ovwagbedia, "Down on her Knees" in The African Guardian, September 13, 1993, p. 15.

²²⁸ Godson Ukpevo, "Doomsday Ahead" in Newswatch, July 26, 1993.

exchange, huge profits were realized through speculative activities which put further downward pressure on the value of the naira.

For the productive sectors of the economy, long since staggering under the regime of adjustment, the impact of the political crisis was disastrous. In the manufacturing sector, political uncertainty increased production costs and created havoc in the planning of production and the distribution of goods. As a consequence, the process of deindustrialization, manifest in the closure of firms and reduction in capacity utilization, accelerated in this period. The apex bodies for productive capital, such as the MAN, the Organized Private Sector (OPS) and the National Association of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (NACCIMA), vociferously highlighted the constraints on domestic capital accumulation created or exacerbated by the crisis. Such obstacles included, the sharp rise in the cost of credit, the closure of credit lines and spiralling inflation which led to the build up of unsold stock in warehouses. Such a business environment, it was further maintained, not only quickened the disinvestment of transnational capital, but also almost ruled out new capital inflows and discouraged investments by domestic capital.²²⁹ The mismanagement of the economy was also a major source of concern. With the 1993 Budget, introduced by the

²²⁹ Organized Private Sector (OPS), "The Political Situation in Nigeria" in the Nigerian Economist, September 27, 1993, p.29.

Shonekan-led Transitional Council, already overspent by N48 billion by mid-1993 and extra-budgetary spending rapidly rising as scarce resources were expended to contain the political crisis, Nigeria's debt continued to increase. In the context of a drop in world oil prices to \$14.50 per barrel, in contrast to the projected price of \$17 per barrel of petroleum in the budget, the constricted resources had negative repercussions for the productive sectors of the economy. Needless to say, the pains of the economic malaise continued to be unequally borne by subordinate classes. Unemployment in the country grew at a frightening pace. The price of basic commodities skyrocketed. The cost of essential services also witnessed a precipitous rise as a consequence of the political stalemate. Compounding the economic downturn and particularly its impact on subordinate groupings, the Shonekan government increased the prices of petroleum at the insistence of an IMF/World Bank monitoring team, who claimed yet again that the domestic prices of petroleum and petroleum products were heavily subsidized. Fuelling the economic crisis, in early November 1993, Nigerians went to the pumps to find a dramatic 700% increase in the price of a petroleum. The overnight inflation in the prices of a litre of petrol -- from N0.70 to N5.00 -- and the obvious implication of such a sharp rise for the standard of living and survival of ordinary Nigerians, sparked off nationwide demonstrations which deepened the

credibility problems of the ING.²³⁰

A combination of heightened economic instability and the inability of Nigerian state to redress the socio-economic malaise and mediate intensified intra and inter-class political contestations, created an environment historically conducive for the men bestowed with the legitimate monopoly of the instruments of coercion to intervene in the political landscape. Some specificities at the political level on the eve of the Abacha coup made such an intervention especially inviting to the military and strongly suggested that the dissolution of the seemingly democratic structures built up by the PTP was imminent. These require elaboration: First, the political class became increasingly polarized between pro-ING forces, comprised of the tripartite alliance between the ABN, the Yar'Dua faction of the SDP and the NRC, and on the other side of the divide, the June 12 faction of the SDP led by MKO Abiola. The latter was vehemently opposed to ING proposals for local government and presidential elections slated in February 1994, but continued to lose ground in the political contestation over the June 12 issue. When a principal defender of the electoral mandate within the higher circles, Iyorchia Ayu, was unconstitutionally removed from the senate presidential seat by anti-democratic forces in the National

²³⁰ anon., "This is Armageddon" in Tell, November 22, 1993.

Assembly, intra-ruling class antagonisms intensified.²³¹ As expected, the resolve of the SDP members defending the June 12 mandate waned, particularly after the president-elect unilaterally decided to leave the country on a 53 day Euro-North American mission to gain external support for pro-democracy forces at the height of the crisis. For the most part, the position of the pro-June 12 faction of the political class on the pro-democracy struggle was always wavering, as they seldom came out in full support of the CD and its democratic activities. Abiola, also vacillated in his response to the political debacles and was clearly disorganized and had no political strategy to realize the popular mandate. Given that he came from the ranks of the ruling classes, Abiola was always susceptible to all sorts of inducements to protect his objective interests. The weakening of the seemingly progressive faction of the ruling class, together with the inability of the political class to sort themselves out peacefully, in no small measure also enabled the military to determine the direction of political developments, as we have shown earlier.

Second, internal acrimony within the military faction of the ruling classes also around the June 12 issue, left the armed forces increasingly divided into different groups vying for hegemonic control. Already, the dominant forces led by the

²³¹ Chukwuemeka Gahia, "Grace to Grass" in Newswatch, November 15, 1993.

then Secretary of Defence of the ING, Sani Abacha, sought to strengthen its position by retiring loyalists of the ex-dictator and redeploying into less sensitive posts members of the military hierarchy supportive of the June 12 verdict. An allegedly failed coup of mainly middle and junior ranking officers which sought to reinstate the June 12 mandate and depoliticize the armed forces, served to intensify internal tensions within the armed forces.²³² It became increasingly clear that the dominant faction would intervene more decisively in national politics and do away with the contrived ING which it ostensibly controlled. Third, the October 25th 1993 hijacking of a domestic Nigerian Airways flight from Lagos to Abuja, which eventually landed in Niamey the capital of Niger, was a manifestation -- although somewhat crude -- of popular grievances in civil society to the political stalemate. Though popular groups distanced themselves and condemned the Movement for the Advancement for Democracy (MAD) who orchestrated this action, they strongly supported the issues enunciated by the MAD. The popular demands of the MAD included among others,

the immediate hand-over of power from the illegal and unconstitutional National Interim Puppet Arrangement to a well constituted authority that is the National Assembly... and the immediate civil trial of the military and their civilian collaborators for treason, ... looting of the economy of

²³² Seye Kehinde, "A Coup Aborted" in The News, November 1, 1993. see also Ademola Oyinlola, "Testy Moments for the Military" in Tell, November 1, 1993.

billions of dollars into foreign accounts.²³³

Although the hijacking crisis was quickly brought to an end without the resolution of any of these grievances, it sent a clear message to the military that the government had lost all political, moral, legal, cultural and social authority in civil society. Fourth, the legitimation crisis of the Nigerian state and the new government intensified when a ruling by Justice Dolapo Akinsanya in Lagos High Court declared the formation of the ING unconstitutional. This legal victory for pro-democracy forces and the immediate popular agitation for MKO Abiola to form an alternative government discredited the ING and sent shock waves throughout the military's top brass. The impetus this development provided for the realization of the June 12 mandate and to the demilitarization of the state and civil society gave the generals added incentive to strike quickly.

One of the most compelling reasons for the Abacha coup and *coup d'etats* historically in Nigeria as elsewhere on the continent, is the continued fragmentation of civil society. Without a doubt, the June 12 crisis and its aftermath was the clearest indication in recent years of the growing strength of the Nigerian civic terrain. The principled position of the CD and its allies and their catalytic role in mobilizing ordinary Nigerians certainly boded well for the delimitation of the

²³³ Ima Nibodo, "Whodunit and Why" in African Guardian, November 8, 1993.

state, the enthronement of meaningful, participatory and transparent political structure in the country which would provide structural and institutional mechanisms to ensure that the military stays out of the political terrain permanently. Indeed, an alliance reached between the CD and NLC on the eve of the November 17 coup also strengthened popular democratic struggles, since despite a compromised leadership in recent years and the resultant aloofness of labour on critical national issues, trade unions remained the most organized and national civic force. The apparent rapprochement of these groups to advance democratic agitation did, however, remain precarious with both sides embroiled in mutual suspicion and susceptible to state efforts to prevent such an alliance. Such a situation where civil society is weak and unable to delimit state control has invariably made military intervention quite easy. But perhaps unlike the eve of other coups in Nigerian history, some pro-democracy groups, centred around prominent activists like Gani Fawehinmi, unilaterally and indeed quite naively advocated the military's intervention in defence of the June 12 mandate. In addition, a divided civil society at the height of political contestation then provide the military with sufficient incentive and opportunity to intervene in the political impasse. On November 17, the tumultuous and expensive -- said to have cost in excess of N50 billion -- road to Nigeria's Third Republic was halted by a palace coup led by General Sani Abacha. The ING and all of the seemingly

democratic structures produced by the transition process were unilaterally dissolved. In addition, the NEC, the two statist political parties and all political associations were banned by the junta. Popular struggles for democracy faced a serious setback with the remilitarization of the state and the civic terrain.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, we have examined in considerable detail, the long ignored subjective factors of African and Third World development. Established mainstream and even radical schools of thought have treated development as technocratic and/or statist, or resigned it in recent years to the magic of the market, while paying little or no attention to collective responses of civic groups. The new intellectual renaissance with the dynamics of civil society within the respective schools, while welcomed, still largely treat this realm uncritically and often conceptually examine it through romantic, non-conflictual and benign lenses. Our concrete case study of the popular responses in Nigeria's civic terrain to SAP and the tortuous PTP underscores the need to analyze the dialectics of state and civil society and the contradictions and conflicts herein, in order to better understand the prospects for African development centred around the participation of the grassroots. The concluding chapter of this thesis examines some of the competing interpretation of adjustment, informalization, civil society and democracy. In

addition, we draw some conclusions from the Nigerian case study, ascertain the implications for democratic struggle in the country and the continent, make some future projections, and enunciate some policy alternatives from below for democratic development towards the end of this millennium.

CHAPTER FOUR

ADJUSTMENT, CIVIL SOCIETY AND DEMOCRACY: SOME CONCLUSIONS FROM THE CASE STUDY ON NIGERIA AND FUTURE PROSPECTS AND POLICY ALTERNATIVES FOR DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

Africa's economic problems are rooted in its politics, a democratic revolution is inevitable because it is the only route to escape from the crisis. Africans are seeking democracy partly as a condition of survival, from the realization that they must fend for themselves or perish...democracy will not necessarily put more food on the table, cure diseases, provide shelter or ensure higher prices for primary commodities. The democracy which the movement is groping for is a fusion of the economic and the political, an arrangement by which the people become the means as well as the ends of development potential in their own interest.¹

...empowering people could not be more relevant to the current crisis in Africa, particularly the continent-wide movement for political freedom and liberal democracy. For what underlies the current historical movement is not simply a desire to end the gross abuse and misappropriation of power by the various despots who have held sway on the continent during the past three decades. Behind these powerful political movements lies a deeply-felt need by the peoples of our continent, the common people, to have a real say in the shaping of their lives and societies. People wish to participate fully in the affairs of their countries in order to address and solve the real problems of poverty, hunger, disease, education, political oppression, economic dependence and development.¹

This exposition has examined the interplay of the two most salient features of Africa's political economy over the past two decades, namely the neo-liberal market reforms and the intensified struggles for democracy on the continent. The 1980s began with the majority of African countries tottering on the brink of massive economic decay, political instability and social disarray. Africa's multifarious crisis continued to deepen throughout the decade. In no small measure, the decline was exacerbated by the disastrous socioeconomic impact of the IMF/World Bank guided structural adjustment programmes adopted by most African countries in the integrum. A neo-liberal response to the Third World debt crisis, this economic

¹ Claude Ake, "As Africa Democratizes" in Africa Forum, vol.2, no.2, 1992, p.13-14.

² Ampaw "Political Liberalism", p.36.

policy sought to restructure the pattern of state capitalist accumulation blamed for precipitating the post-colonial development crisis in Africa as elsewhere. Emphasizing the primacy of the market mechanism, the now familiar policies of devaluation, the removal of subsidies, privatization and trade liberalization, the economic reforms sought to curtail state intervention in the economy, increase export earnings, promote the efficient use of resources and balance external deficits. These reforms were expected to foster greater domestic accumulation, higher rates of economic growth, employment and incomes; and to ameliorate widespread poverty while catalyzing political liberalization and democracy in the process.

Against these expectations generated by proponents of market reforms, African countries witnessed declines in all major indicators of development. Average annual GDP growth rates dropped from 3.8% in 1980 to 1.8% in 1991.³ A late 1980s comparative assessment of the performance of 'strong', 'weak' and 'non-adjusting' countries, concluded that despite relatively larger amounts of foreign aid infused in support of favoured adjusting countries by the IFIs and bilateral donors, this category of countries experienced an overall negative annual GDP growth rate of 1.5% between 1980-1987, while the latter categories achieved a rate of 1.2% and 3.1%

³ World Bank, World Tables, (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press for the World Bank, 1993), p.22-23.

(respectively) in the same period.⁴ Average annual GNP per capita incomes on the continent fell from US\$600 in 1981 to US\$350 in 1991, a figure which is below the World Bank's definition of absolute poverty.⁵ Industrial production on the continent continued on a downturn, while in the agrarian sector, initial productive gains for certain food and export commodities tapered off or declined. In the second half of the 1980s, export earnings dropped by US\$50 billion, despite annual increases in export volumes of 2.5%.⁶ Africa's total external debt more than doubled from US\$109 billion in 1980 to US\$276 billion in 1991,⁷ with debt servicing as a percentage of export receipts now hovering between 35% and 45%. As scarce foreign exchange was significantly earmarked for debt obligations, exchange allotment for the importation of essential consumer and capital goods for production process fell drastically. Basic infrastructure has deteriorated, and public expenditure in the areas of education, health care and transportation have precipitously declined. The pains of adjustment continued to be unevenly borne by subordinate classes. Unemployment increased at a rapid pace, coupled with

⁴ UNECA, AAF-SAP, p.21-23.

⁵ World Bank, World Tables, p.2-3.

⁶ Douglas Hellinger, "US Aid Policy in Africa: No Room for Democracy" in ROAPE, no.55, 1992, p.84.

⁷ African Development Bank, African Development Report 1993, (Abidjan: CDEP for the ADB, 1993) p.A-22

a wage decrease of 30% during the 1980s.⁸ Africans fortunate enough to have jobs in the formal sector have seen their real incomes constantly eroded by spiralling inflation, as have rural producers who were expected to benefit from the adjustment programmes. The prices of basic commodities and essential services skyrocketed. Food shortages continued to be endemic, leading to widespread malnutrition. Curable diseases still claimed the lives of millions of Africans yearly. Child and maternal mortality rapidly increased. Most people had to straddle multiple modes of income generation just to eke out a meagre livelihood. Therefore, the 1980s were indeed the lost decade of African development. Already housing the bulk of the poorest countries in the world, in this period, Africa increased its share of the impoverished and now holds the dubious claim of having 24 of the 36 poorest developing countries in this region.⁹

Yet, all is not gloom in Africa, in spite of this brief portrait of an unabating decline in objective conditions. Since the late 1980s, popular contestation in Africa's nascent civil society around the disastrous direction of economic recovery has increasingly been linked to agitation for democracy, human rights, empowerment and popular participation as the necessary pre-condition and accompaniment of economic

⁸ Hellinger, "U.S. Aid Policy", p.84.

⁹ George B.N. Ayittey, "Why Structural Adjustment Failed in Africa" in TransAfrica Forum, Summer 1991, p.44.

development. Popular democratic protests on the streets of Abidjan, Cotonou, Lagos, Lusaka, Nairobi, etc. to the adverse consequences of SAP and seething authoritarianism, together with 'high-level' criticisms of adjustment from international bodies and a dramatically changed global political economy with the end of the 'cold war', have brought into sharp focus the politics of economic reforms. If the development discourse in the 1980s was preoccupied with questions of economic reforms, in the 1990s grassroots empowerment, the strengthening of civil society and popular participation have become emphatic themes, if not new panaceas for recovery and sustainable development in Africa. Even the World Bank, -- at least rhetorically -- now calls for the empowerment of ordinary people, the pluralization of decision-making and state transparency and accountability to its citizens. "Africa needs not just less government but better government,... [which] requires political renewal...and means the empowerment of women and the poor,"¹⁰ so extolled the Bank's landmark 1989 Long-Term Perspective Study (LTPS) on Africa. With an apparent policy shift in multilateral circles towards a recognition of the political dimension of the crisis, the Bank boldly declared a rapprochement between itself and its African critics. Despite continued national and international opposition to SAPs, a broad consensus on Africa's development needs in the 1990s based on governance and further neo-liberal

¹⁰ World Bank, LTPS, p.5-6.

market reforms was declared by the Bank in the LTPS. However, this raises question of whether democracy is really on Africa's developmental agenda for the 1990s in the circles of the Washington-based international financial institutions, since the impetus for redemocratization in Africa and the form and content of the democratic project for those whose democratic participation is most at stake seems to contradict the Bank's declared consensus.

The lessons drawn from the Nigerian experience are instructive of the challenges for democratic development in Africa in the 1990s. The concluding chapter of this thesis will sum up the case material on Nigeria and reiterate my main arguments, while relating it to the experiences of other African countries. The first section will revisit the competing explanations of the politics of adjustment from differing schools of thought in relation to an investigation of the impetus for redemocratization in Africa. Here again I maintain that in the period of neo-liberal market reforms, mass campaigns for civil liberties and democracy have little to do with what appears to mainstream scholars as a two-fold struggle for economic and political liberalization. Rather, the intensification of popular democratic struggles is in response to the failure of post-colonial development, the deepening socioeconomic malaise associated with SAPs and the growing authoritarianism and restrictions on civil society in this period.

The first section of this chapter will sum up and re-examine the competing interpretations of state-civil society relations and the factors and forces ascribed to the strengthening of the civic terrain and democratic renewal in Africa. Here, I argue that in deciphering the complexities of Africa's social reality and the problematic of civil society and democracy, it is important to recognize the interconnection of objective and subjective factors and forces, and appreciate the dialectical unity of the state and civil society, transversed as they are by social contestations, contradictions and conflicts. I further argue that received neo-liberal theories which emphasize market reforms, the process of informality and destatization as the necessary support for the fortification of civil society and democratic renewal are simply not borne out by the African evidence. Instead, I maintain that democratic renewal and consolidation is not only a question of strengthening civil society. While crucial, democratic consolidation in Africa will depend on the level of organization and autonomy of the civic realm and the manner in which popular force influence state power and dictate the content and direction of development in their own interest.

In section three, the continued contestation over the direction of economic recovery and development is highlighted. On this issue the focus is on the 'high level' policy debates between the IFIs and UN organizations as to Africa's

development needs in the 1990s, juxtaposed with alternative development approaches articulated from within the popular sector of Africa's civil societies. I conclude the chapter and this thesis, by proffering some projections on the prospects for democratic development in Africa in the late 1990s.

SECTION ONE: THE POLITICS OF ADJUSTMENT AND THE IMPETUS TOWARDS REDEMOCRATIZATION IN AFRICA

It is widely held that the recent strengthening of Africa's civil society, the intensification of pro-democracy pressures, and the unprecedented democratic transitions in Africa, were largely unanticipated by scholars and analysts of this region. While disillusioned by statist capitalist and socialist development models in Africa, several prominent Africanists in the mid 1980s argued that the prospects for democratic development in Africa were indeed bleak. In a review article Beckman succinctly summarized the obstacles to liberal democracy in Africa highlighted by some liberal analysts, which, *inter alia*, included the "depth of poverty, the violence of politics and the anti-democratic practice inherited from colonial rule and the process of decolonization."¹¹ To have expected a vibrant African democracy in this context would have amounted to 'historical blindness', or so argued Patrick Chabal.¹² Samuel Huntington

¹¹ Beckman, "Whose Democracy?", p.87.

¹² Patrick Chabal ed., Political Domination in Africa: Reflections on the Limits of Power, (London: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p.5.

boldly declared that "with a few exceptions, the limits of democratic development may well have reached its limits."¹³ Resigning Africa to the fate of predatory rule, some analysts, such as Sandbrook, presented the alternatives of governance as between authoritarianism and efficient authoritarianism. The best feasible option under African conditions, he noted, was a "decent, responsive and largely even-handed personal ruler" and governance of Houphouet Boigny was said to be 'infinitely preferable' to that of Idi Amin.¹⁴

While some radical African democrats had paid considerable attention to popular democratic struggles for some time, they too were pessimistic about the prospects for democratic development. The economic determinism of the *dependencia* variant had long ruled out democratic alternatives in Africa. As an extension of the unequal exchange thesis, it was argued that as long as development in the periphery was simply a result of the will of capital in the centre, autonomous development in these countries was blocked. Additionally, the comprador nature of the state and bourgeoisie in the periphery meant that it could only reproduce itself through authoritarianism.¹⁵ This led Samir Amin to argue that since a pattern of autocentric accumulation

¹³ Samuel Huntington, "Will More Countries Become Democratic?" in Political Science Quarterly, no.99, 1984, p.218.

¹⁴ Richard Sandbrook, The Politics of Africa's Economic Stagnation, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p.157.

¹⁵ M. Mamdani et al., Social Movements, p.4.

was immutably obstructed in the periphery, so too was bourgeois democracy.¹⁶ Other radical intellectuals took cognizance of the struggles for liberal democracy insofar as they curbed state repression and expanded the constitutional space for popular forces to demand greater equality and social justice, but, citing the greater constriction of political space in the period of harsh neo-liberal economic reforms were circumspect as to the possibility of liberal democratic governance.¹⁷ An editorial in a leading radical journal on the political economy of Africa also noted that the changing global context -- in which the collapse of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union had opened the way for Africa's further integration and subordination into a hostile and unequal international division of labour -- reduced the prospects of 'bourgeois' democracy. In light of the exogenous constraints and the on-going endogenous drive towards market reforms, the editorial further maintained that rather than democratic rule "more probable are various forms of authoritarian regimes with strictly limited political pluralism."¹⁸ One thread which united liberal and radical democrats in the general pessimism on the question of African democratization was the low level

¹⁶ Samir Amin, "The State and the Question of Development" in Peter Anyang' Nyong'o ed., Popular Struggles for Democracy in Africa, (London: Zed Press, 1987).

¹⁷ Beckman, "Whose Democracy?".

¹⁸ Lionel Cliffe, "Editorial: Africa in a New World Order" in ROAPE, no.50, 1991, p.10.

of material development on the continent, the distorted nature of state and class formation, and in particular the absence of a 'proper bourgeoisie' to champion the struggle for the rule of law, civil liberties and democratic governance.¹⁹ In a few short years, however, this pessimism gave way to an intellectual renaissance based on the emergence or irruption of civil society, voluntary associations, non-governmental and grassroots organizations, and a renewed faith in the potentialities of democratic development in Africa. An avalanche of writings now paid increasing attention to the subjective factors of development and the manner in which subordinate classes individually and collectively sought to overcome constricting objective parameters, in order to transform their societies in a democratic direction.

The factors and forces that have galvanized Africa's civil society to increasingly demand a voice in determining the political and socio-economic landscape in their respective countries are both historical and conjunctural, remote and proximate. A prominent neo-liberal school of thought, notably excluded from the widespread negative prognostic interpretation on democratic development, had seemingly predicted the recent democratic outbursts in Africa. Previous chapters have alluded to the position held by its chief proponent, Larry Diamond. Before the wave of mass democratic movements throughout the continent, these analysts held that

¹⁹ Beckman, "Post-Colonial State".

the increasing move away from statist economic policies and structures was the single most significant contributor to democratic renewal in Africa. Presented as the *sine qua non* for recovery and development, the shrinking of the role of the state and the free reign of market forces were seen as highly positive developments, curtailing the tendency towards rent-seeking and corruption, and curbing the process of primitive accumulation of capital, concomitantly creating an autonomous arena for capital accumulation outside the ambit of the state. Thus, civil society once freed from the intrusion of the state, propelled the creation of actors and institutions and alternative centres of power to ensure state transparency and accountability. While giving attention to the plurality of autonomous associations in the civic arena, particular focus was paid to the authentication of a domestic bourgeoisie, who once nurtured and liberated by market forces, was seen as the driving force behind internal democratization. It was expected that the expansion of the private sector engendered by SAPs, would reduce intra-ruling class contestation over rent-seeking opportunities, diminish the use of state patronage networks, and in the process catalyze a 'bourgeois constituency' to tame the state and enthrone liberal democracy.

Of course, there is nothing new in this proposition. A host of liberal democratic theorists have maintained a causality between economic and political liberalization. Prominent among them, Milton Friedman, argued in his seminal

work *Capitalism and Freedom*, that:

the kind of economic organization that provides economic freedom directly, namely, competitive capitalism, also promotes political freedom because it separates economic power and political power and in this way enables the one to offset the other.²⁰

The centrality of a market economy to democratic change has been reiterated by Lindblom and more recently by Berger, Kim et al. and Fukuyama, with the demise of Eastern European and Soviet state socialism in the vein of ideological triumphalism over the supposed "unabashed victory of economic and political liberalism".²¹ Lindblom, in this context, argued that "only within market-oriented systems does political democracy arise."²² While these analysts agree that "not all market-oriented systems are democratic, every democratic system is [said to be] market oriented."²³ Similarly, Barrington Moore, some years ago contended, that a "vigorous and independent class of town dwellers has been an indispensable element in the growth of parliamentary democracy. No bourgeoisie, no

²⁰ Friedman cited in Richard Sandbrook, "Liberal Democracy in Africa: A Socialist-Revisionist Perspective" in The Canadian Journal of African Studies, vol.xxii, no.2, 1988, p.255-256.

²¹ Francis Fukuyama, "The End of History?" in The National Interest, no.16, Summer 1989, p.3.

²² Charles Lindblom cited in Samuel Decalo, "The Process, Prospects and Constraints of Democratization in Africa" in African Affairs, vol 91, no.362, 1992, p.23.

²³ Peter Berger, "The Uncertain Triumph of Democratic Capitalism" in Journal of Democracy, vol. 3, no.3, July, 1992. Also see similar views in Kim and Fukayama in this special issue on Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy.

democracy."²⁴ But what is new as Harsch recently noted, is the resonance in which this quintessential liberal assumption is being applied to Africa. A mechanistic relationship between structural adjustment, civil society, and democracy has become dogma in neo-liberal interpretations of the process of political and socio-economic change in Africa.

However, received neo-liberal postulates which see market reforms bringing about social and political freedoms at the level of the state and civil society, are simply not upheld by the African evidence. Our case study offers a unique and instructive backdrop for such an examination. Nigeria is one of the few -- if not the only of Africa's countries -- where the state inextricably linked the SAP to democratization; yet the country's experience challenges the validity of neo-liberal assumptions. Rather than the liberalism of SAP providing the impetus towards African democratization, it has been popular reaction to the harshness of the economic regime and the increasing authoritarianism the programme engendered that gave the immediate spark to social movements struggling for democratization. This has been the case with most countries that are 'adjusting' in the region. Over the past decade, *Anti-SAP* and *Anti-IMF* popular rebellions across Africa have been prolific. Usually popular protests have been spontaneous, even though they often spread nationwide and were

²⁴ Barrington Moore, Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966), p.418.

normally ignited by specific features of the adjustment package -- ie. devaluation, wage deflation, subsidy removals, increases in user fees -- underscoring the widespread grievances over declining living conditions.²⁵ Some notable cases of grievances included rising prices of wheat in Egypt, rice in Sierra Leone and maize-meal in Zambia, wage reductions and educational sector rationalization in Benin and Niger and increased taxation of public and private sector workers in Cote d'Ivoire. The Nigerian case has shown that mass demonstrations against socio-economic conditions have intensified in the adjustment period. They have been touched off by the recurrent devaluation of the naira (1990, 1992) and the intermittent removal of the 'subsidy' on domestic petroleum products (1988, 1989).

Popular protests in Africa have often been met with state suppression. In Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Senegal, and Zambia the state regularly flexed its repressive muscles in order to sustain the course of neo-liberal market reforms.²⁶ Most of the contributors to a recent edited volume on Authoritarianism, Democracy and Adjustment, agreed that authoritarianism has been an indelible feature of the adjustment exercise. Whether interpreting state repression as

²⁵ Thandika Mkandawire, "Democratic Face", p.309.

²⁶ Bjorn Beckman, "Empowerment or Repression? The World Bank and the Politics of African Adjustment" in Africa Development, vol.15, no.1, 1991, p.60-61. also reprinted in Gibbon et al., Authoritarianism, Democracy and Adjustment.

an outgrowth of SAPs or attributing its intensification to SAPs, they all concurred that the adjustment period engendered authoritarian relations between the state and civil society.²⁷ Keeping with the general African experience, most mass protests in Nigeria were short-lived and were often brutally crushed by the state in an attempt to dissuade opposition to its recovery programme. Rather being characterized by political liberalization, dialogue and consensus building the adjustment project for economic recovery has entailed increasing authoritarianism. While the Nigerian state occasionally made economic concessions to the subordinate classes, and consistently sought to co-opt the leadership of popular groups to support its programmes, it relied inordinately on suppression as the mode of social regulation and control. The regular banning of the NANS and ASUU, the 1988 dissolution and reconstitution of the NLC under statist control and the frequent arrest and detention of the leadership of trade, students and academic unions and women's groups and human rights NGOs are but a few Nigerian examples replicated elsewhere. The Nigerian experience is particularly interesting in that the state, a few years before the continent-wide wave of democratic transitions, launched a political programme to return the country to civil rule. The 1986 AFRC decision to embark on the PTP to Nigeria's Third Republic in tandem with the SAP, showed an acute awareness on

²⁷ Peter Gibbon et al., Authoritarianism, Democracy and Adjustment.

the part of the new military junta of the strength of popular forces on the ground. Indeed, with the firm coalition of different factions of national and transnational capital in support of the SAP, popular sectors of civil society were too fragmented and organizationally weak to make a political impact on the direction of economic recovery. Yet, the strongly embedded civic perception of military rule as an aberration, together with the widespread opposition in civil society to 'one-sided' austerity measure dating back to the late 1970s, compelled the state to open the question of the country's political and economic future to national debate.

Despite popular rejection of the neo-liberal market reforms and popular imprint on the proposed PTP, the state proceeded with the SAP and a statist PTP. The Nigerian experience has shown that the now defunct PTP of the Babangida regime, rather than entailing a transition to democracy was simply a coercive strategy to regulate political opposition to the government's contentious economic recovery programme, rather than a transition to democracy. From the inauguration of the 1986 national PTP debate through the annulment of the June 12 presidential elections, the transition programme was characterized by over-regimentation, manipulation, anti-democratic illls and the truncation of political space. The purported democratic transition, *sapped* (or *zapped*) civil liberties, press freedoms, the rule of law and political participation. But the attempt to hijack democratic impulses

in the civic terrain through the imposition of a top-down, guided, and sham PTP, could not quell contending forces from below in agitating for popular democracy. Commenting on the recent Nigerian experience, Olukoshi argued, that

the politics of the transition...generally fed into and [were] reinforced by the politics of the market reforms process and both...combined to produce, at the level of civil society, a growing struggle for popular democracy and, at the level of the state, an increasing disposition towards, intolerance, authoritarianism, and repression.²⁸

State repression tends to illicit various hidden and overt forms of resistance from civil society. In seeking to impose its hegemony in civil society through coercion, the state only alienated the majority of the people and intensified popular opposition. Individualized and spontaneous responses to the 'pains' of adjustment were increasingly transformed into collective, organized and broad-based campaigns against the SAP, but now they were linked to demands for civil liberties, human rights, accountability and popular participation. To be sure as Bangura rightfully noted, "struggles to protect living standards in the context of crisis and adjustment tend to take on a democratic character."²⁹ Towards the end of the 1980s, popular democratic struggles in Africa, which stretch back to colonialism, took on an explicitly political direction and a more vibrant expression. The increasing strength of democratic

²⁸ Adebayo Olukoshi, "General Introduction: From Crisis to Adjustment in Nigeria" in Olukoshi ed., The Politics, 1993, p.10.

²⁹ Yusef Bangura, "Authoritarian Rule and Democracy in Africa: A Theoretical Discourse" in Gibbon et al., Authoritarianism, Democracy and Adjustment, 1992, p.66.

forces led to an unprecedented number of political transitions away from autocracy not seen at such a scale since the period of decolonization.

But the bourgeois constituency expected by neo-liberal analysts to benefit from market reforms such that the strengthening of the accumulation base outside the ambit of the state also mitigated intra-ruling class rivalries, enabling them to play consensual politics and thereby lead democratic struggles have been unwilling and unreliable 'democrats'. It is true that adjustment policies of devaluation, privatization, and trade liberalization have moved factions -- if only tiny -- of the African ruling classes into productive activities, particularly in agriculture. With the initial price incentives which devaluation gave for accumulation in Nigeria's agrarian sector, several high ranking retired and serving military officers directed resources appropriated from the state into productive investments in agri-businesses. Some factions of capital have also benefitted from the on-going commercialization and privatization programme and are engaging in productive activities. However, in the social contestation within the higher circles over the benefits of the SAP, some sections of the capitalist class have prospered while other have dissipated or collapsed.

Chapter Two highlighted the disastrous impact of adjustment on industrial development and the acceleration of

pre-SAP processes of deindustrialization. The apex organizations of productive capital, such as the MAN, OPS and NACCIMA, continues to oppose key policy instrument of the recovery programme. Issues of interest and exchange rate deregulation and trade liberalization remain hotly contested among the dominant classes. While the productive activities of sections of domestic capital are constricted by a hostile SAP environment, huge profits still accrue to the dominant commercial or comprador faction together with their transnational allies. The market reforms and the process of informalization have also given birth to or nurtured an entirely new faction of emergency bankers, currency speculators, smugglers, drug traffickers and 4-1-9ers. In the second chapter we detailed these new lucrative, yet unproductive extra-legal modes of accumulation which thrive in the parallel economy through access to the state. Exhibiting parallels with Eastern European and Latin American countries undergoing market reforms, the SAP in Nigeria has fostered an unproductive 'paper' capitalism.

Conflict over scarce resources and the direction of SAP in Nigeria has sharpened intra-ruling class divisions and contradictions. On this point, Agbese noted that the oil rents of the 1970s and statist intervention through the policies of ISI and indigenization programmes had sought to foster a productive ruling class and encourage its material and social cohesion, but that the on-going crisis of accumulation eroded

the fragile unity which local elites may have enjoyed in the post-civil war period.³⁰ With decreasing state largesse and constraints on domestic accumulation, the internal struggle over state power for private ends intensified. As a result, traditional ruling class modes of accumulation, such as contract inflation, kickbacks, and the outright embezzlement of public funds have been strengthened and state patronage, nepotism and corruption have reached new heights. In the fierce competition over scarce resources, the historical tools of ethnic, regional and religious manipulation were readily mobilized. The acute struggle over the sale of prized state parastatals, in which the government's privatization programme continues to be beset by ethnic and regional conflicts, is indicative of this tension.³¹

Nowhere was the intensity of ruling class conflict for state power more glaring than in the largely opportunistic responses of the political class to the PTP. At every stage of the transition process the political class reaffirmed its lack of commitment to democracy. Politics still remained an investment. The widespread infusion of money into the electoral competition, the readiness to exploit ethnic, religious and regional cleavages, the ease with which political thuggery and violence were encouraged was indicative of their collective democratic resolve. Neither crisis

³⁰ Pita Agbese, "Impeding Demise", p.37.

³¹ Olukoshi, "General Introduction".

management meetings, various zoning formulas apportioning political office on the basis of region and ethnicity, nor the much utilized 'settlement politics', could mitigate these tensions. The divisions and crass opportunism within the political class reduced their overall political weight and enabled the dominant military faction to manipulate and control the PTP. This is why the political class acquiesced to the impositions placed on the two statist political parties and the constant government tinkering with the PTP, and it is why they were divided on the popular verdict of the June 12 presidential election after its annulment by the military junta. Rather than leading, or at the very least supporting pro-democracy struggles to uphold the sanctity of the elections and expansion of the democratic space, they largely divorced themselves from the mass activities organized by the CD. When the June 12 mandate increasingly seemed unrealizable they jockeyed instead for posts in the ING. Later, a faction, which included the president-elect, MKO Abiola, even went so far as to invite the military to intervene in the political impasse. Solidarity visits by the president elect and other members of the political class welcoming the Abacha junta, -- after the coup had dissolved all democratic institutions -- together with the co-optation of elected public official into the new military regime are more indications of the opportunism of the political class. There is, therefore, very little evidence from the Nigerian experience of a 'proper'

bourgeois class being engendered by adjustment to galvanize democratic struggles. This remains the case notwithstanding the renewed agitation by factions of the political class to realize the June 12 mandate. In spite of the recent formation of the National Democratic Coalition (NADECO) -- which provided a platform for the political confrontation against the Abacha junta -- and the apparent resolve of MKO Abiola to be relevant in this contestation, the political class has consistently exposed its instrumentalist endearment to democracy as an avenue for gaining access to the state for private accumulation.

The renewal of demands for democracy have also been attributed to the impetus given by the end of the 'cold war' and the democratic convulsions in other world regions. This interpretation has gained particular resonance in the Western journalistic literature. Changes in Africa are said to be conditioned by "the modernizing impact of an expanding global economy...and of successful democratic revolutions, mainly in Eastern Europe."³² Adduced to a universal historical process and a 'diffusionist effect', recent democratic transitions in Africa are seen to merely mimic or even stem directly from Eastern European upheavals. Closely associated with mainstream analysis which emphasizes the exogenous causes to current political developments in Africa, some analysts, such as

³² Michael Bratton and Nicholas van de Walle, "Popular Protest and Political Reform in Africa" in Comparative Politics, vol.24, no.4, 1992, p.419-420.

Munslow and Williams, asserted that much of the drive towards the restoration of multiparty politics is derived from the pressure exerted by Western governments utilizing the leverage given by Africa's debt peonage.³³ An editorial in the publication Africa Confidential made a similar observation, noting that "the principal causes of Africa's wind of change is the World Bank and donor countries."³⁴

Since the early 1990s, donor communities have added political conditionalities to the litany of strings attached to foreign aid disbursements and debt relief concessions to Third World countries. In part, the change in perception over the political dimension of the African crisis was prompted by the collapse of the Second World, which seemed to vindicate Western value systems. In the context of ideological triumphalism and the jubilant intellectual atmosphere that surrounds the American-declared 'New World Order', the cloud of cold-war rivalry which had rendered democracy unfeasible in the Third World, now revealed a silver lining, as the West sought to consummate its global hegemony. To be sure, other than the ideological imperative to the recent Western advocacy of democratic reforms in Africa, the new policy position was a tacit recognition of the sharpened contestation within and outside of Africa around the abysmal performance of neo-

³³ Barry Munslow and A.B. Zack-Williams "Editorial: Development and Democracy" in ROAPE, no.49, 1990, p.5-6.

³⁴ anon., "Africa: The Roots of Reform" in Africa Confidential, vol.31, no.15, 1990, p.3.

liberal market reforms. The 1989 World Bank LPTS, in which the Bank appeared to shed its 'apolitical' cloak by strongly calling for civil liberties, human rights and democracy, was a placating response to the Bank's critics but seemed to signal the beginning of a new shift in policy dialogue between the IFIs and African countries. In a review of the Bank's 1989 Report, Gibbon observed that the study,

performs an intellectual balancing act between acknowledging that economic conditions in Sub-Saharan Africa have deteriorated sharply in the 1980s, and claiming that the structural adjustment had been a success. As such it had to address, at least indirectly, the question of why the structural adjustment framework had proven an inadequate instrument of stabilisation in some countries at least.³⁵

However, the Bank did not reconcile the contradiction between its pronounced success of SAP in Africa and the glaring economic evidence to the contrary; nor did it fully address the mounting criticisms from the ILO and UNICEF, among others that highlighted the disastrous impact of SAPs on vulnerable groups. But the Bank did have to contend with the growing evidence, stressed by the UNECA, NGOs, domestic social movements and radical critics, that SAP engendered increasing authoritarianism. The IMF/World Bank monitoring teams who intermittently visited 'adjusting' countries observed the intensified agitation around adjustment and predatory rule. If not prompted to now show a concern for democracy on the basis of glaring evidence, these economists at the very least had to

³⁵ Peter Gibbon, "Structural Adjustment and Pressures towards Multipartyism in Sub-Saharan Africa" in Peter Gibbon et al., Authoritarianism, Democracy and Adjustment, 1992, p.139.

address the opposition to SAP from below and the implications this had for the sustainability of neo-liberal market reforms. This is a crucial, but seldom recognized objective impetus which inspired the policy shift of multilateral and bilateral donors towards the issue of 'good governance.' It is important to appreciate the underlying imperative behind the call from outside Africa for multiparty democracy.

As we argue below, the attachment of governance criteria to further neo-liberal market reforms begs the question: how much does the new donor policy position reflect a long-term commitment to people-centred democratic development in Africa versus an opportunistic initiative to foist a temporary 'managerial' democracy in order to sustain and consolidate the structural adjustment programme?

In the short-term, several speeches, policy statements and declarations by Western governments and aid agencies, particularly from the U.S. and Africa's major colonial powers, Britain and France, seemed to reconfirm the new Western stand on democracy. Speaking in June 1990 at the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), the British Foreign Secretary, Douglas Hurd, announced that the British government would "consider potential recipients of aid in light of certain criteria [which *inter alia* included]... a shift towards pluralism, public accountability, respect for the rule of law,

human rights and market principles."³⁶ A year later, this view point was enunciated in detail by Lynda Chalker, Minister of Overseas Development and the Foreign Office Minister of State responsible for Africa, when she delivered a keynote address on *Good Governance and Aid Programmes* to the ODI in mid-1991.³⁷ In the same policy direction, Francois Mitterand, the French President, disclosed at the biannual French/African Summit of Heads of State at La Baule in June 1990, that "France will link its contributions (aid and debt relief) to efforts designed to lead to greater liberty and democracy."³⁸ Similarly, the United States became an ardent proponent of political conditionalities. Now unable to legitimize its 'cold war' support for authoritarian regimes in the name of curbing an encroaching 'communist threat' the U.S. linked aid to political indicators. Observance of human rights, press freedoms, and pluralist politics were central themes in the 1990 policy statement titled *Democracy Initiatives*, released by the United Agency for International Development (USAID).³⁹ At the 1991 Commonwealth Conference, Canada in tandem with Britain vehemently linked aid to good governance. Later that

³⁶ Douglas Hurd cited in Stephen P. Riley, *The Democratic Transition in Africa: An End to the One Party State*, (London: Conflict Studies no.245, published by the Research Institute for the Study of Conflict and Terrorism, 1991), p.10.

³⁷ Riley, *Democratic Transition*, p.10.

³⁸ Riley, *Democratic Transition*, p.9.

³⁹ USAID cited in Schmitz and Hutchful, *Popular Participation*, p.23.

year, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) published a policy document *Africa 21: A Vision of Africa for the 21st Century* which also called for good governance but lacked the forcefulness of public pronouncements from the External Relations Department, linking Canadian foreign aid to human rights and democracy.⁴⁰ Scandinavian countries also issued similar statements. In 1990, the *Monde Declaration* of Nordic Ministers for Development Cooperation stated that "lack of progress in the democratization process will effect the willingness of donors to provide aid."⁴¹ Correspondingly, organizations of advanced capitalist countries, such as the OECD, also released reports to this effect. The OECD/DAC 1990 Report began by declaring that "allocation decisions henceforth will be more influenced than in the past by the country's record on human rights and democratic practices."⁴² Recently, the European Union (EU) has linked democratic and free market criteria to its aid disbursement to African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries. Manuel Marin, the EU Commissioner for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid,

⁴⁰ CIDA, *Africa 21: A Vision of Africa for the 21st Century* (Ottawa: CIDA: Africa and the Middle East Branch, 1991). See also an address by the then Canadian Minister of External Relations, Monique Landry, at a Round Table discussion in Ottawa, June 1991, reprinted in full in *Africa Recovery*, vol.5, no.2-3, 1991, p.50-51.

⁴¹ Bard-Anders Andreassen and Theresa Swinehart, "Promoting Human Rights in Poor Countries: The New Political Conditionality of Aid Policies" in Bard-Anders Andreassen and Theresa Swinehart eds., *Human Rights in Developing Countries: Yearbook 1991*, (Oslo: Scandinavian University Press, 1992), p.vii.

⁴² Andreassen and Swinehart, "Promoting Human Rights", p.vii.

stated that the aid conditionalities would feature prominently in Lome IV (1990-2000), the recurrent trade and aid convention between the 12 EU and 70 ACP countries.⁴³ In like manner, the world's largest aid donor Japan -- surpassed the US in 1991 -- and growing player in African development, has also made good governance a central principle of its aid policy. The recently released *Tokyo Declaration* adopted in October 1993 at the Tokyo International Conference on African Development, stipulated that Japan's aid to Africa will be tied to military, environmental and democratic criteria.⁴⁴

Of course, recent political transitions in Africa are not totally unrelated to changes in the global economy nor to the overwhelming and strong demands by donor communities for human rights and democracy, as highlighted above. The collapse of state socialism in Eastern Europe had serious implications for many African regimes. At the level of the state, the demise of Eastern European socialism and the end of the 'cold war' meant that African countries could no longer play upon superpower rivalries for military, technical and financial aid to prop up and reproduce their predatory rule. While the influence of the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in Africa was always more apparent than real, as indicated by the low level of aid

⁴³ Shada Islam "Europe Toughens Terms for ACP Countries" in *Africa Recovery*, December 1993-March 1994, p.21.

⁴⁴ R.C.F. Sweinnerton, "Japan Raises its Profile in Africa" in *Africa Recovery*, December 1993-March 1994, p.34. See also "Japan Spotlights African Development" in the same volume.

disbursements, trade, and investment in this region,⁴⁵ their dramatic collapse did lead to an ideological and deeper economic crisis for the handful of African state socialist regimes. In like manner, the end of the 'cold war' also 'orphaned' the majority of the authoritarian regime in Africa which had been supported by the West. Dictators could no longer be backed by Western patrons in the name of curbing Soviet incursions, nor internal popular contestation for democracy delegitimized "as the Trojan horse for Soviet subvention."⁴⁶

At the level of civil society, the psychological effect of democratic struggles in Eastern Europe may have impacted on African democratic movements. Indeed, many popular groups, NGOs, and civil organizations have symbolically drawn on these experiences to fuel the on-going domestic democratic struggles. However, it is erroneous and indeed Eurocentric to attribute recent democratic changes in Africa to a knee-jerk reaction to Eastern European experiences. The latest and intensified phase of democratic contestations in Africa not to mention its historical antecedent, began long before the Eastern European state socialists *denouement*. Popular opposition movements at the current stage of democratic

⁴⁵ Julius Ihonvbere, "The Dynamics of Change in Eastern Europe and Their Implications for Africa" in Coexistence: A Journal of East-West Relations, 1991.

⁴⁶ Mahmood Mamdani, "Africa: Democratic Theory and Democratic Struggles" in Dissent, Special edition on Africa) Summer 1992, p.312.

struggles in Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Gabon, Zaire, Zambia, and Nigeria existed well before the collapse of the Eastern Bloc. Moreover, popular forces have drawn on experiences closer to home. The Palestinian 'Intifada' of the West Bank and Gaza, the *Sopi* (Change) youth rebellion in Dakar, Senegal,⁴⁷ the popular struggles in South Africa and the resultant lifting of the ban on the ANC, PAC, SACP, etc., and the release of Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners were more of an influence on African democratic struggles than those emanating from other contexts.

Similarly, the influence of Western political conditionalities should not be exaggerated. While it is true that the drastic reduction in Africa's geo-strategic relevance in recent years has tempered this imperative in the policy consideration of donor communities towards this region, the internal struggles for democratic development in Africa predate Western pressures. As just alluded to, constraints on post-colonial popular democratic struggles in Africa have often come from Western support and "direct complicity...which sustained and gave legitimacy to most of the authoritarian regimes in Africa."⁴⁸ Throughout the 1980s favoured one-party and no-party states continued to receive the support of donor communities. The 29-year-old dictatorship in Zaire was

⁴⁷ Mamdani, "Democratic Theory", p.312.

⁴⁸ Thandika Mkandawire, "North-South Links and Democratization in Africa" in Development, Journal of SID, no.3/4, 1991, p.39.

inaugurated by the US. The US government for most of this period shored up this regime along with the country's two other major patrons, France and its ex-colonizer Belgium. For decades, the aged tyrant Mobutu Sese Seko and the kleptocracy surrounding his regime were tolerated by Western patrons keen on maintaining access to the resource-rich country, which was also strategically located as a base to supply rebel forces fighting the then Marxists-MPLA government in neighbouring Angola.⁴⁹ Similarly, Britain for several years overlooked the wanton abuse of human-rights in Kenya and Malawi where it had strong economic and geo-strategic interests. Consistent with other advanced capitalist countries, France up until 1990 intervened to prop-up corrupt and dictatorial regimes in Francophone Africa. The squalor and tyranny of 'Emperor Bokassa's regime in the Central African Republic and the equally decadent and dictatorial rule of the 'Wise Old Man of Yamoussoukro', Houphouet-Boigny's regime in Cote d'Ivoire was supported by the French government for several years.⁵⁰ France had also periodically intervened in Chad and Togo and was reported in March 1990 by the publication Africa Confidential, to have agitated against the introduction of multiparty politics in Benin and Gabon, on the eve of pronouncing its new found commitment to human rights, liberty

⁴⁹ Shawn H. McCormick, "Zaire II: Master of the Game?" in Current History, May 1994, p.224.

⁵⁰ anon., "Africa: The Roots of Reform" in Africa Confidential vol.31, no.15, 1990, p.3.

and democracy.⁵¹ The outright support of African dictatorships given legitimacy by the logic of the 'cold war' also received intellectual credence from developmental circles.

In the first chapter, I illuminated the established tradition in Western academic circles which advocated for authoritarian forms of government in the Third World, as an unfortunate, but necessary sacrifice in the process of development. There was a shared belief among international development students, development economists, project managers, technocrats, aid agencies and the IFIs, that dictatorial regimes were conducive to economic growth and development.

While the shift by donor communities towards issues of governance and human rights has been welcomed by many African democrats, NGOs and popular groups, they remain sceptical of the new Western aid policy given this historical antecedent. Already such suspicions have been validated by the West's inconsistent application of the new aid conditionally on human rights performances and democratic principles. Despite the general devaluation of Western strategic interests in Africa, in many cases the West has shown ambivalence toward long-favoured 'friendly tyrants', although in some cases the West has attenuated its outright support. Britain, for example,

⁵¹ Africa Confidential, March 9, 1990, cited in Riley, Democratic, p.9.

before the recent electoral ouster of the octogenarian and sycophantically staunch ally and self-styled Life-President, Kamuzu Hastings Banda of Malawi, was treated with 'velvet gloves' for a couple of years after Britain's 1990 declared commitment to human rights, manifest simply by mere diplomatic prodding to hold multiparty elections, although along with the U.S and the European Union it later froze all economic assistance in 1992.⁵²

In like manner, Britain and other donors continued to maintain aid to Kenya, amidst widespread documented accounts of massive abuse of human rights and repression of opposition groups by the Arap Moi regime, all taking place in the new era of political conditionalities.⁵³ Later the West's did stop the disbursement of aid to Kenya and together with internal popular contestation compelled the regime to hold multiparty elections in December 1992. But President Moi manipulated the transition process and rigged his way back into power, although aided by a fractionalized civil society and a divided and opportunistic political class.⁵⁴

In Zaire, this scenario has been all too familiar. Four years after Mobutu's 1990 announcement of a one-year political transition programme (PTP) from one party rule to multiparty

⁵² John Edlin, "Banda's Ghastly Legacy" in New African, July/August 1994, p.24. See also Baffour Ankomah, "Good Night, Dr. Banda" in New African, July/August 1994, p.8.

⁵³ Andreassen and Swinehart "Promoting Human Rights", p.xvii.

⁵⁴ anon., "Split Decision" in Africa Report, March-April 1993.

democracy, he still comfortably holds the reigns of power. Superseded perhaps only by General Babangida of Nigeria, he has masterly manipulated the PTP, co-opted and divided the opposition, fostered and exploited ethnic cleavages and outrightly repressed popular leaders and groups. Unilaterally, the Mobutu government has constantly suspended and abrogated the decisions of the sovereign national conference (SNC), the democratic mechanism to guide the PTP. Composed of 2,840 delegates, the SNC, which represents all social classes and strata in civil society, in August 1992 elected Etienne Tshisekedi as Prime Minister and head of a transitional government; and it also sanctioned the formation of a 453-member High Council to draft and ratify a new constitution, which was later nullified by the ruling government. Although the U.S., France and Belgium publicly condemned Mobutu's documented human rights abuses and the regime's arbitrary and regular suspension of the SNC, they seemed reluctant to exert strong and sustaining pressure on the recalcitrant dictatorship.⁵⁵

The West has given credence to these actions and legitimacy to Mobutu's regime, by failing to impose punitive sanctions and instead advocating new talks between Mobutu and the opposition. Indeed, the U.S. Clinton Administration and their French and Belgian counterparts reduced aid

⁵⁵ Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja, "Zaire: Moving Beyond Mobutu" in Current History, May 1994, p.219.

disbursements in order to compel Mobutu to liberalize the political terrain. Likewise, the World Bank ceased aid allotments in November 1993.⁵⁶ In the case of the Bank, however, this reprisal was motivated by Zaire's failure to produce US\$ 25 million in debt arrears rather than any democratic consideration. Currently, the US is again showing its complicity with the Mobutu dictatorship. It has unilaterally decided that Prime Minister Tshisekedi is not fit to lead the interim government despite his overwhelming support from the SNC and equally firm civic base of the Union for Democracy and Social Progress, the party he represents. Just like the inconsistent US response to the three year old Haitian crisis and the occasional tyrannical portrayal of the militarily deposed but popularly elected President Aristide, the US and Zaire's other Western patrons seem more interested in a compromise candidate, malleable as Mobutu and agreeable to factions of transnational and national capital.⁵⁷

Similarly, with the end of the 'cold war' hopes were renewed that the cessation of superpower rivalry fought on Angolan soil would lead to the end of the 16 year civil war -- between the Peoples Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), the former Marxist government and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), the rebel forces

⁵⁶ McCormick, "Zaire II", p.227.

⁵⁷ See excerpts of statements made by Herman Cohen, former US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs cited in McCormick, "Zaire II", p.226.

--, again tested Western commitment to democracy and political conditionalities. While in light of the changing global political economy, both Cuba and the former Soviet Union ceased financial and military support to the MPLA, the US maintained its commitment to UNITA and the 'democratic freedom fighter' Jonas Savimbi that it and the former apartheid regime in South Africa created and fuelled in the struggle to curb 'Soviet incursions' in Southern Africa.⁵⁸ Right up to the May 1991 Bicesse Peace Accord ending the civil war, the U.S. continued to support UNITA and in the ensuing period showed an ambivalence towards the peace process and its sustainability. Where the U.S committed an estimated \$75 million to UNITA in the preceding years before the cease-fire, a paltry \$14.5 million in aid was disbursed to support the transition to multiparty rule and the demobilization and unification of government and UNITA forces.⁵⁹ When in September 1992, UNITA refused to honour its resounding defeat in elections judged to be free and fair by national and international monitors and subsequently renewed the civil war, the U.S seemed unable or unwilling to exact punitive sanctions on its long-time client for derailing the peace process. While initially unable to bring UNITA to the negotiation table, the Bush Administration

⁵⁸ James G. Blight and Thomas G. Weiss, "Must the Grass Still Suffer? Some Thoughts on Third World Conflicts After the Cold War" in Third World Quarterly, vol.13, no.2, 1992.

⁵⁹ Deepa Ollapally, "The South Looks North: The Third World in the New World Order" in Current History, April 1993, p.179.

refused to recognize the MPLA government, giving tacit encouragement to UNITA to continue the war.⁶⁰ In like manner, the new Clinton administration initially resisted conferring the MPLA regime recognition and had no clear policy towards Angola, although it did send across the television and radio waves in Angola a strong message to UNITA, warning its former allies not to attack property owned by Americans, and in particular the lucrative and strategic US dominated oil installations in the northern enclave of Cabinda.⁶¹ In mid-1993, in the wake of the breakdown of the Abidjan peace talks largely instigated by UNITA, the US did belatedly officially recognize the Angolan government, but it remains ambivalent towards the persisting civil war, which again brings into question the U.S. commitment to human rights and democracy in the post-cold war period.

Perhaps nowhere is the Western resolve and commitment to the new political conditionalities in Africa more transparent and catastrophic than in its response to the current Rwandan crisis. Long before the BBC and CNN daily broadcasts brought into Western living rooms graphic pictures of mass slaughter of civilians⁶² in the renewed civil war in Rwanda following

⁶⁰ Andrew Meldrum, "Two Steps Back" in Africa Report, March-April, 1993, p.46.

⁶¹ Meldrum, "Two Steps Back", p.46. See also Chris Simpson, "The Undemocratic Game" in Africa Report, July/August 1993.

⁶² Conservative figures on civilian casualties are estimated at 500,000, while over 2 million refugees have fled the small landlocked country of 6 million during the recently ended four month civil war.

the April 6, 1994 killing of the Rwandan President Juvenal Habyarimana, the West was quite complacent about the restoration of democratic rule to the country. Of course the crisis in Rwanda has historical roots and proximate causes, internal and external dimensions, but of immediate concern here is the reaction of the West, particularly that of France to the crisis since 1990 when the civil war began. One commentator has pointedly noted that "Rwanda has no strategic significance, no wealth, too many people, and not enough land."⁶³ Indeed, Rwanda has no resources of significance for global accumulation. Its chief export commodity, coffee, is produced in abundance globally and the country ranks among the most densely populated in the world. In spite of having little or no economic relevance to the West, since the colonial period, Belgium (Rwanda's ex-colonizer) and later the U.S. have shown a strategic interest in Rwanda, largely for its proximity to resource-rich Zaire. Over the last three decades, the French also sought to influence events in Rwanda, again with an eye towards Zaire. Much like its 1991 military intercession in support of the ruling dictator Omar Bongo in Gabon, its backing of the electorally ousted, but equally 'friendly tyrant' Paul Biya in Cameroon and its general indifference to the recalcitrance of the initially deposed despot Gnassingbe Eyadema in Togo, France in its intervention

⁶³ Lindsey Hilsum, "Settling Scores" in Africa Report, May-June, 1994, p.16.

in Rwanda has been consistent in its commitment to maintain la francophone in Africa, and in spite of its stated unequivocal support for democratic change in the region.⁶⁴

After the signing of the August 1993 Arusha Peace Accord, -- the agreement reached between the ruling National Republican Movement for Democracy and Development (MRND) and the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) ending the three year civil war -- which laid out a power sharing arrangement and a PTP to have culminated in multiparty elections in 1995, the French and the West did not withdraw foreign aid to pressure the corrupt, dictatorial and increasingly recalcitrant ruling government.⁶⁵ Despite an impending military defeat and some international diplomatic pressure, the authoritarian and ethnic-based MRND government remained bent on subverting the peace accord in order to retain its power and privileges. Instead of strong Western reprisals, the French continued to support Habyarimana -- who was also a close personal friend to President Mitterand and family -- through financial assistance, military aid and training, as it had done over the years.⁶⁶ In the era of political conditionalities, the French

⁶⁴ Francois Misser and Alan Rake, "Battle for Francophone Africa" in New Africa, February 1993, p.12-13.

⁶⁵ Hilsum, "Settling Scores", p.16.

⁶⁶ France was a major supplier of weapons to the Rwandan army during the civil war (1990-1993) with French paratroopers also providing military training to Rwandan troops and commandos. Of course, French armaments have fallen into the hands of government sponsored local militia, an integral cog for much of the current genocidal operation against Tutsi citizens and the massacre of political opponents. see Francois Misser, "Belgium and France Beg to Differ" in New African, June 1994, p.15. See also Hilsum "Settling Scores", 1994

ignored the wanton abuse of human rights, the massacre of pro-democracy and human right activists, journalist, opposition politicians (both Bahutu and Watutsi), by the Presidential Guard as well as the state sponsored and supported death squads, known as the "Zero Network". For three years before the current embroglio the French remained supportive of the ruling government's desperate machination designed to cling to power. Amidst growing state manipulation of ethnic cleavages and widespread documentation of the indiscriminate killing of minority Twa and Watutsi civilians, by state sponsored and Bahutu dominated local militia, the *Interahamwe* (Those who Attack Together) and the *Impuzamugambi* (Those who have the Same Goal), the French government remained largely silent.⁶⁷ France and the West have distanced themselves from the Rwandan debacle. Despite the 'cold war' strategic interest in Rwanda, in the new global conjuncture Rwanda proved 'too poor, too remote and too Black' to deserve the type of Western response exhibited towards geo-strategic regions, such as Eastern Europe. Amidst the genocidal killings of Tutsi civilians, the UN first reduced its 5,000 UNAMIR-I troops to 500 and got caught up in bureaucratic inertia after the security council decided a month into the renewed conflict to send a UNAMIR-2

and "Arming Rwanda: The Arms Trade in the Rwandan Civil War", Human Rights Watch Arms Project, January 1994.

⁶⁷ anon., "Operation Genocide" in New African, July/August 1994. See also: Anver Versi, "Rwanda's Killing Fields" in New African, June 1994. and anon., "Why Rwanda?" in West Africa, June 27-July 3, 1994.

force to the country. To be sure, the humanitarian INGO community have been mobilized, setting up refugee camps in eastern Zaire. Similarly, the French established a UN sanctioned security zone in southwestern Rwanda to provide a safe-haven for refugees, though it is currently pulling out of the region. Likewise, Western governments have sent food and medical aid, although not nearly in sufficient quantities. The response of the West to the Rwandan conflict has been ambivalent at best, stemming from a crisis which in no small measure it exacerbated, if not engendered.⁶⁸

These are but a few examples to clearly exhibit the contradictions in the application of political conditionalities in Africa today. Rather than a genuine commitment to democratic development in this region, Riley suggests "that examples may only be made of unimportant countries, ex-left-wing regimes, or states which matter little to the West"⁶⁹ in the enforcement of democratic criteria attached to aid. In support of this position the African Confidential also observed, that

the selectivity with which these new criteria are being applied suggests that an insistence on good governance could be used as an excuse to abandon those countries considered basket cases while maintaining leverage over the more interesting ones, with

⁶⁸ At the renewal of the conflict between the MRND and RPF in April 1994, the UN peacekeeping forces, the UN Mission of Assistance to Rwanda (UNAMIR) was reduced from 2500 to 500 troops. The U.S. (through neighbouring Burundi) France and Belgium (directly) sent troops into the country solely to rescue their nationals from the conflict.

⁶⁹ Riley, Democratic Transitions, p.12.

less regard to the standards they adopt.⁷⁰

In any case, Ake has argued that political conditionalities are more apparent than real. He maintained that since "Western resources available for Africa have diminished with the economic and strategic marginalization of [the region], so has...Western leverage."⁷¹ While it is true that official development assistance to Africa has diminished in recent years, dropping from 19.7 billion in 1990 to 12.1 billion in 1992,⁷² I disagree with Ake's inference that Western leverage in the region may be declining. It is true that Ake's position can be further buttressed by the African Confidential's position that political conditionalities may give the West the pretext to reduce resource flows to Africa. But, Africa's debt peonage provides sufficient leverage to impose trade sanctions and prohibit access to commercial credit among other reprisals to enforce the democracy criteria on 'choice' countries. However, I do agree with Ake's observation that the Western commitment to political conditionalities is suspect, not even to mention its catalytic impact on democratic change in Africa since donor countries are now "leaving its [administering] to its multilateral agencies, the World Bank and IMF who

⁷⁰ anon., "The Roots of Reform", p.3-4.

⁷¹ Ake, "Democratizes", p.14.

⁷² World Bank/UNECA statistics cited in Tim Wall, "Africa Agenda Needs Stronger Support: UN" in Africa Recovery, December 1993-March 1994 p.36. See also Roy Laishley, "Africa Faces Aid Cuts" in Africa Recovery, November 1992, p.3.

apparently have no feeling for democracy."⁷³ Already, we are seeing the revival and increasing intellectual currency of at least an indifference towards authoritarian rule, if not its advocacy in Western academic and policy circles. Despite the recent emphasis on good governance and the overwhelming evidence discrediting the developmental record of dictatorships, Ernest Harsh's recent article cited an argument in support of the *ancien regime* advanced by Carol Lancaster, the US Clinton administration appointee as deputy administrator to the USAID. She argued that,

where a democratically elected government proved weak, inept, or corrupt, its replacement by a competent military government could, in the long run, lead to more rapid development and the prospect for a better standard of living for that country's citizens...Where a new military government appears stable and competent, the United States should continue financing on-going aid projects....⁷⁴

Also, within multilateral finance policy circles "a courageous, ruthless and perhaps undemocratic government...to ride roughshod over the newly created special interest group"⁷⁵ in the Third World, remains a much preferred political framework for the anti-popular neo-liberal market reforms. This position advanced by Deepak Lal -- an influential World Bank policy adviser -- at the inception of the adjustment drive in the Third World, according to Toye was

⁷³ Ake, "Democratizes", p.14.

⁷⁴ Carol Lancaster cited in Ernest Harsch, "Structural Adjustment and Africa's Democracy Movement" in Africa Today, 4th Quarter, 1993, p.27. See also Carol Lancaster "Reform or Else?" in Africa Report, July-August, 1990.

⁷⁵ Deepak Lal cited in Mkandawire, "North-South", p.40.

widely acclaimed and seems to endure until today.⁷⁶ Returning to Gibbon's assessment of the 1989 World Bank LTPS, he noted that because of the difficulties in finding monitorable performance indicators, the danger which 'conditionality overload' or 'fatigue' may pose for the sustainability of economic reforms, in addition to the intellectual preeminence of received neo-liberal wisdom which sees democracy as 'slowing things down', the Bank may well revert back to its technocratic and apolitical posture.⁷⁷ Another commentator on the LTPS, Robert Browne had observed that

the LTPS...is just a Bank publication...in World Bank circles it is perceived as leaning towards the radical side because of its tentative tone as regard SAPs, its call for involvement of non-professional persons and organizations in the development process, its open allusion to corruption among recipient governments, and for other heresies. Merely because the forces of enlightenment succeeded in obtaining publication of the document does not guarantee that the bureaucracy will be mobilized to implement it.⁷⁸

The 'enlightened forces' of the World Bank seem to have retreated from the vehement governance call of the LTPS, in its latest study of the region Adjustment in Africa: Reforms, Results and the Road Ahead (1993). In a volte-face from the LTPS, the 1993 Report noticeably treats the question of good governance, empowerment and grassroots participation with a

⁷⁶ John Teye, "Interest Group Politics and Implementation of Adjustment Policies in Sub-Saharan Africa" in Gibbon et al., Authoritarianism, Democracy and Adjustment, 1992, p.109.

⁷⁷ Gibbon, "Multipartyism", p.143.

⁷⁸ Robert S. Browne, "The Continuing Debate on African Development" in TransAfrica Forum, vol.7, no.2, 1990, p.34-35.

passing interest.⁷⁹ It again reflects the contestation around political conditionalities in Washington policy circles, and the erroneous analysis which attributes democratic change in Africa to Western democratic resolve and pressure.

Beyond political changes in East European, beyond Western political conditionalities, and beyond the democratic drive of a bourgeois constituency born out of the neo-liberal mechanistic union of economic and political liberalization, we must look elsewhere for an explanation of the impetus towards African democratization. I have argued and exhibited with specific reference to Nigeria that a continuity exists between democratic agitation dating back to the period of decolonization and the reinvigorated popular struggles in recent years. The basis of these agitations are in response to the failure of post-colonial development, the corrupt and repressive character of the state and to the marginalization of popular forces in the development process. It underscores the widespread desire for a new popular politics to provide the political framework for democratic development and the betterment of life chances of the poor majority. I have also attributed the proximate causes of the renewed democratic agitation to the social economic exigencies of SAPs and the increasing authoritarianism the programme engendered. While Eastern European state socialist *denouement* and Western

⁷⁹ World Bank, Adjustment in Africa: Reforms, Results and the Road Ahead, (New York: Oxford University Press for the World Bank, 1993).

political conditionalities may have provided a favourable international environment for and a belated recognition of these struggles, if we are to fully understand the form and content of the democratic project being articulated from below, it is important that due cognizance is taken of the underlying factors behind the popular movements. The following sections draw attention to the alternatives for democratic development in Africa in the 1990s and the challenges ahead.

SECTION TWO: AFRICA'S NASCENT CIVIC TERRAIN: CONTRADICTIONS, CONFLICTS AND NEW HOPES

In spite of increasing political liberalization in recent years, which culminated with the removal of some erstwhile authoritarian regimes, Africa's democratic map remains very patchy. In countries currently undergoing a transition toward multiparty politics, the process has been replete with contradictions and conflicts. In other countries where a democratically elected government has been installed and constitutional reforms instituted, democratic gains remain contested and far from consolidated. While the diversity of African countries and the incompleteness of recent political development, make it difficult to provide an all encompassing typology of the pattern of political change, most democratic transitions in the region fall into one of three categories. The specificities of the recent and successful democratic

transitions in Eritrea and South Africa after decades of national liberation struggles against Ethiopian domination and apartheid (respectively) provide two notable exceptions to our classification. But from the promising to the catastrophic, liberalizing transitions in Africa can be characterized as either (1) 'successful', (2) 'problematic' or (3) 'disintegrative'.

Several African nations have undergone **successful** transitions to democratic rule. In countries such as Benin, Cape Verde, Congo, Niger, Sao Tome and Principe and Zambia, popular agitation has compelled entrenched dictatorships to initiate institutional reforms on the way to introducing competitive multiparty elections. Although in many instances the transition process was top-down, (ie. Cape Verde and Zambia) a presidential aspirant from the opposition parties (Carlos Veiga and Frederick Chiluba) defeated the incumbent despot (Aristedes Pereira and Kenneth Kaunda) in elections generally adjudged by national and international monitors as free and fair.⁸⁰ Providing a contrasting transition model to democratic rule, popular forces in certain countries in Francophone Africa (Benin, Niger, Congo) have initiated an innovative and bottom up modality to catalyze political

⁸⁰ Riley, Democratic Transition. See also Carolyn Baylies and Morris Szeftel, "The Fall and Rise of Multi-Party Politics in Zambia" in ROAPE, no.54, 1992.

restructuring.⁸¹ The realization of a sovereign national conference (SNC) offered a novel transitional mechanism. Fatton has described the SNC as representing the "culmination of civil society's revenge against bankrupt, unpopular and corrupt regimes... and the *cahiers de doléances* of the disenfranchised."⁸² Giving a forum for the assemblage of a broad cross-section of civil society, the SNC has created a national cathartic moment where formerly suppressed political, social and economic issues of critical national importance are debated on a national platform by conferees. Often lasting several months, delegates from the onset declared the sovereignty of the conference to supersede all institutional powers. Commonly, the conference dissolves the existing government, strips the age-old tyrant of most of his powers and sanctions the formation of a transitional government which later oversees national elections. To be sure, these conferences have not been without fierce and destructive contestation. In Gabon, Togo and Zaire for example, the country's dictator Omar Bongo, Gnassingbe Eyadema and Mobutu Sese Seko (respectively) subverted the sovereignty of the conference by consistently contravening its authority and

⁸¹ Harsch, "Democracy Movement". See also, Jibrin Ibrahim, "Democratic Political Succession in Niger Republic: The 1993 Elections" in CODESRIA Bulletin, no.2, 1993. see also Ibrahim "From Political Exclusion to Popular Participation: Democratic Participation in Niger Republic" in B Caron et al. Democratic Transition in Africa, 1992.

⁸² Fatton, Predatory Rule, p.104.

decisions, and thus rendered the SNC politically ineffective.⁸³ In Benin, Congo and Niger, however, the conference reduced the long-standing dictators Mathieu Kerekou, Denis Sassou Nguesso and Ali Saibou (respectively) into ceremonial heads of state, en route to their electoral ouster in competitive multiparty elections held later.⁸⁴ I have characterized these transitions as **successful**, since unlike most African countries the PTP here has been stable, competitive multiparty elections were widely judged as free and fair, and the transfer of power to the new democratically elected government was peaceful. Again, the democratization process remains fragile and far from consolidated.

Contrary to optimistic mainstream expectations which held out transition processes in Benin and Zambia as beacons of political liberty soon to be replicated throughout Africa⁸⁵, the majority of democratic transition in this region have been **problematic**. Transition programmes in these countries have generally been top-down, over-regimented and characterized to varying degrees by manipulation, electoral chicanery, money politics, repression, political assassination and violence, exploitation of regional, religious and ethnic cleavages; and

⁸³ Nzongola-Ntalaja, "Beyond Mobutu", see also McCormick (1994) "Zaire II", Peter Da Costa, "Togo: The Dictators Duet" in Africa Report, November - December 1993, p.63., James F. Barnes "Gabon: Adieu, System Bongo?" in Africa Report, November - December 1993, and Barnes "The Tainted Win" in Africa Report, March - April, 1994.

⁸⁴ Fatton, Predatory Rule, Ibrahim, "From Political Exclusion".

⁸⁵ Richard Joseph, "Zambia: A Model for Democratic Change" in Current History, May 1992.

they can be further delineated as **tainted, recalcitrant and resistant** and **aborted** transitions.

In **tainted** 'democratic' changes which characterized countries such as, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Gabon, Ghana, Kenya, Senegal, Togo and Zaire, the incumbent dictator either preempted popular pressures for democracy by convening a national conference and/or multiparty elections, or grudgingly acceded to competitive elections, but manipulated the process to ensure that he electorally succeed himself in power. While in many cases the immediate pre-election tyranny continued unabated, the convening of multiparty elections -- widely viewed by national and international observers to have been replete with systematic malpractice and irregularities -- and the initiation of cosmetic institutional reforms have often been enough to give the 'newly' elected dictatorship external legitimacy, if not domestic credibility.⁸⁶

Exhibiting similar traits as the former but differing in the stage of the transition process, long-standing dictators in Zaire and Malawi have publicly committed to a PTP (Banda did recently lose elections in Malawi) although they remain **recalcitrant and resistant** to internal pressures on the content, character and direction of the democratic changes. As mentioned earlier, Mobutu of Zaire has utilized repression and cooptation with the aid of Western complicity, if not support,

⁸⁶ Barnes, "Gabon". Ruby Ofori, "Ghana: The Election Controversy" in Africa Report, July - August, 1993.

to retain power four years after announcing a one year PTP.

Lastly, the **aborted** transitions that characterized recent developments in Burundi, Nigeria and The Gambia further exhibits the precariousness of the process of political change in Africa today. Our case study in Chapter Three detailed Nigeria's tumultuous PTP which led to the military's abrogation of the June 12 presidential elections then later the dissolution of the transition programme by the Abacha military coup. Equally turbulent, in Burundi the democratic transition and processes of consolidation have been challenged by non-civilian control of the military. In October 1993, the new democratically elected President, Melchoir Ndadaye was assassinated in an unsuccessful coup, which plummeted the country back into the civic and ethnic strife that has repeatedly marred it since 1962. The success of the coup would have certainly spelled the end of the fledgling Burundian democracy. Yet again, in April 1994, the new President elected by the country's National Assembly, Cyprien Ntaryamira, was killed in the plane crashed that also claimed the life of the Rwandan president. This development has currently challenged the sustainability of the democratic project.

Finally, **disintegrative** transitions refer to countries where political liberalization in the context of protracted crises of the state, civil society and economy has led to ethnic conflict and civil war or its renewal. Angola, Liberia, Rwanda and Somalia are current examples of such cases,

although in most of these countries the civil war has ended and the process of post-war reconstruction, though fragile, is on the way. We provide this broad and brief tapestry of the recent transition processes in Africa and some general outcomes to date in order to underscore the precariousness and fragility of these changes.

One area both neo-liberal and radical analysts agree is crucial for the sustainability and consolidation of democracy is the strengthening of civil society. For neo-liberals like Diamond, civil society is the crucial factor at every stage of democratization, as it is the necessary arena to curtail the state's propensity towards predatory rule.⁸⁷ Akin to the de Tocquevillian perspective, Bratton⁸⁸, Lewis⁸⁹ and Woods⁹⁰ also view civil society and its associational life as the important bulwark to curb state excesses and ensure the protection of formal civic and democratic rights. Echoing these positions, Fitzpatrick, in the social democratic middle ground, sees civil society as an indispensable democratic 'watchdog', required to retain the autonomy of its voluntary associations in order to lay irreverent criticisms on the

⁸⁷ Diamond, "Roots of Failure".

⁸⁸ Bratton, "Associational Life".

⁸⁹ Lewis, "Dilemma of Civil Society".

⁹⁰ Dwayne Woods, "Civil Society in Europe and Africa: Limiting State Power through a Public Sphere" in African Studies Review, vol.35, no.2, 1992.

state's pretensions and prerogatives.⁹¹ Radical analysts also embrace civil society and its strengthening as necessary to provide an edifice against state repression. Beyond safeguarding what Ibrahim has called '*pro-forma democracy*', that is, the formal and abstract political rights historically associated with liberal democracy, the strengthening of civil society is also viewed by radical analysts as vital for the expansion of democratic space and the articulation of any alternative social project.⁹² Formal constitutionalism and its protection of civil liberties and the rule of the law is expected to expand the democratic space which better enables popular forces to press for concrete social and economic rights. While there seems to be a broad intellectual consensus on the need to strengthen civil society, the factors and forces which are to embolden the civic terrain and enhance the prospects for democratic consolidation, much like the conceptual application of civil society, remains widely contested. The remainder of this section revisits the competing explanations on state-civil society relations introduced in Chapter One against the backdrop of the Nigerian case study and experience elsewhere and the factors they deem as crucial for the strengthening of civil society. Broadly, the various schools of thought have identified the on-going dynamic of the process of informality, the proliferation and

⁹¹ Fitzpatrick, "A Response to Daryl Glaser".

⁹² Ibrahim, "From Political Exclusion".

the strengthening of NGOs, continued market reforms in the form of SAPs and the attendant rolling back of the state, as the important factor(s) and force(s) which are to embolden Nigeria's and Africa's nascent civic terrain and increase the prospects of democratic consolidation.

INFORMALITY, CIVIL SOCIETY AND DEMOCRACY

A sub-theme or approach which has become quite common in the explanation of Africa's social reality emphasizes the political dynamics of *informality* as the crucial avenue supportive of democratization. Chapter Two detailed the key postulates of neo-liberal analysts whose central inquiry is the survivalist strategies in civil society and the manner in which the on-going process of informalization changes economic and political circumstances. Amidst the protracted African crisis, analysts such as Chazan, Bratton and MacGaffey argue that ordinary people are taking matters into their own hands and organizing an unofficial economy and similar institutions to compensate for the failure of the state and formal economy.⁹³ Market reforms and informality reduce the reach of the state into the economy which enables subordinate classes to better bargain for survival. The process of informalization releases dormant entrepreneurial energies, spawns the creation of multifarious voluntary organizations, and facilitates

⁹³ Azarya, "Reordering", Chazan, "Patterns of State-Society", Bratton, "Associational Life", MacGaffey, "Zaire's Other Path".

popular evasion of the repressive and predatory African state.⁹⁴ Informality and the new actors, organizations and institutions it spawns, fills the gaps left by the retreating state and delivers resources, employment opportunities and a rudimentary social safety net for the poor. What is crucial about the process of informalization according to Chazan et al. is the novel forms of participation it engenders and the implications for democratic renewal. Just like the process of informalization is held out to diminish the sphere of primitive accumulation for ruling class factions, thereby contributing to the strengthening of a bourgeois constituency to press for democracy, the survivalist strategies of non-bourgeois classes and groups are also anticipated to break state patronage networks and challenge the legitimacy of the state in regulating private behaviour. This process, they note, is leading to grassroots agitation for the autonomy of the civic realm and democratic national politics. Therefore, informality has fostered tremendous vitality at the grassroots, contributed to the reconstitution of democracy in smaller units, created alternative poles and centres of power outside the ambit of the state, thus nurturing a change in state-civil society relations which is conducive to stable and consensual politics at the national level.⁹⁵ This

⁹⁴ MacGaffey, "Zaire's Other Path".

⁹⁵ Bratton, "Associational Life", see also, Chazan, "Liberalization", MacGaffey, "Zaire's Other Path".

interpretation of social reality in Africa has its counterparts elsewhere in the Third World. In Latin America, the work of Hernando de Soto and the *Instituto Libertad y Democracia* popularized informality and the link made between informal sector growth, the proliferation of voluntary associations and democratic renewal that has gained explanatory currency with respect to the recent African experience.⁹⁶

There is very little disagreement, if any, among development analysts that the continuing African and Third World crisis has engendered a process of economic informalization. Equally attested to is the acceleration of this process under neo-liberal market reforms. Chapter Two noted in the case of Nigeria that the cumulative effect of the structural adjustment project on the Nigerian state, economy and society -- where industrial closures have become rampant, capacity utilization in the manufacturing sector has been drastically reduced, the casualization of labour has intensified and the state has retreated from the social reproduction of marginalized groups -- has forced the majority of Nigerians to find creative ways to survive the crisis. With the constriction of formal sector employment and the dramatic decline in urban and rural real incomes, workers, peasants and even professionals employ multiple modes of livelihood to earn a living wage. Consequently, the informal sector has expanded

⁹⁶ de Soto, The Other Path.

enormously in this period. Mustapha's writing on Nigeria noted that 70% of working populations in most cities are involved in the informal sector⁹⁷, a figure Cornia⁹⁸ and the International Labour Organization placed at the upper limits of the sector's occupancy in most Third World countries.

But, while informality theorists have rightly focused intellectual lenses on the much neglected novel forms of informal production and participation, they have failed to capture the concrete dynamics of the current processes of socio-economic and political change in Africa or substantiate how informality strengthens civil society and supports democratic renewal. As a result, informality theory has been criticized widely on theoretical and empirical grounds.

Recently, Bangura and Gibbon scrutinized the conceptual framework of informality theorists, particularly the rigid dichotomies these writers make between the formal and informal sectors and the state and civil society.⁹⁹ They agreed with Beckman's observation that juxtaposing "the wage economy...treated largely as an adjunct to a parasitic state sector,...with true civil society...seen to flourish primarily

⁹⁷ Mustapha, "Multiple Modes of Social Livelihood", p.195.

⁹⁸ G. Cornia, "Adjustment at the Household Level: Potentials and Limitations of Survival Strategies" in G. Cornia et al. Adjustment with a Human Face, (Oxford: Clarendon Press for UNICEF, 1987).

⁹⁹ Yusef Bangura and Peter Gibbon, "Adjustment, Authoritarianism and Democracy: An Introduction to Some Conceptual and Empirical Issues" in Gibbon et al. Authoritarianism, Democracy and Adjustment, 1992.

in the non-wage economy"¹⁰⁰ is highly problematic since both the state/formal sector and civil society/informal sectors are integrated at various levels. Our examination of the Nigeria experience has shown that by virtue of the multiple interconnections with the dominant capitalist sector, on which it depends on raw materials, imported inputs, credit and access to markets, the informal sector has not been immune from the vagaries of the macro-economic environment of adjustment. Beyond pockets of vitality, our study suggests that informal sector growth, labour absorptive capacities and real incomes in the this sector have been negligible. Meagher and Yunusa's research into the developmental implications of informality in Nigeria, identified the limitations on informal sector growth by both supply and demand constraints, which are not supported but rather exacerbated by the economic policy prescriptions of the adjustment project.¹⁰¹ In any case, Bangura and Gibbon have rightfully noted that "workers and most other social groups hardly impose such rigid dichotomies between their formal jobs and involvement in the informal sector."¹⁰² The dictates of survival have compelled workers and social forces attached to the formal sector in Nigeria to straddle various jobs simultaneously, bargaining scarce resources for social reproduction. But the retreat into the

¹⁰⁰ Beckman, "Empowerment or Repression", p.91.

¹⁰¹ Meagher and Yunusa, Limits of Labour Absorption.

¹⁰² Bangura and Gibbon, "An Introduction", p.21-22.

informal sector is generally not a wilful exit from the parasitic state and formal sector as informality analysts have maintained. I have argued that the 'exit' of subordinate and middle classes into the informal sector is borne out of the crisis, declining real incomes, wage labour restructuring under SAPs and the resultant massive redundancy of formal sector employment engendered in its wake.

The corollary to this, where the informal sector is viewed by neo-liberal writers as an unencumbered social space possessing tremendous vitality is also taken to task by Bangura and Gibbon and others. They rightly noted that by conceiving the state and civil society and the formal and informal sectors in oppositional and mutually exclusive terms, neo-liberals obfuscate the multiple social contestations and conflicts which traverse these spheres. That is to say, there is an erroneous tendency in neo-liberal analysis to exclusively identify power and exploitive relations with the state and public sector, while civil society and the informal sector are portrayed with democratic, libertarian and self-determining attributes.¹⁰³ This conceptual framework fails to recognize that power relations that exist in the state and formal sector are ever present in civil society and the informal sector.

Informal sector participation, as we have detailed in the Nigerian case, is by no means devoid of power relations and

¹⁰³ Bangura and Gibbon, "An Introduction", p.20.

social struggles for access to resources. Class and gender status continue to have an adverse differential impact on workers, peasants and women, constricting the manoeuvrability of these social classes and groups to cope with socio-economic exigencies. The working classes have very little access to commodities with which to bargain for survival. Women within this social class have increasingly borne the burden of social reproduction when male members of the household have lost formal sector jobs or seen real incomes deteriorate rapidly. Moreover, women's real incomes and autonomous power from pre-existing informal sector activities outside state control and male domination, such as petty trading, continues to erode with the countless new male entrants into the sector. Informality analysts often downplay the low level of income, insecurity of jobs, the hazardous working conditions, the long hours and the super-exploitation of women and youth, and the environmental degradation engendered by this process. Though state retreat from markets and the social reproduction of marginalized groups, encouraged by adjustment, has forced ordinary people to find ways to survive the crisis, the state retains a determining influence on the process of informalization. Previous chapters have attested to the major influence of the state in the parallel economy, through which members of the higher circles have found a niche to boost lucrative but often unproductive accumulation. The scarcity of resources, even in the much celebrated informal sector have

also given rise to all sorts of social anomies in the daily struggle of subordinate groups for survival. Petty theft, prostitution, armed robbery are such individualistic responses to cope with material decline, which vitiate the forging of collective responses to resolve the crisis from below. Similarly, the dearth of material resources, the time demands of daily survival and the general lack of surplus funds for people to contribute to associational activities are a few objective constraints that militate against informal forms of participation and associational life.

On empirical grounds, the neo-liberal prediction that envisaged the process of informalization as providing an avenue of democratization is untenable. Although, there is no gainsaying the fact that the 1980s have witnessed the proliferation of informal organizations in tandem with the crisis and adjustment, the African evidence suggests that these grassroots groups have marginally influenced the process of democratization. The Nigerian case study alluded to the mushrooming of various informal community development associations (CDAs) ranging from self-help voluntary associations to informal credit societies. While our investigation focused primarily on the democratic impact of intermediate formal NGOs, the Nigerian experience suggests that CDAs have had even less of an influence on the direction of political and economic development in the country. Jane Guyer's research into grassroots organizations in Rural

Nigeria supports this conclusion. Guyer noted that a major constraint facing CDAs is the larger political environment in which these organizations operate. She asserted that "associations based on community are often too small to achieve much in any larger arena."¹⁰⁴ Mustapha's investigation into the multiple modes of livelihood spawned by the crisis and adjustment in Nigeria also casts doubts on the democratizing affect of community development associations. Recognizing the growth of CDAs in recent years, he observed that

...it would seem that the new, and more dynamic, forms of cooperation are not those organizations based on neighbourhoods or streets, but a resurgence of particularistic ethnic and religious groupings who not only help their members to cope with the crisis, but also help ultimately to fragment the collective spirit or identity of the neighbourhood or community.¹⁰⁵

Indeed, many forms of community based organizations which persist, such as farmers organizations, have mobilized rural producers around a shared economic interest beyond ethnicity and region. Some associations, like the militant farmers organizations, *Agbekoya*, have contested the direction of political development in Nigeria.¹⁰⁶ Yet, by and large, the myriad of CDAs ranging from town unions, ethnic associations, women's groups and cooperatives whose democratic participation

¹⁰⁴ Jane I. Guyer, "Representation Without Taxation: An Essay on Democracy in Rural Nigeria, 1952-1990" in African Studies Review, vol.35, no.1, 1992, p.66.

¹⁰⁵ Mustapha, "Multiple Modes of Social Livelihood", p.213.

¹⁰⁶ Doifie Ola, "No Respite for Abacha" in The News, June 27, 1994, p.14.

is most at stake are often localized, particularistic and inward-oriented, and rarely articulate broader positions on critical national issues.

The recent Rwandan experience, while at an extreme, provides an instructive illustration on the limits of informal forms of participation in engendering democratic renewal and the vulnerability of such organizations to manipulation by the state and ruling classes. A writer for the weekly magazine, West Africa, has noted that *prima facie* the proliferation of informal organizations, especially in the rural areas during Rwanda's Second Republic was a promising development for democracy. Autonomous from the state and increasingly intermeshed in larger federations, CDAs were a significant source of alternative mobilization of the peasantry around common economic interests which transcended ethnicity and region. Such a significant development the writer further noted, "provided fertile ground for democratic national politics with competing groups or parties based primarily around mutual economic interests."¹⁰⁷ However, in the wake of the 1993 Arusha Accord -- ending the three year civil war --, which was anticipated to pave an immutable path to multiparty democracy in Rwanda, informal organizations were increasingly weakened, had little influence on the fragile transition process and were easily manipulated towards sectarian ends.

¹⁰⁷ anon., "Why Rwanda?" in West Africa, June 27 - July 3, 1994, p.1127.

Most certainly many CDAs have disappeared during the recently ended four month civic and ethnic strife.

In countries such as Kenya, known for the most advanced CDAs in Africa, the experience has been similar. Claude Ake has noted that despite the success of rural self-help and voluntary organizations in achieving grassroots economic development, they have not appeared to catalyze any decentralization of power or affected processes at the national level. Consistent with experience in Nigeria and elsewhere, Ake further maintains that the limited democratic impact of CDAs is in part because the majority of these groups "are isolated and are not usually aggregated at higher organizational levels where they could have some potential for influencing policy."¹⁰⁸ Writing on Ghana, Kwame Ninsin has also noted that if the proliferation of self-help voluntary groups were any indication of the strengthening of civil society and the potential for democratic renewal, "then Ghana's transition to democratic rule should not [have been] so problematic."¹⁰⁹ What is crucial to note about the democratizing influence of CDAs, as Ake aptly observed, is that the supposed reconstitution of democracy in smaller units, as maintained by Chazan and others, can lead to the disenfranchisement of local people if grassroots democracy is

¹⁰⁸ Ake, "Rethinking", p.37.

¹⁰⁹ Kwame A. Ninsin, "Some Problems in Ghana's Transition to Democratic Governance" in Africa Development, vol. xviii, no.2, 1993, p.15.

not linked to popular participation at the national level. With direct reference to Ghana and in particular the Rawlings government's 1989 introduction of District Assemblies as the stated agent to mobilize and incorporate rural people into the democratization process, Ake has maintained that such "granting of local authority is not a liberty but a constraint".¹¹⁰ Since "people are given some local space, not to integrate them into a democratic polity but to separate them from meaningful participation at the national level"¹¹¹, the process of decision-making on issues which effect their daily lives flows "from the central to the local government in a strictly one-way traffic."¹¹² Therefore, there is little African evidence that the process of informalization strengthens civil society and has spawned Africa's democratic reawakening. While the survival strategies of subordinate social groups in the informal economy have cushioned the fall in formal sector employment, declines in real incomes and cut backs in social welfare, the concomitant proliferation of grassroots organization has not translated into the delimitation of state arbitrariness and coercion or produced fertile ground for stable, democratic national politics as advocates of informalization postulated.

¹¹⁰ Ake, "Rethinking", p.37.

¹¹¹ Ake, "Rethinking", p.37.

¹¹² Ake, "Rethinking", p.37.

NGOs, CIVIL SOCIETY AND DEMOCRACY

Although radical critics continue to challenge the democratic influence of the process of informalization, they have joined neo-liberal analysts in placing greater emphasis on the democratic implications of the growth of intermediate formal NGOs as opposed to CDAs. They are widely deemed the important, if not crucial factor for the strengthening of civil society and the potentialities of democratic development, as previous chapters attested. No longer simply commended by multilateral and bilateral agencies for their facilitation of micro-development, NGOs are now envisaged by the IFIs, donor agencies and intellectuals as the all important civic 'watchdog' to keep the state accountable. NGOs are also viewed as the crucial institution of mediation between the state and grassroots communities, serving to pluralize the national policy-making environment and empowers local communities to influence decisions that affect their daily lives. While the NGO sector in Africa is still in its infancy, NGOs in many countries have made important strides towards grassroots empowerment, have contested state arbitrariness and excesses and in some cases have been instrumental forces in democratic transitions across the continent. But overall, the contribution of NGOs to African democratization has been negligible. It has been my contention in this study, that to date, NGOs have not only contributed marginally to the strengthening of civil society in order to

provide an edifice against state arbitrariness, but equally, if not more importantly, NGOs have failed to politically challenge the unequal distribution of power and resources in their respective societies. The Nigerian experience underscored the contradictions and constraints within the incipient NGO community similarly faced by NGOs continentally.

While this thesis has not set out a rigorous theoretical template for our examination of NGOs in Nigeria, five factors are considered crucial for any critical assessment of the democratic influence of NGOs: (1) the internal structure of NGOs; (2) relations between NGOs; and the (3) relationship between NGOs and other social forces, (4) the state and (5) donor communities. The Nigerian case suggests that due to the constraints and contradictions herein, in the future NGOs may at best make a limited contribution to democratic development and at worse simply function as an instrument for the reproduction of national and transnational capital domination.

To sum up, the internal limitations of NGOs, the lack of networking within the sector and between NGOs and popular sections of civil society, together with the increasing loss of NGO autonomy, have all contributed to rendering NGOs ineffective in mobilizing grassroots communities to change state-civil society relations.

Notwithstanding material constraints, such as the insufficiency of resources which continues to constrict progress on the stated empowerment project of NGOs and the

often hostile and restrictive state regulatory environment NGOs must operate in, a major obstacle to the democratizing affect of NGOs and their operations is derived from within NGOs themselves. While most NGOs interviewed for this study attested to the transparent and participatory structures within the organization, a closer examination not only revealed the persistence of internal power relations, but also suggested that in many cases the question of even evolving democratic structures has not been a priority for many NGOs. Several of the NGOs in Nigeria revolve around one prominent leader. Research on specifically Women's NGOs in Nigeria conducted by Trager and Osinulu similarly revealed that these groups "tend to be dependent on a single strong, dominant leader, usually the founder or one of the founders."¹¹³ Often, NGO operations are top-down and devoid of institutional mechanisms to facilitate popular input in the conception, formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of micro-projects and programmes. The vast majority of NGOs are formed and staffed by elites and members of the middle classes and largely lack a popular base. Even within the vibrant and progressive human rights NGO community, Mahmud has suggested that many organizations often operate as elite groups.¹¹⁴ A

¹¹³ Lillian Trager and Clara Osinulu, "New Women's Organizations in Nigeria: One Response to Structural Adjustment" in Christine Gladwin et al. eds., Structural Adjustment and African Women Farmers, 1991, p.357.

¹¹⁴ Mahmud, "The Failed Transition", p.93.

number of analysts, such as Fatton¹¹⁵ and Clark,¹¹⁶ have noted that NGO rhetoric about their 'grassrootness' is simply not substantiated by the African and Third World evidence since in the majority of cases their operations do not involve or reach the 'poorest of the poor'. They both cite Judith Tendler's study on seventy-five project evaluations of US NGOs which concluded that "beneficiaries were often in the middle and upper ranges of the income distribution".¹¹⁷ Very few Nigerian NGOs interviewed, such as the NEST and WIN have taken seriously the urgent need to broaden their middle class composition and likewise the imperative to build internal participatory structures, if the organization is to be relevant in empowering the grassroots. With the obvious exception of WIN and a few other Women's NGOs, most NGOs are not sensitive to gender issues and rarely take consideration of the needs of women into their programming. The Nigerian experience revealed that such an undemocratic environment has made NGOs susceptible to opportunism and corruption.

With the expansion of the sector and the widespread romance with NGOs in the Western media and bilateral and multilateral policy-making circles, many sophisticated '4-1-9' operations have emerged, privately prospering by cultivating

¹¹⁵ Fatton, Predatory Rule, p.135.

¹¹⁶ John Clark, Democratizing Development The Role of Voluntary Organisations, (London: Earthscan, 1991), p.55.

¹¹⁷ Judith Tendler cited in Clark, Democratizing Development, p.55.

links with, and garnering resources from, the state and external donor agencies in the name of the grassroots. Fowler's research on NGOs in Eastern and Southern Africa -- with the exception of South Africa -- noted that "many local NGOs are products of urban based educated elites with no substantive roots in underprivileged groups or are just consulting firms by another name."¹¹⁸ Similarly, John Clark has observed that Southern NGOs are predominately elite and middle class in composition and leadership, with many groups revolving around a 'guru-like' leader. Such groups are vulnerable to corrupt practises and as Clark suggests,

...tend to stagnate rapidly when the leaders are away more than a short period; are prone to decay and die when the leader moves on, cannot be replicated; and are likely to be fixed in their approach sometimes dogmatically so, being only as flexible and open to new ideas as their leader will allow.¹¹⁹

Though the mortality rate of such NGOs may be quite high, Africa's material deterioration, the international legitimacy accorded NGOs, together with the pervading lack of internal democracy among many NGOs, provides an arable environment for the rejuvenation and sustenance of self-serving NGOs. At a recent international conference devoted to the theme *Empowering People: Building Community, Civil Associations and Legality in Africa*, Mwalimu Julius Nyerere's keynote address alluded to the opportunity NGO visibility has provided for

¹¹⁸ Alan Fowler, "The Role of NGOs in Changing State-Society Relations: Perspectives from Eastern and Southern Africa" in Development Policy Review, vol.9, 1991, p.73. emphasis mine.

¹¹⁹ Clark, Democratising Development, p.66.

self-interested individuals, when he implored NGOs to be "genuinely peoples' organizations, not just a cover up for some crooks seeking to make some money or to gain prestige for themselves."¹²⁰ A paper presented by Emmanuel Baingana at the same conference, aptly observed that the undemocratic character of NGOs also "creates fertile ground for local dictators of these civil association to flourish."¹²¹ He further asserted that "when given a chance to gain governmental power, these petty tyrants become monsters, now to a broader population."¹²² Writing with specific reference to the Kenyan NGO human rights sector but applicable elsewhere, Shadrack Gutto supports this conclusion by also bringing attention to constraints which the paucity of internal democracy within NGOs poses for the wider democratic project. Gutto asserted that

...notwithstanding the fact that such instant "friends of the people" may appear useful and important in the immediate battles to remove the present dictators, and the fact that the people are so fed up that they readily tolerate such elements as "leaders", in the end such "heroes" are more likely than not to turn out to be as removed from, and hostile to, the masses as the dictator regime were or are. They are more likely than not to impose ready-made policies on the people rather than be involved in the difficult, but democratic, task of working out policies and choices with the people's participation. They naturally fear social and political accountability and

¹²⁰ Noted from a videocassette of Julius Nyerere's keynote address to the International Conference on Empowering People: Building Community, Civil Associations and Legality in Africa, organized by the Institute of Development Studies of the University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania and the Development Studies Group, University of Toronto, Canada, held in Arusha, Tanzania, August 1991. Reprinted in Sandbrook and Halfani eds., Empowering People, 1993.

¹²¹ Emmanuel Baingana, "Views on Building Democratic NGOs: A Uganda Perspective in Sandbrook and Halfani eds., Empowering People, 1993, p.84.

¹²² Baingana, "Building Democratic NGOs", p.84.

transparency, except temporarily and in so far as it is limited to the struggle to change personnel in leadership. These types of "grassroots", "democracy" and "human rights" individuals and groups of individuals are mushrooming on the African scene.¹²³

The embryonic Nigerian NGO community, even its popular and vibrant human rights sector, have been susceptible to corruption, opportunism and state cooptation. Though Mahmud may be right to infer that the cooptation of some human rights activists by the Abacha regime is a tacit recognition even on the part of the military of the growing strength of human rights NGOs¹²⁴, the implications for the democratic role of NGOs may be disastrous. The acceptance of ministerial posts by these activists, in spite of the protestations by popular groups is more importantly, an illustration of the lack of sound democratic structure within NGOs. In any case, historically state cooptation of the leadership of popular groups has been utilized to disarticulate contending democratic forces in civil society. Such individuals upon ascending to the corridors of state power tend to be hostile to the popular groups they championed at an earlier period, as Gutto suggests and as indicated by the positions taken by these former activists towards the current pro-democracy campaigns in Nigeria. The vulnerability of NGO leadership to cooptation serves to increase popular disillusionment and in the end weakens the struggle for civic and democratic rights.

¹²³ Gutto, "Human and Peoples Rights", p.38.

¹²⁴ Mahmud, "The Failed Transition", p.95.

Baingana has also noted that the "limited interaction among members of different civil associations means that the wide scope of [these] problem[s] remains hidden, which in turn limits the members opportunity to struggle for democratization of their organizations."¹²⁵

The internal democracy within NGOs, the strength of the NGO community and their ascribed catalytic role in emboldening civil society will ultimately depend on the extent to which NGOs forge linkages and networks, to enhance cooperation and coordination. NGO collaboration will redress the dearth of material resources, reduce the duplication of activities and strengthen organizational structures, which is paramount for the sustainability of micro-projects and programmes. All importantly, the fostering of closer links within the community, horizontally and vertically, is vital to enhance the organizational capacity of NGOs to mobilize and empower the grassroots, delimit the state, and evolve participatory structures in the process of development. The Nigerian and African NGO community have not reached this stage, in spite of the existence of continental, regional, national and domestic sectoral umbrella bodies. Many Nigerian NGO, like their continental counterparts, remain suspicious of building networks, usually for reasons of organizational autonomy, retaining personnel, protecting the independent recognition of its operations and/or maintaining privileged access to its

¹²⁵ Baingana, "Building Democratic NGOs", p.84.

funding base. Internecine rivalries have been common. The majority of Nigerian NGOs are localized and have little contact among each other even when operating in the same city or town. These factors have contributed to making existing apex bodies, such as NAVDO, politically ineffective in influencing public policy, curbing state oppression and mobilizing the grassroots to demand civic and democratic rights. The *rapporteur* of the NGO conference on *Empowering People*, Mohammed Halfani, maintained that in spite of the existence of umbrella bodies in virtually all African countries and particularly those in Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe represented at the forum, "the degree of organizational linkages remains low."¹²⁶ In support of our conclusions on the Nigerian experience, Halfani also noted that "civil association not only do not work with each other but often have little knowledge about one another or are even antagonistic."¹²⁷ It would then seem that there is still little evidence of the emergence of a politically significant NGO community in Nigeria and Africa.

To be sure, the reproduction of the internal fragmentation within the NGO sector has been consistently assisted by state manipulation and coercion. The leverage

¹²⁶ Mohamed Halfani, "The Challenges Ahead" in Sandbrook and Halfani eds., Empowering People, p.204.

¹²⁷ Halfani, "The Challenges Ahead", p.204.

given to the state by NGOs' lack of financial and material resources, has enabled it to foster an apolitical and non-combative NGO community. The majority of Nigerian NGOs rely inordinately on state subventions and to a larger extent on official aid. Stipulations attached to state funding since 1988, such as the obligatory non-political status and the mandatory registration with the Ministry of Internal Affairs, have reduced NGO autonomy and increased statist control of the burgeoning sector. The registration process even when fully complied with by NGOs, has often been used to deny funding to popular groups, like the Civil Liberties Organization, in the effort to cripple them financially and thus organizationally, as Chapter Three noted. Experiences in Uganda and Kenya also reveal that new legislation, such as this insistence on NGO registration, has enabled the state to better control the NGO community.¹²⁸ Bratton has provided a comprehensive treatment of the instruments employed by the state to restrict the autonomy of non-governmental organizations. Demarcating such strategies by degree, he noted that African governments have utilized monitoring, coordination, cooptation and dissolution to control NGOs. According to Bratton

i. **monitoring** refers to the use of legislative regulations, particularly the control of the registration process and reporting requirements to gather information on NGOs and maintain a watchful eye on their operations. ii. **coordination** refers to state intervention into the NGO sector in the effort to increase NGO coherence in order to evolve rational rural planning, but also "government...can be excessively rigid and ponderous in their requirements." iii. **cooptation** refers to a

¹²⁸ Fowler, "Agents of Democratization", p.331.

"firmer form of control in which autonomous organisations are captured and guided by a superordinate agency." Through the establishment of state sponsored quasi-NGOs or state incursion on the autonomy of independently formed umbrella NGOs, the state has sought to encapsulate the NGO community. iv. **dissolution** refers to a number of government actions to impede the operations of NGOs and range from the arrest and detention of the leadership of groups to the reorganization of NGOs under state control and at an extreme the outright proscription of NGOs.¹²⁹

The Nigerian state has readily used these various strategies. Statist control over the registration process has served to deny registration and funding to popular NGOs. The state has played a prominent role in giving the NGO sector coherence. Though NGOs independently formed the national umbrella body, NAVDO, the state has been accorded an important role in the development of the sector. While to date, no INGO or NGO in Nigeria has been expelled or proscribed, the leadership of particularly human rights NGOs are frequently arrested and detained. The internal weakness and fragmentation within the NGO community has made it quite easy for the state to prevent the development of critical groupings. As a consequence, very few Nigerian NGOs including apex bodies such as NAVDO have challenged state arbitrariness and coercion or the direction of economic recovery under SAP. Indeed, many have and continue to highlight the disastrous consequences of SAPs on vulnerable groups, but NGOs in Nigeria have generally failed to articulate alternatives to SAPs through a politically significant network which could influence government policy. Korten is right to suggest that

¹²⁹ Bratton, "Government-NGO Relations", p.576-580.

"ironically, it at times seems easier for NGOs to work with government than with other NGOs."¹³⁰ Much like the apex body in Nigeria, Fowler's study has observed that the "the umbrella bodies in Sudan, Zimbabwe and Zambia are either identified with government or have not expressed views on issues which concern members, such as legislative reform and social policy."¹³¹ In fact, it is often through the existence of apex bodies that the state penetrates the nascent NGO community. The 1988 Company and Allied Act in Nigeria which made mandatory NGO registration also made known government intentions to establish a national NGO body to enhance NGO co-ordination and collaboration, if not control. Similar to experiences in Togo and Kenya¹³² and parallel to recent developments in the Ghanaian NGO sector,¹³³ in Nigeria, the government and official agencies like the United Nations Development Programme have actively promoted the compilation of a national NGO database through the auspices of NAVDO, with the stated aim of improving sectoral coherence and cooperation. In Ghana, this same effort has been advanced for the purpose of enhancing the implementation of PAMSCAD, the social programme adopted by the Rawlings government to

¹³⁰ David Korten, "Third Generation NGO Strategies: A Key to People-Centred Development" in World Development vol.15. Special Supplement on NGOs, Anne Gordon Drabek (ed), 1987, p.148.

¹³¹ Fowler, "The Role of NGOs", p.73.

¹³² Bratton "Government-NGO Relations", p.579.

¹³³ Fowler, "Agents of Democratization", p.331.

mitigate the 'pains' of SAP on vulnerable groups. While apex bodies are crucial for the strengthening of the NGO community and may have their organizational capabilities enhanced by the development of a national database, such an instrument with state involvement may enhance the monitoring and control of NGOs leaving such bodies with less autonomy and by implication the entire sector. Though the state has consistently encroached on the autonomy of NGOs, the increasing dependence of NGOs on external actors for financial and material resources poses an equal, if not greater threat to the independence of local NGOs, essential for NGO authority and integrity in pursuit of popular empowerment and democratization.

Since the early 1980s and the advent of SAP, both domestic and international NGOs have seen a significant rise in their funding from official agencies. A policy shift on the part of bilateral and multilateral donors in favour of funding channelled through NGOs, increased the amount of official development assistance (ODA) to NGOs from US\$1.04 billion in 1980 to US\$2.14 billion in 1988.¹³⁴ Currently, five percent of ODA is disbursed by INGOs and increasingly official aid is being allotted directly to domestic NGOs. Given the anti-statist logic of SAPs, yet the recognition in recent years of the need to 'humanize' adjustment through the provision of a minimalist social safety net for vulnerable groups, donor

¹³⁴ Fowler, "Distant Obligations", p.15.

agencies have turned to NGOs. As previously mentioned, bilateral and multilateral donors have embraced NGOs for their comparative advantage over African and Third World governments in the delivery of micro-development projects and poverty alleviation programmes and have been applauded for their capacity to empower the grassroots and strengthen civil society. In spite of the recession and 'aid fatigue' in the West, by all indications aid flows, at least those transferred via NGOs, are likely to increase.

The growing dependency of INGOs and NGOs on official aid rather than on resources from the gift economy or through self-financing, raises important issues on the operations of non-governmental organizations and their actual capacity to realize their stated democratic function. The degree of dependency of INGOs on official aid, which often ranges from between 70% to 100%, has led analysts like Yash Tandon to view INGOs as agents of imperialism, merely operating as an adjunct of the Foreign Ministry of their respective countries.¹³⁵ As INGOs remain the principal source of financial assistance to domestic NGOs, by extension they too may increasingly be susceptible to cooptation by IFIs, bilateral donors and INGOs. Fowler explains the dangers of NGO financial dependency well:

Greater official aid for NGOs inevitably incorporates them into propagating political reforms in the donor's image. A likely negative effect of this trend is that NGOs will be less able to offer critical or alternative views of associated economic policies, such as structural adjustment programmes, or question

¹³⁵ Yash Tandon, "Foreign NGOs, Uses and Abuses: An African Perspective" in IPDA DOSSIER, no.81, 1991.

the validity of externally vaunted political models that are inconsistent with indigenous values and historical process. For the current dominance of multi-partyism as a suitable political system is for want of proven alternative models evolving from within the continent. NGOs assimilate into the structures and priorities of official aid, and could therefore come to be regarded as agents of a new form of imperialism; a perception that will undermine their credibility and possibly their comparative advantages in social innovation.¹³⁶

Even though Bade Onimode may be right to state, with reference to Nigeria, that foreign resource dependency of NGOs has not rendered them agents of external actors,¹³⁷ the extent of donor influence over the operations of NGOs should not be down-played. Data on the sources of NGO funding is difficult to access, often due to their lack of transparency. However, with the on-going crisis of state and economy, attendant reductions in state subventions, the constriction of avenues for local resource mobilization and the weakness of the gift economy, it is likely that the dependency of NGOs on external aid has increased. The majority of Nigerian NGOs interviewed attested to the significant composition of foreign assistance in their funding base, even if reluctant to confirm with actual figures. External aid continues to be mainly disbursed through INGOs, such as CUSO. Once primarily concerned with funding state agencies, increasingly donor agencies, such as the US-based Ford Foundation and the German-based, Friedrich Naumann and Friedrich Ebert Foundations have expanded their

¹³⁶ Fowler, "Agents of Democratization", p.329-330.

¹³⁷ Interview with Bade Onimode, December 1993.

funding profile to NGOs in Nigeria in recent years.¹³⁸

The increasing reliance of NGOs on external resources while easing material constraints and often enhancing organizational effectiveness, "undermines initiative, superimposes a donor perspective in the definition of goals and objectives (in order to qualify for funding), and disorients civil organizations by preoccupying them with the tasks of aid administration (accounting, reporting, supervision, and requisitioning), thus vitiating the empowerment project."¹³⁹ Though NGOs have prided themselves on their autonomy and responsiveness to grassroots needs, the imposition of onerous reporting and accounting requirements by INGOs and external donors, together with the growing external influence over the orientation of local NGOs makes them increasingly answerable to external agents and erodes their already tenuous accountability to the local constituencies they seek to empower. Clark,¹⁴⁰ Fowler,¹⁴¹ Schmitz and Hutchful¹⁴² have also highlighted the limits of the historical tendency of official aid policies to promote community development in the narrow project oriented sense.

¹³⁸ Interview with Yahaya, January 1994.

¹³⁹ Halfani, "The Challenge Ahead", p.204.

¹⁴⁰ Clark, Democratizing Development.

¹⁴¹ Fowler, "The Role of NGOs", and Fowler, "Agents of Democratization".

¹⁴² Schmitz and Hutchful, Popular Participation.

The *modus operandi* of project aid, Fowler maintained, is based "on a mechanistic cause and effect paradigm"¹⁴³ which dissuades participation or treats popular input merely "in an instrumental fashion, as a cost reducing input."¹⁴⁴ The process of decision making tends to be dominated by local elites, with often little grassroots participation, especially of women, in the conception, planning, monitoring and evaluation of micro-projects. Such an approach to grassroots community development encourages a localized, particularistic and apolitical NGO community and "steers NGOs away from activities designed to remove the social and political structures which hold the poor in their disadvantaged position."¹⁴⁵

Ultimately, NGO project-gearred development disempowers the grassroots, for it fails to enhance the capacity of ordinary people to influence their daily lives, individually and collectively and discourages the evolution of politically significant NGO networks to challenge the state which retains, though distant, a strong influence over local processes. It also serves to strengthen the state at its margins through its sustenance of a social service system which the state has absconded under adjustment and thus reproduces the political economy of poverty and underdevelopment, rather than seeking

¹⁴³ Fowler, "Distant Obligations", p.17.

¹⁴⁴ Fowler, "Distant Obligations".

¹⁴⁵ Fowler, "The Role of NGOs", p.70.

its transformation. While the majority of Nigerian NGOs interviewed were acutely aware of the unequal division of labour between INGOs/external donors and local NGOs, stemming from the former's control of resources, very few have evolved concrete policy measures to protect their autonomy and local relevance. Popular NGOs, such as the NEST and WIN, which until recently had resisted external assistance for reasons of autonomy, have both adopted policies which screen funding sources for 'hidden agendas' and negative records of donor collaborations. They have also sought to diversify their funding base to reduce their vulnerability to cooptation, while consistently searching for innovative means of generating resources internally which is the surest means of reducing external influence over NGO operations. They are however, the exception not the norm.

The experience of Nigeria's nascent NGO community underscores the need to temper the often enthusiastic responses to NGO operations and their stated ability to empower the grassroots with a critical assessment of the actual capacity of NGOs to enhance political liberalization, strengthen civil society and instigate democratic renewal. To date, the Nigerian and African NGO sectors have contributed marginally to this process. Like any other social force in civil society, non-governmental organizations, even the most popular and democratic, are vulnerable to manipulation, cooptation, and colonization by the forces of the higher

circles, internal and external. The middle class character, the lack of internal democracy and a popular base of the majority of NGOs, coupled with their growing dependence on financial and material aid from the state and external donor agencies make them particularly susceptible to cooptation. With the increasing legitimacy of the rhetoric of 'grassrootsness' in policy and analysis, NGOs may be rendered mere stepping stones for its middle class leadership and membership seeking to increase their societal influence and power as Fatton has suggested.¹⁴⁶ A relevant NGO community must seek to empower the grassroots not simply to effectively execute isolated local development projects but more importantly to evolve politically significant and democratic NGO networks, vertically and horizontally, not only to curb state excesses but also to challenge the state and restructure the unequal relations of power and resource distribution in their respective societies. It is not enough for NGOs to simply concentrate on a myriad of micro-development projects. While primary health care projects, school and shelter construction, agricultural extension services, cottage industry promotion, revolving credit loan schemes, etc., undertaken by NGOs have been indispensable in providing a social safety net and access to resources for ordinary people in their daily struggles for survival, -- particularly as the state retreats from the social reproduction of vulnerable

¹⁴⁶ Fatton, Predatory Rule, p.5.

groups -- increasing the capacities of the grassroots to engage the broad political arena must be pursued in tandem. Poverty, as Clark has noted "will not be defeated just by tackling it at the micro-level, important as that work is for the millions of people who benefit directly from grassroots development projects....to stem the mounting tide necessitate attacking the root causes of poverty at the macro-level."¹⁴⁷ A non-combative and apolitical NGO community may render NGOs simply third millennium missionaries. That is to say, the activities of NGO, regardless of how genuine, benign and important to the social reproduction of the poor, may be the conduit through which capitalist expansionism seeks to shelter potentially revolutionary subordinate groups from socio-economic exigencies since these forces may pose a threat to the state and transnational domination. While serving the imperative of market globalization at the African and Third World end, NGO operations may also do double duty by mitigating migratory pressures to the West.¹⁴⁸ In short, NGO's simple pursuance of micro-projects divert attention from the urgent need to agitate for the transformation and democratization of the state and the creation of participatory political institutions in which popular forces have a determining role in the policy decisions that influence local and national development. In this process, NGOs must

¹⁴⁷ Clark, Democratizing Development, p.198.

¹⁴⁸ Fowler, "Distant Obligations", p.25-26.

democratize their internal structures, forge networks with other NGOs and seek to build linkages with progressive social forces in what Beckman has called 'actually existing civil society.'

ADJUSTMENT, DESTATIZATION, CIVIL SOCIETY AND DEMOCRACY

There has been no shortage of neo-liberal approaches that have intervened to interpret and proffer solutions to Africa's on-going socio-economic and political crisis. If market forces are held out by neo-liberal analysts as the catalyst for political liberalization as I have noted in section one, then further economic reform in this direction is paramount for the strengthening of civil society and democratic consolidation. In this view, democracy is best served by the ongoing adjustment exercise because it emboldens the market and civil society relative to the state. Economic deregulation and liberalization promote the formation of alternative poles of association and centres of power outside the ambit of the state, providing an 'enabling environment' for the strengthening of civil society, consensual democratic politics and economic recovery and development. Political pluralism, public transparency, accountability, empowerment and the devolution of decision-making to the grassroots are thus an outgrowth of market reforms.

As previously mentioned, *informality* approaches and the emphasis on the survivalist strategies of subordinate groups and the manner in which this process changes state-civil

society relations has gained resonance in unravelling the complexity of African social reality. Similarly, the urban *bias/coalition* and the *economy of affection* schools of thought elaborated in Chapter Two have been favoured neo-liberal approaches to understanding the problems of African development. While differing in their interpretation of the dimensions of the African crisis, both schools of thought agree that the encapsulation of the African state by either an urban coalition or persisting affective ties lay at the roots of post-colonial development failures and the crisis of governance on the continent which can only be remedied by the release of market forces. A new approach, termed *governance*, has grown significantly in the literature on African development in recent years. It has been popularized by the World Bank, the Ford Foundation and in the academic writings of Africanists attached to the African Governance Programme of the Carter Centre of Emory University.¹⁴⁹ Goran Hyden's work has been recognized for elevating the divergent neo-liberal usage of governance "to an umbrella concept defining an approach."¹⁵⁰ The governance approach, according to its proponents, seeks to move beyond the predominant academic and policy focus on the economic facets of Africa's development

¹⁴⁹ World Bank, *LTPS*, Richard Joseph, "Africa: The Rebirth of Political Freedom" in *Journal of Democracy*, vol.1, no.4, 1991. See also Goran Hyden and Michael Bratton eds., *Governance and Politics in Africa*, (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1992).

¹⁵⁰ Michael Bratton and Donald Rothchild, "The Institutional Bases of Governance in Africa" in Goran Hyden and Michael Bratton eds., *Governance and Politics in Africa*, (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1992) p.266.

problems to place greater emphasis on the political dimension of this process, particularly turning intellectual lenses to "issues of state responsiveness and accountability, and the impact of these factors on political stability and economic development."¹⁵¹ Governance, Goran Hyden maintained, differs and transcends the voluntarism of some neo-liberal approaches and the pessimistic and deterministic perspectives of Marxist and non-Marxist structuralist frameworks.

Hyden asserted that governance is "characterized by reciprocal behaviour and legitimate relations of power between the governors and governed; in this respect 'governance' differs from 'rules' which does not presuppose legitimacy."¹⁵² At the core of the governance framework is the assumption that politics is devoid of social contestation on the basis of fundamental conflict of interests. Rather for Hyden, politics can be viewed as a "positive sum-game; where reciprocal behaviour and legitimate relation of power between governors and governed prevail; and where everybody is a winner not only in the short-term but also in the long term."¹⁵³ In the continuum of classical liberal democratic theorists, especially contract theorists, to whom Hyden pays

¹⁵¹ Bratton and Rothchild, "The Institutional Bases", p.263.

¹⁵² Hyden quoted as cited in Bratton and Rothchild, "The Institutional Bases", p.266-267.

¹⁵³ Goran Hyden, "Governance and the Study of Politics" in Goran Hyden and Michael Bratton eds., Governance and Politics in Africa, (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1992) p.10.

homage, he maintained that citizen's legitimize state authority by voluntarily accepting an asymmetrical relationship with the state and political leaders in a *quid pro quo* for effective governance and the resolution of societal problems. Governance analysts further argued that though political actors seek to enhance personal power and opportunities to amass wealth, they derive satisfaction from their performance in public service. The key for Hyden, is to initiate institutional changes "so as to make individual actors expend their energies in the labour of public interest."¹⁵⁴ The familiar values and procedures historically associated with liberal democracy, mainly the rule of law, public accountability, the pluralization of policy making processes and the regularization of competitive elections are at the core of institutional reforms advocated by governance analysts. Through such reforms "leaders can mobilize popular energy in support of developmental actions, and...followers can keep leaders honest and accountable."¹⁵⁵ However, civil society and its associational life remains a crucial 'democratic watchdog' to check state excesses. According to Hyden, the sustainability of governance and reciprocal relations "depend[s] on the extent to which individuals are free to form associations to defend and promote their interest

¹⁵⁴ Hyden cited in Bratton and Rothchild "The Institutional Bases", p.269.

¹⁵⁵ Bratton and Rothchild, "The Institutional Bases", p.269.

at the public realm."¹⁵⁶ The governance framework, like other neo-liberal approaches supports further market reforms and the 'rolling back' of the state as crucial for strengthening civil society and democratic consolidation.

The governance approach, much like its neo-liberal intellectual cousins, is not helpful in deciphering the complexity of Africa's social reality and obfuscates the relationship between the state and civil society. In an attempt to restore human agency to the understanding of political and socio-economic development in Africa, but in a stated middle ground between action and structuralist development theories, the governance approach shows a disregard for the objective parameters which constrain creative politics. Notwithstanding the stated recognition by governance analysts of the structural constraints in the evolution of 'reciprocal legitimate relations', and Hyden's incorporation of the Marxist dictum: "human beings make their own history but not in circumstances of their own choice"¹⁵⁷, the ascription of politics "to an independent and superordinate factor in the study of development"¹⁵⁸ leads these analysts to ignore the material realities in Africa; the unequal internal relations of power, politics and resource distribution and the uneven integration of the continent into

¹⁵⁶ Hyden, "Governance", p.14.

¹⁵⁷ Hyden, "Governance", p.8.

¹⁵⁸ Hyden, "Governance", p.8.

the global economy. While it is important to recognize human agency, a crucial factor long-neglected in the development literature, the analysis and understanding of on-going processes of change cannot be divorced from the objective parameters which are always constraints, albeit not immutably. Hyden and other governance analysts simplify politics in Africa, emptying it of contradictions and conflict. Criticizing the new governance approach, and its ascriptions of political authority with the 'general will', Fatton aptly notes that governance "imparts to politics a supreme benignity that conjures away the manifest realities of economic injustice, brutal oppression, and social conflict."¹⁵⁹ He pointedly asks: "how can human beings truly share a community of interest when they are divided into classes of perpetrators and victims of exploitation?"¹⁶⁰ "How can it be conceived that the fundamentally unequal distribution of wealth and gross disparities in life-chances that characterize most African regimes are merely accidental, or worse yet, symptomatic of a voluntary acceptance of an asymmetrical relationship?"¹⁶¹

Much like informality theory, which erroneously portrays the formal and informal sectors as mutually exclusive arenas, there is also a proclivity in governance analysis to falsely

¹⁵⁹ Fatton, Predatory Rule, p.4.

¹⁶⁰ Fatton, Predatory Rule, p.4.

¹⁶¹ Fatton, Predatory Rule, p.142.

polarize the state and civil society. Central to the conceptual framework of my thesis and the analysis of the problematic of civil society and democracy in Africa, is the recognition of the interconnection of the objective and subjective factors and force in development and the explicit appreciation of the dialectical quality of state-civil society relations. To accurately and holistically unearth the concrete dynamics of Africa's nascent civil society and the factors and forces which strengthen and weaken the civic terrain, particularly its popular sectors, it is paramount to recognize the dialectical unity of the state and civil society as "the state is transformed by a changing civil society, likewise civil society is transformed by a changing state."¹⁶² Though the state is an assemblage of competing social forces, national and transnational, seeking access and control of resources, and where these social classes and groups vie to influence the allocation of resources and the direction of development, the state is controlled and serves the interest of the factions of the ruling class (national and transnational) and seeks to consummate ruling class hegemony in civil society.

This interpretation of Hyden and the economy of affection school of thought, in which the African state is viewed as suspended in 'mid-air without any structural roots' in civil society, is totally unfounded. It ignores that the state in

¹⁶² Fatton, Predatory Rule, p.12.

capitalist social formations, even an underdeveloped one, are political expressions of particular interests in civil society, conditioned by inequities in property and production relations.¹⁶³ The factions of the ruling classes, as represented in the civic space through such favoured neo-liberal institutions as the chambers of commerce, have monopolized the state realm and have had a determining influence on how societal choices are made, rules are defined, resources allocated and benefits enjoyed. To be sure, subordinate and popular social forces and groups in civil society, such as trade unions, civic association, students and women's groups do also seek to influence processes at the state level, agitating for material concession from the state and that "it...lay down and enforce rules in their favour."¹⁶⁴ The state has and does make economic concessions to subordinate groupings and on occasions eases the restrictions on political space, but only insofar as improved wages, expanded social expenditure and limited democratic rights do not obstruct the accumulation project of factions of the ruling classes, as the African and global crisis reconfirms. Mamdani observed that governance theory, like much of the neo-liberal conceptualizations of state-civil society relations, ignores the interconnection of these two spheres. In a review of the proceedings of the 1989 inaugural

¹⁶³ Bangura, "Theoretical Discourse", p.29.

¹⁶⁴ Beckman, "Liberalization of Civil Society", p.29

conference of the African Governance Programme of the Carter Centre, he argued that in so doing, governance theory and their intellectual associates "misrepresents the manner in which forces within society penetrate the state differentially, just as the state power reinforces certain social interest and undermines other."¹⁶⁵

Civil society by no means enjoys an independent existence from the state, despite the general belief in neo-liberal writings that market reforms, the attendant role back of state intervention in the economy, and the curtailment of state redistributive policies has created a vacuum for civil society to grow unencumbered by the state. The state interfaces with civil society through rules and transactions "multiple economic interventions, its disciplinary regulations of private behaviour and its ideological interpellations."¹⁶⁶ In the quest to promote the interests of the ruling classes and their hegemony in the civic terrain, yet retain the veneer of representing the general interest, the state responds to the demands from subordinate forces. However, any semblance of a 'benign aloofness' that the state may have enjoyed since the early years of the post-colonial period has been eroded by the deepening crisis of accumulation which mitigated against its ability to improve the living conditions and life-chance of subordinate groups, thus contributing to the current

¹⁶⁵ Mamdani cited in Beckman, "Liberation of Civil Society, p.23-24.

¹⁶⁶ Fatton, Predatory Rule, p.13.

legitimation crisis of the African state. State attempts to reproduce its hegemony through cooptation has been ineffective while coercion only serves to further alienate civil society. State repression paradoxically galvanizes counter-hegemonic struggles, intra and inter-class, agitating for democratization.

But Africa's reinvigorated civil society should not be simplistically portrayed with democratic and libertarian attributes, emptied of political and ideological struggle, nor should the vibrancy of its associational life, the plurality of social movements and institutions be viewed as united in the same social project of democratizing the state as is commonly assumed by neo-liberal analysts.¹⁶⁷ Civil society is not a neutral terrain but rather a sphere of multiple contestations and conflict on the basis of class, gender, ethnicity, race and religion; an arena of hegemonic, ideological and resistance struggles. Much like the state, political contestation is ever-present in civil society, which transverses trade unions, multinational corporations, political parties, civic associations, universities and NGOs. The civic terrain is fraught with "interests and tendencies that are parochial, sectarian, full of insoluble contradictions and bear a strong tendencies to act in undemocratic, if not authoritarian, ways."¹⁶⁸ In short,

¹⁶⁷ Schmitz and Hutchful, Popular Participation, p.8.

¹⁶⁸ Ninsin, "Some Problems", p.16.

elements in the civic terrain are protean and have "no determining essential properties, neither 'democratic' nor 'undemocratic'".¹⁶⁹ The myriad of community development associations, NGOs, women's groups and rural cooperatives, in addition to trade, student and professional unions, while mobilized to increasingly agitate for democracy have to varying degrees also manifested anti-democratic tendencies, as the Nigerian experience underscored. Internal processes within civic associations, particularly around electoral competitions have been plagued by the contradictions of the wider society. For example, internal relations in the trade union movement have been marred by a lack of internal democracy, corruption, internecine ethnic and religious conflict, a hostility towards gender issues and prone to manipulation to suit the political ambitions of opportunistic leaders as the Bafyau incumbency has shown. Professional associations, especially the Nigerian Bar Association also exemplified quite clearly how intra-union electoral contestation exhibited a proclivity towards *naira* politics, electoral rigging, ethnic and regional manipulation and the political thuggery and violence that have characterized national politics and national electoral competition in the post-colonial period. Likewise the embryonic NGO sector as previously mentioned, has not been immune to these anti-democratic ills. Moreover, the recently concluded 12th Annual Convention of the NANS, at Obafemi

¹⁶⁹ Bangura and Gibbon, "An Introduction", p.21.

Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, illustrated that even the indomitable national student body, which has survived successive military regimes, its intermittent proscription and the most brutal aspects of the state repression to remain the 'conscience of the nation', has been subject to anti-democratic practises. In spite of the resilience of the NANS and its seemingly internal participatory structure, the convention was beset with fierce intra-union antagonisms, allegations and counter-allegations by factions centred on mutual charges of state infiltration, nearly ending in the disintegration of the union.¹⁷⁰ Similarly, the February 1994 Second National Convention of the Campaign for Democracy held in Ibadan, was marred by the convergence of "the internal contradiction within the organization as well as the contradiction of the society it [has sought] to transform."¹⁷¹ The CD which had emerged as the most credible popular group to lead Nigerians in the historic pro-democracy struggles in the wake of the June 12 annulled election, had its legitimacy tainted in the embroglio touched off by the flirtation of its leadership with the military wing of the ING on the eve of the Abacha coup. The CD crisis was acutely manifest in the mutual allegations between the Beko-led and Ubani-led factions, citing undemocratic leadership, financial

¹⁷⁰ Emma Eke, "No to Faction" in African Guardian, May 30, 1994, p.9.

¹⁷¹ Adebayo Williams "Icons against Icons" in The News, March 7, 1994, p.10.

improprieties and state collaboration, but at its roots reflected an ideological conflict over the orientation, principles and strategies to guide popular struggles.¹⁷² Commenting on the CD's leadership conflict, Adebayo Williams noted that the crisis was inevitable since the umbrella body "emerged as an omnibus democratic bandwagon in protest and agitation against the Babangida junta, it could not transform into a conventional political party and thus lacked ideological clarity."¹⁷³ Caught up in the immediate task of confronting the Babangida dictatorship, the CD was unable to give priority to its long-term interests in creating sound internal structures and failed to adopt a constitution, a well articulated programme and a set of guiding principles. While the CD struggled to sort itself out, the pro-democracy umbrella lost some credibility in civil society. To some, the romance of certain CD members with the military, the intensity of the conflict at the Ibadan convention, the mutual allegations of corruption and undemocratic ills exhibited, was a microcosm of, and bore no difference to the kind of politics that had plagued Nigeria since independence and which the CD had sought to transform. In fact, the lull in CD activities in the first few months of the Abacha coup and the failure of its

¹⁷² Abayomi Ogundeji, "A House Divided" in African Guardian, February 21, 1994. See Also: Mikail Mumuni, "The Enemy Within" in Tell, February 21, 1994, and Adewale Maja-Pearce, "Physician, Heal Thyself!" in The News, February 21, 1994.

¹⁷³ Williams, "Icons", p.11.

national 'stay at home' strike organized in May to protest the on-going petrol scarcity and the military junta's self-imposed mandate, can in part be attributed to the fall-out from the convention.¹⁷⁴ To be sure, financial and organizational constraints together with state clampdown on the CD leadership on the eve of the planned action, contributed largely to the ineffectiveness of the action. But in no small measure, the CD's internal conflict did challenge the leadership of the democratic umbrella.

It has been argued in this thesis that in spite of the emboldening of the Nigerian civic terrain in recent years, it remains weak, divided by economic, social, ethnic and religious conflict and subject to state manipulation and domestication. The persisting fragmentation of civil society, the susceptibility of its organizations, particularly its popular organs, to corruption and opportunism and the lack of internal democracy and accountability has made the civic terrain especially vulnerable to state cooptation and colonization, and reduced the political weight of popular forces to determine political and social-economic developments. Currently, in the reinvigorated calls to oust the Abacha junta and uphold the sanctity of June 12 elections, it initially appeared that the CD had lost the initiative in determining the direction of pro-democracy agitations. In the

¹⁷⁴ Isodi Dike, "Excesses of a Campaign for Democracy" in TSM, May 22, 1994. See also: Dele Ajaja, "Sorry, We are Working" in Tell, May 23, 1994 and Felix Oboagwina, "Thumbs Down for CD" in The Week, May 23, 1994.

crystallization of factions of the political class -- from reformed militarist to progressives -- into the NADECO and the new found resolve of MKO Abiola to lay claim to the presidency, the pedestrian and often opportunistic political class who had largely abandoned the June 12 issue on the eve of the Abacha coup, appeared to be leading the struggle for democracy in Nigeria. The NADECO has featured prominently in the campaigns to boycott the government-sponsored national constitutional conference and the increasing demands for a Sovereign National Conference. Highlighting the internal contradictions within the CD, in no way diminishes its continued strong leadership of popular and pro-democracy forces in the country. The CD retains over 50 affiliates which include the country's two strategic oil unions, NUPENG and PERGASSON. These unions have been central to the intensified popular agitation for civil liberties and democracy. Since July 1994, the oil unions have launched a national strike, which has crippled oil production, the country's economic life-line, and intensified the pressure on the military junta. These unions, have demanded the sanctity of the June 12 elections and the release of MKO Abiola who was arrested and detained on June 22 and is currently being tried on treason charges for announcing a parallel government. The June 12 issue and Abiola's release have all been linked to the on-going calls for an SNC as the modality to restructure Nigeria's political and economic terrain.

But the intensified agitation of broad sections of civil society to bring an end to one party, no-party rule and the militarization of the state and civil society in Nigeria and Africa, should not lead to the assumption that all civic groups share a common commitment to democracy, or are uniformly in agreement on its form and content. While in recent years a cross section of civil society have been mobilized against erstwhile dictatorships, the various anti-authoritarian forces drawn into political action have varying interests in ending predatory rule. In Nigeria, the political class throughout the duration of the now defunct PTP, showed an opportunistic attachment to democracy, and defended it only insofar as the pluralization of the political space opened up access to the citadels of state power. Given this antecedent, the renewed agitation of the NADECO may simply be spawned by the marginalization of the political class in the current power equation, rather than a commitment to institutionalize pluralist and consensual politics. Likewise, the interest of the bulk of the middle classes in democracy may be simply conjunctural. While it is true that the crisis, material deterioration and the pauperization and proletarianization of broad sections of the middle classes have galvanized class fractions and hitherto conservation professional bodies, such as the ASUU, NBA and the NUJ to agitate for the rule of law, press freedoms, civil liberties and social justice, others may "see... the move towards greater political democracy as an

occasion to loosen state... [monopoly on] the channels for wealth accumulation."¹⁷⁵ In contrast, for subordinate social classes the struggle for democracy underscores the desire for a 'second independence.' Although democratic campaigns are manifest in the call for civil liberties and multiparties, they are underpinned by popular aspirations for the betterment of life-chances and a determining role in the direction of development and thus an influence on the decision that affect their daily lives, as both Ake and Ampaw highlight with such lucidity in the introductory quotes to this chapter.

In popular contestations to democratize the state, pro-democracy groups confront elements in civil society seeking to resist and undermine the democratic project. The machinations of the conservative factions of Nigeria's ruling classes is a case in point. The CD and other democratic forces consistently challenged, politically and legally, the anti-democratic activities of the Association for Better Nigeria and its effort to prolong the Babangida dictatorship. The interplay of these forces is not characterized by benignity, but rather fierce contestation over fundamental conflict of interests and world-views. It may be more accurate then to view civil society and its associational life as Pereira suggests in the Latin American context, as struggling "against one another and against state managers to use state institutions for their own

¹⁷⁵ Harsch, "Democracy Movement", p.22.

ends."¹⁷⁶ In this regard, it is also erroneous to mechanistically impart on civil society a neo-liberal programme that conflates the development of the civic terrain with the market and where all civic groups are held to be dedicated to minimizing the role of the state in the economy and society.

Various social forces in civil society have opposed SAPs, maintained statist positions but still demanded the democratization of the state and the autonomy of the civic terrain. Workers, of course, remain at the core of popular opposition to SAPs. The cumulative effect of public and private sector 'wage restructuring' and the attendant wage freezes, cut backs and redundancies, in tandem with the removal of subsidies, have drastically reduced the living standards of workers. Devaluation induced inflation has eaten into the real incomes of workers. While trade liberalization has brought imported goods back onto store shelves, price levels have risen beyond the purchasing power of the working classes. Workers have borne disproportionately the burden of adjustment and, although the leadership of the central labour body, the NLC, has often been coopted on the side of the neo-liberal project, workers have joined equally aggrieved urban social forces, such as students and a strata of the middle classes in opposing the SAP. In spite of the expectation of proponents of SAP, that trade and exchange rate deregulation

¹⁷⁶ Pereira, "Democracy and Civil Society", p.371.

would benefit the bulk of rural dwellers, small-scale and middle-scale food and export commodity producers too have been aggrieved by the SAP. The initial beneficiaries of the restructuring of price incentives and favourable international conjunctures for certain export crops, the inflationary spiral in the Nigerian economy has eroded both productive gains and real incomes of rural producers. Similarly, factions of the higher circles have also resisted the policy instruments of the SAP. While the benefits of SAPs have been hotly contested by factions of capital, the disastrous consequences of adjustment on industrial production have led domestic manufacturers and their organizations, such as the MAN, to call for the "reflation of the economy through a significant increase in the consumer purchasing power, a lowering of interest rates, the expansion of credit and liquidity,"¹⁷⁷ and are joined by workers and the middle classes in the demand for the upward review of the naira. The decision of the Abacha junta to accede to the agitation of these social groups, particularly productive capital, and peg the naira and interest rates in its 1994 Budget is indicative of the continued contestation around adjustment and the direction and design of economic recovery.

Rather than the neo-liberal anticipation of an attenuation of statist demands under market reforms, "in which the expansion on non-state activities...[renders] the state

¹⁷⁷ Olukoshi, "General Introduction", p.10.

irrelevant in the economic and political calculations of specific groups"¹⁷⁸, different social forces continue to have strong expectation of the state. Urban social classes demand the restoration of real incomes, the expansion of employment and social welfare, likewise rural dwellers. Rural producers pressure the state for roads, jobs, affordable seeds, fertilizers, etc. Local manufacturers, as mentioned pressured the state for the introduction of fixed exchange and interest rates, in addition to agitating for the rationalization of trade in order to protect domestic industrialist against transnational competitors. While they do support the commercialization and privatization of parastatals, factions of domestic productive capital seek state adjudication in the process in order to guard against transnational domination of prized privatized enterprises.

In spite of the statist perspective of various social forces, particularly urban popular groups, they have been at the centre of agitation to defend the autonomy of civil society and social struggles for civic and democratic rights. Independent popular political action in Nigeria has been largely the preserve of the organizations of workers, students and sections of the middle stratum. It is the associations of these social groups that have consistently challenged state arbitrariness, seeking to delimit the state and enthrone democracy, drawing support from the youth, urban unemployed,

¹⁷⁸ Bangura and Gibbon, "An Introduction", p.22.

petty traders and informal sector participants. Workers continue to agitate for trade union autonomy, collective bargaining and for the democratic right to use union dues for political purposes. The 1989 attempt by workers to form the Nigerian Labour Party in order to give expression to subordinate social forces in the political realm is indicative of this, though the initiative was aborted shortly after by the state. Similarly, the academic union has consistently agitated for academic freedom and university autonomy. Likewise, the respective organizations of the fourth estate and legal practitioners have struggled for press freedoms, the independence of the judiciary and have joined workers, students, women's groups, human rights NGOs in the demand for civil liberties, democracy and social justice.

However, it is these urban social forces that neo-liberal analysts variously portrayed as parasitic 'urban coalitions' and 'vested interests', which have featured prominently in democratic agitations in Nigeria and throughout Africa and have shown the greatest capacity to act as civil society's democratic 'watchdog'. As pointed out in Chapter One, the urban bias/coalition thesis popularized by Lipton and Bates gave theoretical legitimacy to the on-going market reforms, delegitimized urban popular opposition to SAPs and justified their repression, since these analysts blamed the presumed 'self-seeking' and 'privileged' 'urban coalition' for precipitating post-colonial development failures, through

their manipulation of the state and its resources toward sectoral ends, which thereby reduced the majority of rural dwellers to squalor.¹⁷⁹ In this scenario, social actors in the urban and rural sectors are viewed as homogenous, with workers exploiting peasants and town oppressing country. Portraying urban and rural sectors as mutually antagonistic poles, devoid of any recognition of social stratification and hierarchies, as we have shown, grossly negates how post-colonial development and the current market reforms have disastrously affected the living conditions of subordinate groups, urban and rural. In so doing, these analysts eliminate any role for organized formal urban groups to catalyze changes in state-civil society relations and negate any basis for a popular alliance of shared interests between urban and rural subordinate groups to bring about political restructuring.

Urban bias proponents have been joined by informality analysts who also down play or negate the role of formal organized groups, such as trade unions and professional associations, in catalyzing democratic changes to the political system. The intellectual lenses of these analysts have focused on the democratic implications of a retreating state, the liberating dynamics of market reforms and the pluralizing influence of the processes of informalization. Tending to concentrate exclusively on informal forms of associational life flourishing outside the state realm, they

¹⁷⁹ Lipton, Why Poor People Stay Poor, and Bates, Markets and States.

too neglect any examination of the responses of formally-organized social forces in civil society to SAPs and predatory rule, also ignoring how informal organizations relate to urban groups and the manner in which alliances have been built between "'formal' and informal groups' to intervene in the political arena as they seek to introduce changes in the political system."¹⁸⁰

Certainly, as we have seen, post-colonial development led to wanton rural neglect and impoverishment. In the pursuit of the 'modernizing project' successive national development plans extracted cheap food and export revenues in support of rapid industrialization but relegated the rural sector to the fringes of civil society. Moreover, it is equally true that workers, like other social groups, are 'self interested' and 'self-seeking' in defence of their interests as wage-earners. In the context of the crisis and adjustment, the attendant unemployment, rising inflation, hard hitting affect on the living standards of workers, and the resultant trade union weakening, "trade union activit[ies] have become oriented towards the protection of past gains, rather than the advancement of present needs"¹⁸¹ and they may simply seek to defend the corporate interest of workers rather than articulating wider societal concerns. Similarly, the organizations of professional groups also seek to serve the

¹⁸⁰ Bangura and Gibbon, "An Introduction", p.23-24.

¹⁸¹ Mustapha, "Multiple Modes of Social Livelihood", p.213-214.

corporate demands of their respective constituencies, and with their pauperization in recent years they too may be solely concerned with the parochial interest of their members. In addition, the 'urban coalition' of workers and professionals may have conflicts of interest with rural producers over access and distribution of state resources, particularly with the current restructuring of price incentives under SAPs.¹⁸²

However, contrary to the postulates of urban coalition analysts, the Nigerian case suggests that in struggling for their own narrow interests, urban social groups tend to articulate wider societal concerns and enter into broad coalitions and campaigns with other social groups. In the NLC's consistent opposition to the recurrent removal of oil 'subsidies' and the country's intermittent fuel scarcity, they have drawn various social groups into national campaigns to protest against the government's SAP, which often provided a platform to enunciate broader popular grievances. For instance, in listing its demands to the government after the April 1988 fuel crisis, the ad-hoc trade union committee formed on the eve of negotiations demanded not only the restoration of previous petroleum prices and a review of government attitudes towards the NLC -- which was dissolved a month earlier--, but also called for the lifting of the ban on the ASUU and NANS. In addition, the committee demanded an immediate implementation of a SAP relief packages and measures

¹⁸² Bangura, "The Question of Democracy in Nigeria", p.49.

to cushion vulnerable groups, urban and rural, from socio-economic exigencies. In fact, the agitation of the so-called 'urban coalition' is often only effective when linked to broader national concerns. For instance, the ASUU's 1988 industrial dispute with the federal government was largely unsuccessful because union demands were concentrated on 'bread and butter issues'. Three years later, learning from the limitations of the 1988 agitation, the ASUU launched a more effective strike action which linked its corporate interests around issues of wage increases and job security to wider societal concerns over under-funding in the educational sector, academic freedom and university autonomy, and as a consequence gained the support of not just workers and students, but civil liberties and human rights NGOs and other democratic forces.

The penchant of neo-liberal analysts to employ rigid dichotomies in their analytical frameworks such as state-civil society, formal/informal sector and rural/urban with the complementary tendency to ascribe contrasting attributes to these juxtaposed realms, has often led to an oversimplification of the complex dynamics of African social realities. The political interaction of social actors in the formal and informal economy, like that between urban and rural dwellers and their collective responses to material decline and state authoritarianism, is much more complex than neo-liberal analysis projects. Without subscribing to the economy

of affection thesis of Hyden and its deterministic reduction of social relations in the state and civil society to the affective ties rooted in a monolithic and 'uncaptured' 'peasant mode of production' and the resultant view that the social and political orientation of urban social groups has remained rural, we are cognizant that the enduring strength of traditional group identities and the contact of urban and rural residences through familial and community obligations have tended to make urban popular groups acutely aware of the popular demands of rural society. Taking cognizance of rural concerns, Mkandawire has argued that in the post-colonial period, "demands of labour have had positive spill-over effects benefiting other social groups other than labour; free education and health care are classic examples".¹⁸³ While workers and middle class strata organize in unions and professional associations, they also are participants in ethnic, religious, and community-based organizations and are active contributors to rural self-help and micro-development projects.¹⁸⁴ In the context of the crisis, urban actors and community organizations have become increasingly important in providing financial assistance, shelter, employment and educational opportunities, although with material decline, the ability of assistance varies particularly within and between social classes. Likewise material deterioration has

¹⁸³ Mkandawire, "Democratic Face", p.309.

¹⁸⁴ Bangura and Gibbon, "An Introduction", p.23-24.

constrained collective initiatives to provide local constituencies with access to resources and social welfare provisions.

Similarly, organized social groups in the formal sector in Nigeria have made alliances with urban informal groups, in forging survival strategies to cope with the crisis, in agitation against increases in petroleum prices and in pro-democracy struggles. Bangura and Gibbon have observed that "informalization has a levelling effect on society, in terms of getting people of diverse backgrounds to experience each others' work situations and social practices."¹⁸⁵ Popular and urban-based organizations, like WIN have promoted income-generation activities in both urban and rural areas, launched campaigns around a wide range of gender issues, politically and legally challenged retrogressive gender discriminatory policies of the now defunct state legislatures, usually with the support of market-women's association and women's groups, urban and rural. The examination in Chapter Three of the intensified democratic struggle in the wake of the June 12 annulled elections, illuminated the active participation of urban informal groups in the coordination and execution of the civic campaigns to oust the Babangida dictatorship. Although to date, in pro-democracy struggles in Nigeria and most of Africa rural dwellers have remained on the margins of civil society, the CD and other democratic groups continue to give

¹⁸⁵ Bangura and Gibbon, "An Introduction", p.23-24.

expression to rural popular demands and have consistently sought to strengthen organizational capabilities in order to draw the rural populous and their organizations to the centre of on-going democratic campaigns. In light of the Nigerian and African evidence, Beckman is right to point out that by a 'definitional trick', neo-liberal analysts rule out of civil society social groups, particularly urban popular ones, not supportive of their own social project.¹⁸⁶ In the neo-liberal intervention in defence of civil society against the predatory state, they have sought to delegitimize the popular grievances and opposition of urban social actors hardest hit by SAPs and likewise with the most advanced nationalist and welfarist consciousness, as part of the on-going effort to discredit the state as an agent of development and to prop up forces supportive of further market reforms.

Confronted by the neo-liberal onslaught, some radical democrats, while critical of the power of market forces to promote capital accumulation, economic growth, efficient and equitable allocation of resources and sustainable development, have acceded to the anti-statist logic of SAPs in the current retreat into civil society and the one-sided call for its strengthening, devoid of a discourse on the character of the state and the urgent need for its democratic transformation. Whether attributed to the general disillusionment with state and state-centric perspectives, the dismal developmental

¹⁸⁶ Beckman, "Liberation of Civil Society".

record of one- and no-party states in Africa, the emergence of pro-democracy movements throughout the continent and/or theoretical reflections on the anti-democratic ills of the former state socialism regime in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, radical democrats have apparently now come to appreciate the time-honoured respect in liberal democratic discourses for the autonomy and emboldening of the civic terrain necessary to guard against state encroachment and repression. Radical democrats have given credence to the conventional neo-liberal wisdom that democracy and development is best served by a minimalist and weakened state. Of course, radical analysts have a different agenda than their neo-liberal counterparts in the call for the strengthening of civil society and state delimitation. The neo-liberal arguments in favour of a minimalist state, as we have alluded to, appear to be an admixture of the enduring liberal democratic assumption in which 'destatization' in the economy concomitantly fostered, "energized and transformed by liberal economic growth, demand[ed] and require[d] liberal politics",¹⁸⁷ complemented by a recent managerial perspective, which conversely links political reforms to the construction of political legitimacy for further market reforms. Chapter One detailed the classical liberal democratic discourses on state-civil society relations and the advocacy of the need to put limits on state power, which has informed

¹⁸⁷ Diamond cited in Harsch, "Democratic Movement", p.10.

the contemporary perspectives of the various neo-liberal schools of thought discussed in this chapter. Conventionally, neo-liberals argue that unlike the interventionist state, -- blamed for the inefficient allocation of resources, bureaucratic irrationality, corruption, nepotism, lack of transparency and accountability that precipitated the crisis -- a minimalist state attenuates ruling class factional conflict in the pursuit of state power, promotes the efficient use of scarce resources and encourages production all of which foster a material base more conducive for social and political stability and democracy. The managerial perspective is clearly exhibited in the World Bank's 1989 LTPS. As previously mentioned, this historical Report in which for the first time the Bank recognized that "underlying the litany of Africa's development problems is the crisis of governance,"¹⁸⁸ noted also that "history suggest[ed] that political legitimacy and consensus are a precondition for sustainable development."¹⁸⁹ For the Bank, Africa needs both less and better government. Departing from its usual technocratic approach to Africa's development problems, the Bank called for 'grassroots empowerment', the pluralization of policy-making processes and a bottom-up and participatory approach to development. Furthermore, intermediate NGOs, grassroots institutions and a free and vigilant press were all identified as important

¹⁸⁸ World Bank, LTPS, p.60.

¹⁸⁹ World Bank, *Loc.cit.*

'civic watchdogs' to provide countervailing powers to keep the state transparent and accountable. Beyond the rhetorical attachment to the grassroots and civil society, Beckman argued that the Bank's call for:

empowerment has more to do with releasing the presumably dormant and repressed entrepreneurial talents and energies of 'civil society' than with democratization. Similarly, accountability and the rule of law are related more to the development of an enabling environment for private investment than to the establishment of a democratic political order.¹⁹⁰

Moreover, the Bank's advocacy of state delimitation and the strengthening of civil society seems to have "less to do with checking power in the interest of democracy, than it has with ensuring that resources are spread in certain directions."¹⁹¹ The Bank's managerial perspective, which underscored the need to build legitimacy for further market reforms, strongly influenced the recent drive by Western governments toward political conditionalities, as suggested in section one. But whether in its quintessential liberal democratic form or in the nuanced version of the World Bank and bilateral donors, in the current historical conjuncture it has become a virtual unassailable truth that market reforms and a minimalist state, provide an enabling environment for the strengthening of civil society, multiparty democracy, economic growth and 'sustainable development with equity'.

¹⁹⁰ Beckman, "Empowerment or Repression?", p.67. Beckman provides an in depth and critical examination of the Bank's 1989 Long-Term Perspective Study.

¹⁹¹ Graeme Bloch, "Lets Have Some Action: Action for Change-Revisiting Civil Society" in Work in Progress, June 1993, p.24.

In contrast, radical analysts support the fortification of civil society, but expect it not to just provide an edifice against arbitrary and repressive state power but also to expand the political space in order to enable popular forces to better press for greater equality and social justice. It is this view that informs the apparent alliance between some radical and neo-liberal analysts in their support of liberal democracy. In his polemical work cited earlier, Ibrahim vehemently reminded radical African democrats, especially the 'icons' -- deemed to be still waging an 'anti-liberal democracy' war -- that the struggle for liberal democracy is simply not a bourgeois project, but rather an integral part of the on-going campaigns for popular democracy.¹⁹² Drawing lessons from the European historical experience, Ibrahim and others have pointed out that a liberal democratic framework enabled the European working classes and their socialist and Marxist allies to win the "right to free trade unions, independent labour parties funded by unions, the extension of the franchise to workers and women and the welfare State."¹⁹³ Additionally, radical democrats defend liberal democracy for the democratic culture which this political framework engenders, particularly in the promotion of a culture of tolerance, free debate and self criticism, which is also held to foster broad internal democracy within popular

¹⁹² Ibrahim, "Left Stardom".

¹⁹³ Bargura, "The Question of Democracy in Nigeria", p.49.

organizations in civil society, without which popular groups and struggles become dominated by self-serving cliques "arrogating to themselves the responsibility of deciding the level of participation and freedom to be enjoyed by the rest of society."¹⁹⁴ While a liberal democracy is the preferred political framework to expand political space, democratic consolidation requires the strengthening of popular organizations and the autonomy of the civic terrain, which needs to be independent from the state and political parties in order to play the necessary democratic 'watchdog function'. Beckman has pointed out that while in recent years there has been a retreat from the historically held view of most radical democratic theories in which solutions to the crisis of underdevelopment were sought through the capture of state power, the new focus of radical democrats on civil society and the search for ways to influence state power from an organized popular base has not meant an abandonment of its quest, despite its remoteness, given the formidable objective and subjective constraints, domestically and globally.

The principal proposition set out in this thesis has been that democratic consolidation in Nigeria and Africa is not simply a question of strengthening the autonomy of the civic realm. Though crucial, the level of organization and autonomy of civil society and the manner in which popular forces are able to restructure the state (from local to national levels)

¹⁹⁴ Bangura, "The Question of Democracy in Nigeria", p.49.

and change the balance of power, politics, and production and exchange is critical for democratic renewal and consolidation. Without a doubt, the institutionalization of liberal democracy on the African political landscape would be a monumental achievement and an advancement over the despotic rule of the last three decades, in which civil society was repressed in the name of an unachieved material improvement, even if it can only compel the state and ruling classes to respect human rights and civil liberties. But in as much as the fragile transitions towards multiparty democracy in Africa, have enlarged welcomed political space, liberal democracy far from provides institutional expression of the aspirations of the popular social base that have fuelled pro-democracy movements. While popular struggles for democracy in Africa are currently manifest in demands for multiparties, civil liberties and the rule of law they are inextricably linked to the improvement of material conditions and the betterment of life chances. In this process popular forces must be instrumental in defining and creating the institutions that will ensure their participation and influence on the development process while maintaining the autonomy of the civic terrain.

Ibrahim, Bangura and others, are right to point out that historically, liberal democracy was not simply the product of class contestations between the nascent bourgeoisie and the landed feudal class, but its full consolidation was the result of trade union agitations for both the extension of the

franchise and social democratic rights. Certainly, "were democratization dependent on the bourgeoisie as is generally asserted in liberal ideology, we would all still be discussing how much money and how much education defined a responsible citizen."¹⁹⁵ Likewise, the social democratic gains in Western capitalist countries in the last five decades would be far more limited even when compared in the context of the current roll backs. Therefore, historically, in the West liberal democracy not only provided a political framework to regulate the social conflict within ruling class factions emanating from the sphere of production and in civil society, but also between social classes, including the working classes. Nonetheless, we must be careful in equating the strengthening of civil society, popular participation and democracy in Africa and elsewhere with liberal democracy, the pitfalls of which are well known. Liberal democracy constitutes a limited form of democracy. Based on the ideological separation between abstract political and legal rights from concrete social and economic rights, liberal democracy while providing a formal judicial framework to protect civil liberties and check state excesses, disguises and ignores "the real relationship among the citizens in real societies, the inequalities, the relations of domination and subordination, and the social

¹⁹⁵ Chris Allen, Carolyn Baylies and Morris Szeftel, "Editorial: Surviving Democracy?" in ROAPE, no.54, 1992, p.9.

divisions and classes that exist in real life".¹⁹⁶ It will not suffice for radical analysts to downplay this association in the emphasis on the presumed expansion of the democratic space liberal democracy proffers, its undisputable superiority over erstwhile dictatorships and its comparative advantage over authoritarian regimes in the promotion of economic growth and development. Likewise, the tendency of governance analysts, like other neo-liberals, to view the civic terrain as a sphere of competing individuals and groups, freely formed with equal political-legal rights and resources with which to 'defend and promote their interests at the public realm', ignores the inequalities in wealth and power which mitigate against popular realization of these abstract rights.

In the Western consolidation of liberal democracy, which involved the historical processes of the socialization of politics, privatization of production and the bureaucratization of administration, several key social and economic institutional realms are absolved from the ethic of democracy.¹⁹⁷ At the level of access, representation and control of political and bureaucratic structures, liberal democracy institutionalizes alienation rather than empowerment. First, access to the state and policy making processes is unequal between social classes and groups. Typically, in liberal democratic systems social groups seek to

¹⁹⁶ Ampaw, "Political Liberalism", p.37.

¹⁹⁷ Schmitz and Hutchful, Popular Participation, p.16.

influence the decision making process through political and bureaucratic institutions in which access to the former is gained in regularized electoral competitions, while in the case of the latter political influence tends to be informal. Given existing unequal distribution of power and resources, access to political institutions through elections is usually the preserve of social groups and classes with the money and resources with which to influence and mobilize electoral support. Similarly, since access to decision-making processes in bureaucratic institutions tends to be informal, building contacts and networks to provide political access, requires the resources to lubricate these channels and often utilizes corrupt means.¹⁹⁸ Secondly then, the representation of social forces in decision-making processes is also conditioned by the inequalities in civil society. In electing political representatives, ordinary people choose between candidates in whose candidature they had no say. Therefore rather than being decision-makers the majority of people choose between aspiring decision-makers. Democratic choice "already limited to options produced by an oligarchic party machine is rendered all the more meaningless by the increasing similarity of political parties caused by the delegitimization of fundamental criteria such as social class and asymmetrical power relations."¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁸ Post, "Some Theoretical Issues", p.45-46.

¹⁹⁹ Claude Ake, "The Feasibility of Democracy in Africa", Keynote Address at the symposium on Democratic Transition in Africa, organized by the Centre for Research, Documentation and University Exchange, University of

While in elected office, a representative, even if he/she performs poorly, is largely exempt from the judgement of constituents whose democratic rights to institutionally express their displeasure, does not extend in any significant manner beyond voting in elections that may follow several years later.

Even if liberal democracy were as desirable as neo-liberals and radical analysts now contend, it is unlikely to take roots under current African conditions. As we have discussed in the previous section, the 'proper' bourgeois constituency, anticipated in liberal democratic discourses to compel political reforms once liberated by market reforms has not arrived on the African political scene. To the contrary, the Nigerian case suggests that the macro-economic environment of the SAP, rather than fostering a national bourgeoisie which accumulates capital through production has contributed to the strengthening and reproduction of the lucrative but unproductive, commercial, speculative and corrupt practices of the dominant comprador elites. The state is still the primary locus of accumulation. In the unyielding intra-ruling class contestation to control the state and its resources, conditions are created unconducive to consensual politics. Historically, under these circumstances, factions may opt for authoritarian forms of governance. In addition, the middle classes, expected to also be supportive of democracy, have

been caught up in the daily rigors of survival, remain conservative and susceptible to supporting authoritarianism, although in recent years strata have joined popular struggles for civil liberties, democracy and social justice. Examining the unique case of African democracy, Claude Ake has also noted that the sustainability and consolidation of liberal democracy is unlikely, given its predication on a socially atomized society in which interests are so particularized, conditions that do not exist in the African socio-economic and cultural context.²⁰⁰ In Africa, outside urban locales, primary group loyalties and pre-capitalist social structures remain strong. Thus, for Ake the conventional values and attitudes of individualism, competition and abstract universalism associated with liberal democracy, contradict the values of collectivity, cooperation and the concrete particular, emanating from rural Africa. In this regard, Ake has argued that the political arrangements of liberal democracy make little sense in Africa, and may be simply an exercise in alienation, since the "dominant paradigm of democratization is neither interested in what we are...our cultural and social experience... nor in the historicity of what it wants us to become."²⁰¹

Of course, our critique of liberal democracy its

²⁰⁰ Ake, "The Unique Case", p.243.

²⁰¹ Claude Ake, "Is Africa Democratizing?" in The Guardian, December 12, 1993, p. A8. The 1993 Guardian Annual Lecture at the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos.

suitability and unlikely sustainability in contemporary Africa, in no way suggests that a meaningful democracy is undesirable, inappropriate or cannot take strong roots on the continent, nor does it ignore the need to delimit state power. It neither devalues civil liberties and the rights historically associated with liberalism or offers an apologia for dictatorships, as many analysts seem to infer from any critique of liberal democracy in the current historical conjuncture. Instead, it emphatically suggests that a stable and sustainable democracy in Africa must recognize the continent's historical experience, contemporary specificities, the interests of the popular social base underlying pro-democracy movements and thereby the need to evolve structures and novel institutional forms that give expression to popular aspirations and their participation in the decisions and policies that affect their daily lives. Such a political framework in which popular forces dictate the content and direction of development will provide the environment to fulfil the popular desire for material improvement and the betterment of life-chances. Although it is entirely possible to erect the superstructural manifestations of liberal democracy -- parliaments, multiparties, elections -- if democracy in Africa is to overcome its historical urban and ruling class character in which constitutional safeguards were not nearly enough to prevent the abuse of limited civic and democratic rights, popular groups, urban and rural, must be

centre stage in any meaningful and sustainable democratization.

It is in this context that Claude Ake's keynote address at the 1993 Annual Guardian Lecture lamented that in the discourses on democracy in Africa today, there has been a total indifference to the character of the state and its influence on the democratization process. He aptly observed that:

democratic elections are being held to determine who will exercise the powers of the state with no questions asked about the character of the state as if it has no implications for democracy. But its implications are so serious that elections in Africa give the voter only a choice between oppressors. This is hardly surprising since Africa largely retains the colonial state structure which is inherently anti-democratic, being the repressive apparatus of an occupying power. Uncannily, this structure has survived, reproduced and rejuvenated by the legacy of military and single-party rule. By all indications it is also surviving democratization, helped by the reduction of democracy to multiparty elections. So what is happening now by way of democratization is that self-appointed military or civilian dictators are being replaced by elected dictators. *What is the point of choosing 'democratically' those who will control a state apparatus which is inherently undemocratic? The state must be transformed structurally before such elections can become a meaningful exercise in democracy.*²⁰²

Based on the evidence of newly elected regimes, Ake has strong grounds for concern. The nascent multiparty systems have neither increased or protected civil liberties nor promoted the articulation of the interests of subordinate groups. The enthronement of Western-style liberal democracy has not led to any qualitative change in the political practises that characterized predatory regimes of the past three decades. Neo-liberal expectations that liberal democracy would eliminate or at least reduce corruption, clientalism and

²⁰² Ake, "Africa Democratizing", p.A7. emphasis mine.

intra-ruling class conflict, if not inter-class contestations, have not been borne out by the African evidence. Largely failing to resolve intra- and inter class conflict, the new democratic framework has also not institutionalized mechanisms to establish firm civilian control of the military. In the two celebrated democratic transitions in Africa, Benin and Zambia, multiparty politics have been plagued by corruption and nepotism, mirroring the practices of their predecessors. As we elaborate on in the next section, the inability of the new state forms to regulate social tensions, particularly with the intensification of social struggle prompted by renewed government efforts to implement adjustment programmes, has increased state authoritarianism.

For example, in Benin, the initial euphoria and popular enthusiasm that followed the national conference and the ensuing ouster of President Kerekou in multiparty elections held in March 1991, have dissipated in the three years of the new government headed by a former World Bank official, Nicéphore Soglo. In its short tenure, the regime has been beset by factional conflict and widespread corruption. The chairman of the 1990 national conference, Bishop Isidore de Souza, noted that the extent of corruption of the Soglo government has far exceeded that of the previous dictatorship.²⁰³ Parliamentary politics have been marred by

²⁰³ Ernest Harsch, "Accumulators and Democrats: Challenging State Corruption in Africa" in The Journal of Modern African Studies, vol.31, no.1, 1993, p.47.

destructive contestation between rival cliques in which the historic tool of ethnic manipulation has been utilized in the conflict over scarce resources. President Soglo has been at the centre of allegations which accuse high ranking government officials of nepotism. Furthermore, efforts towards institutionalizing civil liberties and providing constitutional checks and balances have been resisted by the government. Only as recently as June 1993 did the government institute a Constitutional Court to aid in this direction, after widespread and recurrent protests over the delays.²⁰⁴ Political tensions and intensified social conflicts traversing the state and civil society have been exacerbated by the inability of the new government to move towards restructuring the country's military institutions, which has left the fledgling democracy susceptible to praetorian politics. Such vulnerability was played out in May 1992, when a suspected coup bid led by former members of Kerekou's presidential guard was foiled.²⁰⁵ Also, popular protests against worsening social-economic conditions under the SAP have been met with repression. In response to a student-led protest, the Soglo government quickly sent out the armed forces to quell the demonstration. In like manner, a conference on human rights organized by civic associations was banned by the government

²⁰⁴ Harsch, "Democratic Movement", p.25.

²⁰⁵ anon., "Benin: All Quiet on the Military Front" in African Guardian, August 17, 1992, p.11.

before it could be convened.

The Zambian experience has been similar. The international optimism which anticipated "Zambia...becoming a beacon of political liberty"²⁰⁶ in Africa, has waned over the last three years. More importantly, the new government, the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD), which came to power - in the electoral victory over the erstwhile one-party regime of Kenneth Kaunda (UNIP) in November 1991 -- with broad popular support and a strong commitment to transparency, accountability and social justice, has since lost credibility in civil society. Led by Frederick Chiluba, -- the former General Secretary of the Zambian Congress of Trade Unions -- the MMD government has done little to transform the country's political structures. Anticipated legal and constitutional reforms to balance legislative and executive powers have been consistently delayed, and have consequently blurred the separation of governmental powers leading to the erosion of parliamentary autonomy. As a further result, the excessive presidential powers, allegations of patronage, corruption and drug trafficking that had characterized nearly three decades of one-party rule are increasingly being levelled against the Chiluba government. Cabinet appointments, according to Baylies and Szeftel "seem to reproduce the factional intrigue" of the Kaunda regime.²⁰⁷ Several cabinet ministers and members of

²⁰⁶ Richard Joseph, "Democratic Change", p.199.

²⁰⁷ Baylies and Szeftel, "Multi-Party Politics in Zambia", p.91.

parliament have resigned or been dismissed after accusing the government of corruption, drug dealing and the obstruction of judicial and legislative responsibilities.²⁰⁸ From March to May 1993 a state of emergency was declared by the Chiluba government, in the name of protecting the young democracy from a few "citizens who [were] bent on plunging the nation into chaos."²⁰⁹ Subsequently, several opposition politicians were arrested and detained without charge. The two independent media houses have been under consistent attack by the government. The police have retained wide-reaching powers, banning demonstrations and executing criminal suspects without any recourse to a judicial process.²¹⁰ Under such authoritarian conditions and deepening economic woes exacerbated by the implementation of the SAP, Zambians now question the government's commitment to civil liberties and democracy, with many beginning to remember the repressive years of the Kaunda-led UNIP regime with nostalgia.²¹¹ With the intensification of political and economic instability since the Zambian elections, rumours of coups and plots against government officials abound. Recently, an automobile

²⁰⁸ Melinda Ham, "An Outspoken Opposition" in Africa Report, November - December 1993.

²⁰⁹ Melinda Ham, "History Repeats Itself" in Africa Report, May - June, 1993, p.14.

²¹⁰ Melinda Ham, "One Year On" in Africa Report, January -February, 1993, p.40.

²¹¹ Jowie Mwiinga, "Chill for Chiluba" in Africa Report, March - April, 1994, p.60.

accident involving Levi Mwanawasa, vice-president of Zambia, implicated a top ranking military official -- General Miyanda.²¹²

Three years on, the Benin and Zambian 'democratic' experiences provide a sobering reflection on the high expectations of neo-liberals and to a lesser extent radical analysts and the assumptions that electoral competitions and the enthronement of liberal democracy would increase civil liberties and democratic rights and in turn create a stable environment for economic recovery and development. The anticipation by radical analysts that the opening up of constitutional space would allow popular forces to press for greater equality and social justice is also not supported by the recent African evidence. While radical analysts have rightfully paid increasing attention to the strengthening of popular organizations in civil society vis-a-vis the state -- after the apparent historical neglect of the need to delimit the state -- in the current retreat from questions of state power in the face of the neo-liberal onslaught, they have failed to relate the manner in which popular forces are to influence the state and the direction of development. Even in accepting liberal democratic frameworks, radical analysts have called on popular organizations to retain their independence from the state and political parties, in order to act as an effective civic 'watchdog', but have yet to proffer solutions

²¹² Baylies and Szeftel, "Multi-Party Politics In Zambia", p.90.

to the issue of political mediation which is necessary to enable popular groups to articulate their interests at the state level. In spite of the historical limitations of political parties and their proclivity to coopt and colonize popular groups, some mechanism is required to give expression to popular concerns and dictates at the state realm. The one-sided focus on strengthening the autonomy of civil society while neglecting political mediation, leads to what Robert Fine has called 'anti-politics', as it disempowers popular forces and retains state power as the exclusive preserve of a small minority of the population.²¹³ So, if not political parties, then some institutional mechanism is required to ensure popular participation beyond neo-liberal rhetoric of its attainment under liberal democracy. Certainly crucial for popular democracy, Chapter One illuminated the contribution of Wamba-dia-Wamba in this direction and his call for the rejuvenation of democratic institutions rooted in African traditions and historical experiences. While I agree with the need for civil society to remain autonomous in order to delimit and check state excesses, the key question is how popular groups in Africa can play a role both inside and outside the state in order to have a determining influence in the decision-making processes that effect their daily lives. The challenge of any meaningful democratization process is to build sustainable democratic institutions which ensure

²¹³ Robert Fine, "Civil Society Theory".

widespread popular participation, transparency and accountability, while retaining the autonomy of the civic terrain.

It is in this context that the current call in mainstream discourses for a minimalist state is misconceived for any meaningful democracy, even liberal democracy. Weak states tend to be predatory and undermine civil society, which serves neither democracy or development. A strong, democratic and autonomous state is crucial for the preservation of the integrity of political structures, dissuading corruption and clientalist relations, and curbing arbitrariness and predatory rule. Stadler has noted that the integrity of civil society depends on the integrity of the state.²¹⁴ A strong and interventionist state is not simply to strengthen the institutional mechanisms that historically have safeguarded civil liberties and democratic rights under liberal democracies, but necessary to promote production, economic growth and the redistribution of resources required to give not only meaning to abstract democratic rights, but more importantly to truly empower popular forces.

Of course, this is in direct contravention to the neo-liberal mechanistic association between a minimalist state in tandem with market reforms as the fundamental requisite for efficiency, rationality, economic growth, development and

²¹⁴ Alf Stadler, "A Strong State Civilises Society: A Response to Louw" in Work in Progress, December 1992, p.34.

democracy. Beyond the anti-statist logic of the current neo-liberal offensive and the idolatry of market reforms, state intervention has always been an indispensable part of capitalist development. Non-radical and certainly radical analysts have for a long-time recognized the banality of the notion of the natural, spontaneous and inevitable birth of *laissez-faire* or unfettered market forces. In the liberal tradition, Karl Polanyi's examination of 18th and 19th century Britain in his seminal work The Great Transformation, clearly pointed out the extent of state intervention in the economy which was necessary for the removal of the barriers to capitalist development. Polanyi noted some time ago, that "the road to free markets was opened and kept open by an enormous increase in continuous, centrally organized and controlled [state] interventionism."²¹⁵ While neo-liberals prescribe a minimalist state in Africa and the Third World, the state in advanced capitalist countries remains interventionist, promoting and facilitating capital accumulation, regulating the market through legislation on cartels, managing money supplies, exchange and interest rates, interceding to provide some environmental protection, maintaining subventions on agricultural production and retaining subsidies on health care, housing, education and transportation -- albeit increasingly curtailed. Although, rolling back social

²¹⁵ Karl Polanyi, The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Times, (Boston: Beacon Hill Press, 1944), p. 140.

welfarism, the state has augmented the funding of its coercive arm, resisting cuts in military expenditures after the 'cold war' and raising police budgets in order to cope with the ungovernability and rising crime resulting from increasing poverty and social inequality. The US Clinton Administration initiative to pass a strong Crime Bill, in which the House of Representatives recent approved a US\$30.2 billion crime package, with two-thirds of this budget earmarked for 100,000 more police officers and more prisons and border guards is a case in point.²¹⁶ In other contexts, Sandbrook has noted that "whether in 19th century Russia or 20th century Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea...extensive government involvement [was] essential for achieving rapid economic growth."²¹⁷ It is now recognized that the high rates of economic growth experienced by the East Asia NICs during the 1960s and 1970s and to a lesser extent in the 1980s, had more to do with the geo-strategic interests in the region, the relatively higher levels of foreign aid, investment and greater market access in the West and indeed active state intervention, rather than the so-called 'miracle' of the market.²¹⁸

In the case of Africa, neo-liberals and radical analysts

²¹⁶ Graham Fraser, "US Crime Bill Passes" in The Globe and Mail, August 22, 1994, p.A1.

²¹⁷ Richard Sandbrook, "Taming the African Leviathan" in World Policy Journal, vol.vii, no.4, 1990, p.681.

²¹⁸ Harris, "The End of the Third World". See also Manfred Bienefeld, "Dependency Theory and the Political Economy of the Africa Crisis" in ROAPE, no.43, 1988.

alike now accept that the state has been inefficient, over-bloated, corrupt and largely unable to perform basic developmental tasks. Certainly, the extent of state ownership and control in the economy should be reduced. Yet, with the overwhelming evidence from Africa, that the 'freeing of market forces' has not led to greater efficiency and better economic performances, this should be enough to invalidate the call for a minimalist state. Sandbrook has aptly asserted that while Africa needs better government, it certainly does not require less government. According to him, a strong, democratic and interventionist state is required to:

mobilize domestic and foreign savings; identify potentially lucrative niches within the global market; orchestrate incentives to ensure that domestic firms play their assigned roles and have access to requisite factors of production; foster local mastery (rather than simply transfer) of modern technologies; and perhaps participate directly in strategic investment when high risks discourage private investors.²¹⁹

The question then does not simply revolve around the wholesale removal of state intervention in the economy, but rather the character and nature of the intervention. The transparency of the ideological construct of anti-statism is particularly evident in that the "beneficiaries of neo-liberal state intervention are as profoundly dependent on state promotion and protection"²²⁰, prospering through lucrative, but unproductive activities vis-a-vis access to the state.

In contrast, a strong and truly democratic state is

²¹⁹ Sandbrook, "Taming", p.682.

²²⁰ Beckman, "The Liberation of Civil Society", p.30-31.

required to make the productive interventions in the economy necessary to create the conditions for capital accumulation. Moreover, a transformed and democratic state must pursue a popular programme which gives people access to clean water, health care services, education and transportation, all of which ultimately contribute to economic growth and development and legitimizes and stabilizes the state, economy and polity. Development is not simply an economistic and technocratic project, but must be a function of democracy in form and design. This implies that the popular aspirations for "democracy must be linked to development in a single project...for as long as economic scarcity and poverty predominate there can be no meaningful democracy or development."²²¹ Therefore, ordinary people must be truly empowered by increasing their capacity individually and collectively, to have the power and control over their daily lives. Popular empowerment gives ordinary people "both autonomy and freedom, particularly the freedom from domination and exploitation at the interpersonal, community and larger structural levels."²²²

In addition, only a democratic state can resolve the national question, beyond simply creating new states or provinces and 'settling' the elites of disaffected ethnic

²²¹ Ben Turok, "Democracy and Development" in Ben Turok ed., Debt and Democracy, (London: Institute for African Alternatives, 1991), p.111.

²²² Akin Aina, "Empowering Environmental NGOs", p.140.

minorities. The effort of the Africa state to placate regional and ethnic factions of the higher circles or to legislate or decree against the political expression of ethnic identities, have only served to keep the national question alive and has in fact sharpened ethnic contradictions.²²³ Of course, the co-existence of multiple ethnic identities is not inherently antagonistic or inimical to democracy and national development. Historically, colonial penetration in Africa and the ensuing effort by the colonial state and capital to reproduce transnational domination, relied not only on coercion but on the manipulation of ethnic identities as well. In the period of decolonization, transnational capital institutionalized regional and ethnic divisions into the body politics in order to ensure their continued domination over the emerging independent states. In the post colonial period, the weak and generally unproductive ruling classes have reproduced the manipulation and politicization of ethnicity in the fierce contestation to reside over the state and its resources, such that ethnicity has fragmented civil society, been divisive in the pursuit of development and has militated against the evolution of a national identity. Only a genuine democratic project can resolve the enduring national question in Africa today. As Ake explains well:

Democratization does not constitute ethnicity as a problem. On the contrary, democratization is a solution to some of the

²²³ Edwin Madunagu, "Questions on the National Question" in The Guardian, March 4, 1993, p.13.

problems which the manipulation of ethnicity has caused especially, the antipathies between ethnic groups, the violent intensity of political competition, caused by fear and ethnic domination, the dissolution of a political society into ethnicities and the failure to crystallize a national identity arising from the tendency to be loyal to the ethnic group rather than the state. Ethnic identities displace national identity for good reasons. The state in Africa is tendentiously uncaring and most ordinary people experience it as a hostile force. The ethnic group cares and delivers. A democratized state would be responsible to social needs, and thus reduce, if not eliminate the need to seek safety and support in the ethnic group. In a truly democratic society, state power would not be privatized and used to terrorize, exploit and oppress as is currently the case in most of Africa. Ethnic groups would not be so desperate about avoiding domination and the premium on power would not be so high when there is the rule of law, equality of opportunity and equitable sharing of the burdens and rewards of citizenship. Those who are suggesting that democratization could unleash a prolific anarchy of ethnic conflicts are mistaken. Democratization is precisely the answer to the problems which we associate with ethnicity.²²⁴

The recent examples of African countries (in which liberalizing transitions in the context of a protracted economic crisis led to civil war and internecine ethnic conflict) highlighted above provide other glaring indications that a weakened state does not necessarily serve to strengthen civil society, nor increase the prospects for democracy or development. Drawing lessons from the European experience, Schmitz and Hutchful have similarly pointed out that in Europe a strong civil society was a product of a strong state.²²⁵ A strong state is crucial for the strengthening of civil society, democracy and development in Africa in the 1990s.

Bratton and Rothchild have recently noted "that perhaps the time has come to acknowledge the values of liberal democracy are spreading universally, especially among the

²²⁴ Ake, "Africa Democratizing", p.A9.

²²⁵ Schmitz and Hutchful, Popular Participation.

growing ranks of the educated middle classes in the developing world."²²⁶ These analysts are also encouraged that some prominent African intellectuals have now come to appreciate the core liberal democratic principles, and its overwhelming superiority over second-best forms of governance based on 'authentic' African cultures. Bratton et al. point out that in any case, historically the appeals to 'primordial values' and a unique case of African democracy rooted in the continent's traditions were usually made by incumbent elites and despots or ambitious elites "who see particularism as a path to power."²²⁷ In a related argument, Larry Diamond also observed that increasingly African elites and middle classes are becoming much more receptive to democratic practices and values. But as "the liberal influence of Western culture further presses [the elites] in a democratic direction"²²⁸, he laments that unfortunately "this is counterbalanced by the lack of support for democracy among the alienated lower classes" who tend to be "largely illiterate and uneducated with little understanding and appreciation for...democratic structures."²²⁹ These analysts have advanced arguments reminiscent of the Eurocentric bias of modernization

²²⁶ Bratton and Rothchild, "The Institutional Bases", p.269.

²²⁷ Bratton and Rothchild, "The Institutional Bases", p.269.

²²⁸ Diamond, "The Roots of Failure", p.14.

²²⁹ Diamond, "The Roots of Failure", p.14.

theory.²³⁰

It is true, as Bratton suggests that in the post-colonial period part of the ideological interpellation made by the continent's despots to legitimize predatory rule drew on the 'appropriateness' and 'authenticity' of the one-party state, deemed to be rooted in African cultures and traditions. But this in of itself, does not dismiss the need to tailor democracy to African specificities. A sustainable democratic project, must be rooted in the historical experiences and specificities of African countries, which recognizes the continent's material conditions, cultural context and reflects the vital interests of the social movements fuelling democratic campaigns. The resolutions of the 1990 UN and NGO sponsored conference on *Popular Participation in Development and Transformation in Africa* clearly recognized the need to incorporate positive elements of African traditions and cultures into the democratic project so as to ensure popular participation and self-reliant development from local to the national levels.²³¹ The point here is not a retreat into an abstract romanticization of African tra. tions and cultures as Bratton intimates and as others have strongly suggested,²³² for as the historical record indicates "by its very nature, tradition, is a contested terrain, open to ambiguity and

²³⁰ Harsch, "Democratic Movement", p.21.

²³¹ UNECA, African Charter, p.9.

²³² Ibrahim, "Left Stardom".

constant reinterpretation and manipulation; the dialectic of despotism and popular accountability and participation."²³³ What is crucial is to concretely identify the empowering and democratic aspects in Africa's historical experience and traditions, and rejuvenate and incorporate them into the democratic project.

Democracy is not a once and for all phenomenon. Liberal democracy even if it is desirable cannot simply be 'parachuted' onto African soil and be expected to take root. The grave error these analysts make is that they fail to distinguish between the principles of democracy which are arguably universal and the institutional arrangement of liberal democracy which was a product of a specific historical conjuncture in the West. A sustainable democracy in Africa will emerge from the social struggles of Africans, given its contours from their practical experiences and shaped by the vital interest of the popular social base. In this respect, African democracy will be an advance and autonomous contribution to the democratic experience not simply a replication of Western liberal democracy.²³⁴ In light of the fact that liberal democracy took over three hundred years to consolidate and in recent years suffered serious roll backs to democratic rights, "Western democracy does not form some perfect or immutable model beyond which other countries cannot

²³³ Schmitz and Hutchful, Popular Participation, p.6.

²³⁴ Schmitz and Hutchful, Popular Participation.

move."²³⁵ The homelessness, increasing unemployment, attack on union rights, crime and despair in the contemporary experiences of advanced capitalist democracies are stark reminders that the political and social freedoms extended in an earlier period are by no means irreversible.

We began the chapter with the dual inquiry into the forces and factors fuelling the democracy movement and the form and content of the democratic project for those whose participation is most at stake. African experiences strongly suggest that it has been precisely the 'largely uneducated and illiterate lower classes' that Diamond laments lack a democratic ethos that have been at the social base of the drive for civic and democratic rights on the continent. While the leadership of pro-democracy movements were by and large middle class in composition, "the movements were truly popular, and often the decisive initiatives towards action came from the more plebian ranks."²³⁶ For popular forces,

democracy cannot simply mean holding...elections periodically whilst [they] continue to endure poverty, misery, illiteracy, hunger and poor health facilities and whilst many...able-bodied citizens are unable to find employment. We cannot divorce any discussion on the structures or process of government from the economic necessity of providing for the basic needs for society.²³⁷

If popular forces have been the central defenders of democracy in contemporary Africa as I have argued in this exposition,

²³⁵ Schmitz and Hutchful, Popular Participation, p.16.

²³⁶ Harsch. "Democratic Movement", p.22.

²³⁷ Rawlings cited in Schmitz and Hutchful, Popular Participation, p.16.

and the only hope for its enthronelement and sustainability, the democratic project must give expression to these popular aspirations. The next section further explores the contours of articulated policy alternatives from below for democratic development in Africa in the 1990s.

**SECTION THREE: BEYOND ADJUSTMENT: CONTINUING POLICY DEBATES
ON AFRICA'S RECOVERY AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE 1990s AND
DEMOCRATIC AFRICAN ALTERNATIVES FROM BELOW**

There is no longer any doubt, if there ever was, that African countries need to restructure their economies in order to recover from the protracted socio-economic downturn which has beset the continent for nearly two decades. Whether or not disagreements still exist as to the roots and dimensions of the African crisis, development analysts agree that strong policy measures must be undertaken by African governments to reduce inefficiency and waste, stimulate domestic savings and investment, catalyze production and reduce the continent's external dependency. What remains contested is the direction and design of economic recovery and development. However, in its 1989 LTPS, the World Bank was optimistic that a broad consensus had been reached on Africa's development needs for the 1990s. Claiming that the differences between the Bank and its critics, particularly the UNECA, had narrowed during the 1980s, the LTPS noted that a "broad agreement exist[ed] on the gravity of the problems...and whatever the political vantage point, there is a broad understanding that...structural

adjustment [programmes are] necessary, but [they] must be sustained -- without dogmatism"²³⁸, take greater account of their social impact and require good governance to create an enabling environment for further market reforms. Contending that certain problems persist, the World Bank consigns them to the technical level, where the issue of the time-frame of trade and exchange rate deregulations for instance, can be debated by technocrats. But according to the Bank, this in "no way diminish[es] the broad consensus on objectives, which is the starting point for working together."²³⁹ Apparently included in this consensus are African governments, bilateral and multilateral agencies, INGOs and NGOs who have been enjoined by the LTPS to form a new Global Coalition for Africa with the mandate to consult and make recommendations on a wide range of long-term development issues. According to the Report, such a forum would facilitate the consolidation of the emerging development compact on Africa, without "diminish[ing] Africa's right to determine what happens on the continent, [while]...respond[ing] to the concerns and insights of the external community."²⁴⁰ It also establishes a firm basis for "effective collaboration among the many partners in Africa's development"²⁴¹ which ultimately seek the "high ground of

²³⁸ World Bank, LTPS, p.185, 189.

²³⁹ World Bank, LTPS, p.185.

²⁴⁰ World Bank, LTPS, p.194.

²⁴¹ World Bank, LTPS, p.185.

agreement and to move from words to deeds."²⁴²

If there was ever any doubt about the fallacy of the Bank's declared 'broad consensus' on Africa's developmental needs, which ironically excluded domestic popular forces, it certainly became apparent in the move towards the formation the Global Coalition for Africa (GCA) and even more obvious with the recent release of the new World Bank study on Sub-Saharan Africa titled Adjustment in Africa: Reforms, Results and the Road Ahead(1993). In the recommendations for a GCA initiative, the imploring of African's to indigenize SAPs and in the complementary emphasis on the need for SAPs to go beyond orthodoxy and dogmatism to focus more closely on long-term development objectives in Africa, the LTPS dodged the intellectual and popular contestations around the short-term socio-economic implications of SAPs and avoided confronting the nationalist and structuralist concerns of the Bank's critics.²⁴³ But right from the inauguration of the GCA, -- launched at the meeting of its Advisory Committee held in Paris in September 1991 -- which set out to act as a political forum to further the consensus building process around the two key issues for African recovery in the 1990s, market-led economic reforms and good governance, it was clear that rather than a move towards furthering the presumed broad developmental consensus, the direction of economic recovery

²⁴² World Bank, LTPS, p.185.

²⁴³ Beckman, "Empowerment or Repression".

remained hotly contested. With its launching coinciding with the Final Review of the UNPAAERD (1986-1990) -- the UN's medium and long-term priority programme for Africa discussed in Chapter Two -- in addition to the initial donor resistance to support a second UN African recovery programme for the 1990s, the GCA initiative was viewed with suspicion and criticized by UN organizations, African NGOs and international and regional NGO networks. While many were concerned that the GCA would duplicate the UN's role as a forum for debates on Africa's development priorities, the principal criticism centred on the degree of representation within the new group, the lack of UN and NGO participation in the formation of its structures and defining of its programmes, its independence from the UN and the resultant lack of accountability, as well as the GCA's close association with Washington based international finance institutions.²⁴⁴ Commenting on the launching of the GCA, Carol Capps of the Church World Service, asserted that the GCA could be "little more than a front for the pursuit of World Bank policies in Africa."²⁴⁵ A briefing paper by the NGO committee of UNPAAERD asked:

why [is] the GCA...an organ independent from the UN or OAU[?]. . . of particular concern for NGOs is the prospect that the responsibility for coordinating and monitoring programmes for Africa will be taken over by an agency so closely associated with the World Bank, which has spearheaded the austerity programmes that have caused so much havoc on the African

²⁴⁴ anon., "Global Coalition for Africa Sets Out its Agenda" in Africa Recovery, December 1991, p.16.

²⁴⁵ Carol Capps cited in anon., "NGOs Launch Grassroots Agenda" in Africa Recovery, December 1991, p.28.

continent. UN agencies like UNICEF and the UN Economic Commission for Africa have at least provided a differing and often opposing perspective on the effects of SAPs. Removing Africa from the agenda of the UN will virtually guarantee ideological supremacy of the World Bank's vision of development in Africa. NGOs view the GCA as yet another mechanism imposed on Africa by the World Bank and donor agencies.²⁴⁶

Judging from the responses of the US, the World Bank and other donor delegations to the UN's Final Review of UNPAAERD and the ensuing negotiations which led to the launching of the UN New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UNNADAF) in December 1991, NGOs and others had strong grounds for concern. Far from a consensus on Africa's development priorities in the 1990s, deliberations surrounding the Final Review and the new UN African programme pitted donor agencies against the UN system, African NGOs and INGOs, especially in debates centred on debt relief and the socio-economic performance of SAPs.

With the UNPAAERD²⁴⁷ widely judged by the UN system, donors and NGOs to have failed to meet its immediate objectives towards resuscitating Africa's stagnating economies and the medium-term aim to diversify the continent's monocultural production base, the then UN Secretary General, Javier Perez de Cuellar's Report and Appraisal at the Final Review, particularly highlighted the hostile international division of labour which hampered the attainment of the goals set out in the UN's Africa programme and emphasized the need

²⁴⁶ NGO Committee of UNPAAERD, "A Briefing Paper: NGOs Express Grave Doubts About Global Coalition for Africa", New York, September 6, 1991, p.1-2.

²⁴⁷ See Salim Lome et al., Special section devoted to the Final Review of UNPAAERD in Africa Recovery, vol.5, no.2-3, 1991.

for any future UN initiative to comprehensively tackle issues of debt relief, commodity prices and development assistance to the continent. Noting that as a result of the precipitous decline in commodity prices Africa lost well over US\$50 billion between 1986 and 1990 and became increasingly indebted by the end of the UNPAAERD period, the Secretary-General's Report pointedly asserted that "it is simply not possible for African countries to develop under an existing debt burden exceeding \$270 billion, [since] the servicing of that debt alone consumes over 30 percent of total exports, with the average loss nearing \$21 billion per annum."²⁴⁸ Towards tackling Africa's mounting debt problems, the Report recommended that any UN Plan for the continent in the 1990s must embody exceptional debt relief measures which *inter alia* included the cancellation of official bilateral debt, the significant discounting of private/commercial debt complemented by supporting initiatives such as debt equity swaps and debt for environment schemes. In particular, the Report recommended that Africa's multilateral debt obligations, consisting of 40% of the continent's debt profile should be substantially reduced. These far-reaching debt relief measures advocated by the Secretary-General were met with significant opposition from the US, the World Bank and

²⁴⁸ Cited in the 1991 Report of the U.N. Secretary General: Prepared for the Session of the Ad-Hoc Committee of the Whole of the UN General Assembly at the Final Review and Appraisal of the Implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Recovery and Development 1986-1990, September 3-13, 1991.

other donor communities and subsequently diluted in the final policy prescriptions of the UNNADAF. Consequently, where the Secretary-General recommended the outright cancellation of official bilateral debt, the UNNADAF simply included the option to reduce such debt. Where the significant *discounting* of private/commercial debt was strongly encouraged by the Secretary-General, the UNNADAF eliminated references that even implied donor governments should take steps to reduce private debts. And, where the Secretary-General's Report vehemently called for the *substantial* reduction of multilateral debt, the UNNADAF suggested *serious considerations* be given to reducing Africa's multilateral debt. Rather than reflecting a broad consensus instead, on the issue debt relief the UNNADAF proposed a donor favoured compromise, which emphasized the orthodoxy of "a growth-oriented solution to the problems of African developing countries with serious debt servicing problems, including those whose debt is mainly to official creditors or to multilateral institutions."²⁴⁹ Though the US, World bank and other donors had unsuccessfully campaigned to place any follow-up initiatives for Africa in the 1990s under the ambit of the GCA so as to abscond from the responsibility and accountability of the UN, multilateral and bilateral donors left a strong imprint on the new UN African Agenda for the 1990s. Yet much like the UNPAAERD which failed to gain the

²⁴⁹ Salim Lome, "New Africa Agenda Adopted at the UN" in Africa Recovery, vol.5, no.4, 1991, p.21.

development assistance projected for the programme period, with the UNNADAF heavily dependent on ODA in the context of an increasingly competitive environment for resource flows since the opening up of Eastern Europe, it is unlikely that donors will support programmes not directly replicated in their own image.

The on-going debates on if and how well structural adjustment programmes are working in Africa which was revisited during the negotiations around the UNNADAF is indicative of donor hostility towards opposition to liberal market reforms. The debate was sparked by the resounding criticism made by the NGO Committee of UNPAAERD of the disastrous implication of SAPs in Africa. In the report presented by Charles Karemano, a Rwandan NGO activist, the NGO committee strongly argued that contrary to the assertions of the IFIs, "there are no examples where SAPs have improved the lives of ordinary people...[instead] the macro-economic policies imposed upon the people of Africa have resulted in economic stagnation, increasing poverty and death."²⁵⁰

The Secretary-General's Report made a similar observation that the socio-economic decline in Africa has continued unabated in the UNPAAERD period, during which most countries have adopted short-term stabilization measures under the

²⁵⁰ Cited in the Statement to the Ad-Hoc Committee of the Whole on the Final Review and Appraisal of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development, delivered by Charles Karemano on behalf of the NGO Committee of UNPAAERD, September 4, 1991.

auspices of the World Bank and IMF, but was tentative in making any direct associations between SAPs and the increasing impoverishment on the continent.

The donor communities were quick to posit in opposition to the mounting criticism against SAPs that adjustment programmes were in fact working to revive economic growth. Scott Spangler the then Assistant Administrator of the Africa Bureau of the USAID pointed out that if the assessment of SAPs were disaggregated between 'non-adjusting' and 'adjusting' countries it would become clear that African countries instituting market reforms exhibited measurable economic gains, but the "poor performance of non-adjusting countries offset the gains by reforming countries, causing the continent-wide figures to be negative."²⁵¹ Drawing the same causality between adjusting and non-adjusting African countries, the World Bank's Vice-President for Africa, Edward Jaycox, was even more encouraged by SAPs, noting that while in the main "evidence is growing that economic reforms are taking effect and with every passing day there are signs of improvement"²⁵², some adjusting African countries had in fact accomplished 'economic miracles'.²⁵³

²⁵¹ Scott Spangler cited in the excerpts from the speeches of the Final Review of UNPAAERD, see anon., "UNPAAERD Speeches Debate Issues of Debt, Governance and Aid Flows" in Africa Recovery, vol.5, no.4, 1991, p.25.

²⁵² Edward Jaycox, cited in anon., "UNPAAERD Speeches", p.27.

²⁵³ Edward Jaycox cited in anon., "How Well is Adjustment Working?" in Africa Recovery, vol.5, no.4, 1991, p.20.

Of course, these international debates on the performance of SAPs in Africa are not new. Since the mid-1980s the World Bank and IMF have repeatedly praised the presumed success stories of adjusting countries in Africa, though later taken to task by the ECA on their empirical findings. Chapter Two detailed this now infamous debate between the Bank and the ECA stemming from a 1989 World Bank Study titled, Africa's Adjustment and Growth in the 1980s. In this study the Bank marshalled data to prove that 'strong adjusters' in the 1980s attained comparatively better growth rates over 'weak' and 'non-adjusting' African countries, but was strongly rebuked by the ECA who challenged the inconsistencies in the statistical techniques of the Report and produced a preliminary assessment which suggested that growth rates in the respective categories did not significantly vary. In part stemming from the acrimonious exchange between the Bank and ECA, the 1989 LTPS released less than six months later tempered the triumphant pronouncements of its preceding study, such that it even acknowledged that the rates of success of SAPs in Africa had not been very impressive.²⁵⁴

What is of particular interest in the renewed contestation surrounding SAPs that surfaced in the deliberations of the Final Review of UNPAAERD is the World Bank's retreat from the humbler tone of the LTPS, with regards not only to its tempered assessment of the economic

²⁵⁴ Browne, "The Continuing", p.33.

performance of SAPs, but additionally, the apparent withdrawal from the rhetoric of human-centred development, empowerment, grassroots participation and indeed an increasing move towards an abandonment of the fictitious veneer of a broad consensus on Africa's development that it sought to construct in the LTPS. This can in part be attributed to the changing global economy in which Africa has become increasingly marginalized both economically and geo-strategically after the cold war. With the collapse of Eastern Europe and the redirection of trade, investment and aid towards the former Second World, all occurring in tandem with Africa's persisting debt peonage and growing international insignificance, it would appear that the Bank does not feel compelled to even superficially address the concerns of its critics in order to sustain its adjustment project as it had in the LTPS.

It is in this context that Adjustment in Africa (1993), the Bank's latest and controversial contribution to the discourses surrounding market-led economic recovery, extols the successes of adjustment contrary to the substantial body of empirical studies on SAPs in Africa, marking a significant departure from the 1989 LTPS which had sought to placate the Bank's critics and was also less optimistic about the macro-economic record of SAPs. Adjustment in Africa is much more imperial in tone, and while slightly less forceful than the orthodox position of the 1981 World Bank Berg Report, it is closer to the 1981 Report in the technocratic and economistic

interpretation of the crisis and the prescriptive remedies, leaving behind its apparent appreciation of the political dimension of economic reform in the LTPS. The 1993 Report ignores the human-centred, participatory and long-term structural transformative approach of the UNECA initiated alternative recovery programmes for Africa embodied in the 1989 AAF-SAP and the 1990 African Charter. It also neglects the strong condemnation of the disastrous short-term socio-economic impact of SAPs on vulnerable groups made by domestic popular organizations, NGOs, UNECA, UNICEF and the ILO among others. Thus, the myth of a development consensus on Africa's recovery and development in the 1990s the Bank sought to conjure in the LTPS became quite evident.

Reminiscent of the four successive World Bank studies since the late 1980s comparing the growth rates of strong, weak and non-adjusting countries, the 1993 Report also provides a comparative assessment of 29 African countries and concluded unequivocally that "in the African countries that have undertaken and sustained major policy reforms, adjustment is working."²⁵⁵ In contrast, the precipitous decline in material conditions or marginal economic improvements of the majority of African countries studied is attributed to their failure to adjust rather than a failure of adjustment. Of the 26 countries closely examined, six, which included Ghana, Burkina Faso, Nigeria, Tanzania, The Gambia and Zimbabwe were

²⁵⁵ World Bank, Adjustment in Africa, p.1.

distinguished as the most improved in instituting market reforms in the periods of 1981-1986 and 1987-1991, and as a result showed a marked revival in macro-economic indicators. The Report found that in these periods, the countries with 'large improvements' in macro-economic policies had attained a median change in average annual GDP per capita growth of 1.8% in comparison to 1.5% for countries with 'small improvements' in macro-economic policies and -2.6% for countries with 'deterioration' in macroeconomic policies. Similarly, the median change in average annual growth rate in exports were 7.9%, 3.0% and -0.7%, in industry 6.1%, 2.8% and 1.7% while in agriculture, -0.2%, 0.3% and -0.1%, respectively.²⁵⁶ Beyond the colourful bar graphs and numerous charts used to demonstrate that SAPs are working and need to be sustained, the study is fraught with statistical inconsistencies in the assessment of agricultural and industrial production, rural incomes as well as in the affect of trade liberalization on African economies to name a few, and has been widely criticized by the UN, African NGOs and INGOs.²⁵⁷ Commenting on Adjustment in Africa, a representative of Oxfam-UK described the New World Bank Report as "a blend of half-truths, oversimplifications and

²⁵⁶ World Bank, Adjustment in Africa, p.5.

²⁵⁷ Roy Laishley, "World Bank Says Adjustment Works" in Africa Recovery, vol.7, no.3-4, 1994.

institutional propaganda."²⁵⁸ Two aspects of the Bank's controversial study, namely its assessment of the impact of SAPs on the poor and the political sustainability of adjustment are of particular interest here and require further detail.

In the riposte to the growing academic and policy consensus on the urgent need to humanize adjustment popularized by UNICEF's two volume study on SAPs, the 1993 Report not only failed to systematically examine the social impact of SAPs, but boldly declared that the "majority of the poor are *probably better off* and *almost certainly* no worse off"²⁵⁹ under SAPs. The Report further stated that "faster growth in *all likelihood* reduced the deterioration in the conditions of the poor" such that "there is every *reason* to think that [the SAP] has helped the poor...[and in fact] often the poor would have benefited from *more* adjustment, not less."²⁶⁰ In a Report the Bank called the 'most comprehensive' to date, there is a striking paucity of data on the relationship between SAPs and poverty-alleviation and the largely unsubstantiated conclusions are veiled in ambiguous language. Yet after making such claims, the Bank of its own

²⁵⁸ Salim Lome, "Adjustment Report Skirts Questions of Poverty, Sustainability" in Africa Recovery, vol.7, no.3-4, December 1993-March 1994, p.18. See also section on "Some Questionable Interpretations" p.47.

²⁵⁹ World Bank, Adjustment in Africa, p.7.

²⁶⁰ World Bank, Adjustment in Africa, p.165, 167.

accord admits that there is no concrete supportive evidence,²⁶¹ although empirical studies substantiating the adverse consequence of SAPs on the poor abound.

In constructing the case for SAPs' presumed attenuation of poverty, the Bank's study borrows from the 'urban coalition' thesis to legitimize the hard-hitting affect of adjustment on urban social groups. In a number of insidious statements given widespread acknowledgment in academic and policy-making circles which asserted that workers and other urban groups have unequally borne the burden of SAPs, as well as the prolific outbreak of popular protests against SAPs over the past decade, the Bank's report argued that though "government feared that the reduction in public employment would lead to major civic unrest and increase the number of poor people...[such] fears have not been realized to any great degree".²⁶² Similarly, the Report asserted that "the likelihood is strong that comprehensive adjustment programs have arrested significant deterioration in the incomes of workers."²⁶³ The Bank attributed the presumed low level of urban poverty to the costly and inefficient compensation packages and job-retraining programmes adopted by governments to cushion workers from wage restructuring. Moreover, the Report surmised that workers have adopted alternative income-

²⁶¹ World Bank, Adjustment in Africa, p.164.

²⁶² World Bank, Adjustment in Africa, p.170.

²⁶³ World Bank, Adjustment in Africa, p.209.

generation activities in the rural and/or informal sector such that the majority of workers are now earning at least as much as before leaving the public sector.²⁶⁴ Again, the Bank does not bother to substantiate its claims to any degree, largely basing its assertions on the abstract deduction of the urban bias theory in which a small parasitic urban coalition -- of which workers are an integral part -- are blamed for post-colonial development failures and the exploitation and pauperization of Africa's 'silent majority' in the countryside. The Report serves to legitimize the restructuring of price incentives under neo-liberal market reforms and its disastrous consequences on the urban social forces while also side-tracking urban popular opposition to SAPs.

But likewise the Bank's proposition "that key reforms...[which] include the reduction in disincentives to the production of tradeable goods, as well as other agrarian reforms such as liberalizing markets...are likely to have helped the rural poor,"²⁶⁵ is also based on a neo-liberal abstract deduction, unrelated to current African realities. The Nigerian case strongly suggests that the neo-liberal assumptions in which trade and exchange deregulation would increase agrarian production and rural incomes have not materialized. While it is true that in the initial stages of economic reform both agrarian production and incomes rose for

²⁶⁴ World Bank, Adjustment in Africa, p.170.

²⁶⁵ World Bank, Adjustment in Africa, p.165.

certain food and export crops, once devaluation induced an inflationary spiral in the Nigerian economy productive gains diminished due to higher costs of inputs and services, contributing to and erosion of any gains in real rural incomes. The deterioration of the material conditions of rural producers was also aggravated by the removal of subventions on fertilizers, transportation and storage facilitates all of which further served to increase production costs. Additionally, despite government claims to ease the access to formal sector credit for rural producers, most small- and medium-scale farmers have been unable to acquire loans to increase agrarian productivity.

Our study further suggests that the abolition of monopolistic state marketing boards, generally did not benefit rural producers since the retreating state managers were quickly replaced by private merchants entering the vacated regulatory space to now expropriate surplus value from medium and small-scale rural producers. In the case of export commodity producers the unfavourable international global economy, in which protectionism in the West, declining global demand for agricultural commodities and productivity gains in other adjusting Third World countries have all conspired to exert downward pressures on the international prices of export commodities -- the so-called 'adding up problem' or the 'fallacy of composition' -- such that \$US 50 billion in potential African export earnings was lost between 1986 and

1990. Contrary to the conclusions of the Bank's Report, the combined effect of devaluation, subsidy removals, tight credit policies, and unfavourable market conditions for export producers have led to the deterioration of the living conditions of small- and medium-scale farmers who were expected to benefit from the deregulation of trade and exchange rates.

Given the Bank's conclusion that SAPs are helping the poor it is not surprising that it has retreated from the earlier advocacy of the need to take greater account of the socio-economic exigencies of economic reforms on the poor. While taking cognizance of the agitation to protect vulnerable groups and conceding that "poverty reduction was not an explicit central objective of early adjustment programs"²⁶⁶, the 1993 Report distances itself from the support of 'socially conscious' programmes to mitigate the social costs of adjustment. Rather than seeking to improve upon the current limitations of such social packages -- eg. their lack of consistency and funding, poor grafting onto SAPs and poor implementation -- the Bank now prefers an ad-hoc and selective approach in the provisioning of a basic social net for the poor. Though such programmes never questioned the model of accumulation and basically were supported by the Bank to prevent social protests in order to sustain neo-liberal market reforms, the Bank appears to believe that the provision of a

²⁶⁶ World Bank, Adjustment in Africa, p.171.

comprehensive social-safety net for the poor amounts to a 'buying off' of politically powerful 'losers' under adjustment which may ultimately undermine the overall goals of the market reform.²⁶⁷

But in perhaps the most contradictory and absurd segment of the 1993 Report, the Bank draws conclusions from Ghana, its vaunted 'success story' touted over the past decade as a model for African development, that even at its current annual GDP growth rate of 5% per year the average poor Ghanaian will not cross the poverty-line until the year 2044 -- another 50 years.²⁶⁸ How this assertion bodes for the *raison d'être* of the 1993 Report which seeks to unequivocally prove that adjusting countries have seen a marked improvement in economic performances and poverty reduction such that the 'road ahead' for Africa lies with further market-led reforms necessary for economic recovery, poverty amelioration and development is not quite clear. While in the interval the Bank callously resigns two generations of Africans to impoverishment in the anticipation that further retrenchment, cut backs in health care and education, increased user fees and the attendant rise in poverty, malnutrition, diseases and death will ultimately improve the living conditions of the yet unborn. In a recent statement from an unlikely source commenting on the process of market reforms in the former Soviet Union but directly

²⁶⁷ World Bank, Adjustment in Africa, p.218.

²⁶⁸ World Bank, Adjustment in Africa, p.40-41.

applicable to Africa, Malcolm Forbes, editor-in-chief of Forbes magazine aptly stated,

...they [the poor] do not need more mindless austerity. Some Western Agencies seem to suggest that the poorer you get, the better off you will be, because it will build character. The idea that we have to wait a couple of generations before countries can get truly on their feet is absolute nonsense. You do not make an economy healthy by making the people within it poor.²⁶⁹

With the mounting criticism, in a presentation to the US Senate, Douglas Hellinger of the Development Group for Alternative Policies asserted that the 1993 World Bank Report is a "deceptive...and an insensitive attempt to dismiss the realities and suffering of the poor with self-serving assumptions."²⁷⁰ Certainly, subordinate classes and their organizations will not be satisfied with today's pains for such an uncertain World Bank guided 'road ahead' in which the majority are unlikely to survive to enjoy the benefits of.

Domestic contestations abound on the direction and designs of African recovery and development in the 1990s. Thomas Callaghy has recently noted that critics of structural adjustment programmes, both inside and outside Africa, do not have a viable alternative to the orthodoxy or the neo-orthodoxy.²⁷¹ Of course, this is not entirely true. From the Lagos Plan of Action to the African Charter for Popular

²⁶⁹ Malcolm Forbes cited in anon., "An Unhappy 50th Birthday" in West Africa, July 25-31, 1994, p.1303.

²⁷⁰ Lome, "Adjustment Report Skirts Questions of Poverty", p.18.

²⁷¹ Thomas Callaghy, "Africa: Falling Off the Map?" in Current History, January 1994.

Participation there have been no shortage of African alternatives to the crisis. In the hegemonic drive toward the consolidation of the neo-liberal project the proponents of SAPs have sought to delegitimize African policy alternatives to the crisis, based on the notion that in spite of the limitations of market reforms the on-going adjustment exercise is more likely to instigate economic recovery and development than the 'second-rate' African solutions. Bangura and Beckman have noted that neo-liberal attempts to challenge the legitimacy of the opposition to SAP, by citing a failure on behalf of the opposition to offer a viable alternative, "must be exposed for what [they are],...attempt[s] to enforce submission by way of psychological warfare."²⁷² The problem then is not a lack of viable alternatives outside the ambit of the IFIs, but the political and structural constraints that prevent their implementation.

Despite the World Bank's reversion to a technocratic treatment of the African crisis, outside the IFIs there is growing consensus that African countries must democratize their societies, increase popular participation and open debate and dialogue in order to provide a stable political framework for economic recovery and development in the 1990s. The UN Secretary-General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali's First Report on UNNADAF pointedly noted that "development is a political undertaking, as well as an economic undertaking...development

²⁷² Bangura and Beckman, "African Workers", p.91.

strategies that fail to take the political dimension of development into account, are certain to fail."²⁷³ The African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation adopted by UNECA and over 500 African NGOs expressed all too well that the crisis that has deepened on the African continent in the last decade is not simply an economic crisis but also a human, legal, political and social crisis. In this regard, its condemnation of SAPs stemmed from both the disastrous socio-economic consequences of the programme for already marginalized groups, in addition to its neglect of the indispensable role of popular participation for long-term self-reliance and self-sustained development. According to the Charter:

...nations cannot be built without popular support and full participation of the people, nor can the economic crisis be resolved and the human and economic conditions improved without the full and effective contribution, creativity and popular enthusiasm of the vast majority of the people. After all, it is to the people that the very benefits of development should and must accrue. We are convinced that neither can Africa's perpetual economic crisis be overcome, nor can a bright future for Africa and its people see the light of day unless the structures, pattern and political context of the process of socio-economic development are appropriately altered.²⁷⁴

Therefore, in the African Charter popular participation is not simply resigned to regularized voting in elections but rather ordinary people must be involved in the development process, from the conceptualization of strategies and policies to the formulation, implementation and monitoring of prescriptions.

²⁷³ Boutros Boutros-Ghali, "Mobilizing Support For Africa" in Africa Recovery: Update on New Agenda for Africa, December 1993, p.3.

²⁷⁴ ECA, African Charter, p.7.

Such an encompassing scope of participation, will ultimately lead to the mobilization of the population in the development process in which people evenly accept the pains of recovery and share equitably in the benefits of development. The Charter complements the ECA's African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment Programme (AAF-SAP) and the document's principal focus on the structural roots of Africa's economic crisis, which AAF-SAP noted requires policy remedies not simply aimed at short-term 'adjustment' but towards the long-term 'structural transformation' of African economies.

Halfani has accurately observed that the old saying that Africa consumes what it does not produce and produces what it does not consume is not simply a cliché, since a dependent society is a powerless society.²⁷⁵ Some thirty years after political independence, African economies are still essentially colonial economies and so long as they are not restructured, democratic development will continue to be hindered. Any alternative programme must give serious policy priority to reducing Africa's structural dependency, via an increase in the level of productive forces, a reorientation and enhancement of domestic linkages between sectors of the economy, the utilization and expansion of the local resource base, and the diversification of production in the first instance to meet basic needs domestically. Popular groups in

²⁷⁵ M. Halfani, "Constraints on Empowerment" in R. Sandbrook and M. Halfani eds., Empowering People, 1993.

Nigeria and throughout Africa have long articulated alternative programmes to SAPs, calling for a restructuring of the state under popular democratic control, especially the military, police force and judiciary in order to accommodate and fulfil development goals. Novel ways must also be created to link the state to civil society while retaining the autonomy of the civic realm. Furthermore, a democratic state will reduce the premium on state power and consequently curb corruption, inflated contracts and other practices that have drained public coffers for the last thirty years. The alternative programmes will, of course, require considerable state intervention in the economy, but in many areas such as the electronic and print media, for instance, the state must retreat and leave ownership to the private sector. However, the state must be active in promoting and expanding employment, and the provision of essential services like health care, education and transportation. Productive increases cannot be expected to occur when the majority of the population is reduced to squalor, with little access to social safety nets. Agrarian producers must be ensured a minimum income in order to have any incentive to increase productivity. Resources must be mobilized internally and scarce foreign exchange conserved. Military expenditures should be significantly curtailed. A comprehensive taxation system must be instituted, taxing the rich and adopting measures to prevent evasion. Unnecessary external commitments

of African governments such as the number of embassies must also be significantly curtailed and perks for government officials eliminated.²⁷⁶

The exchange rate must be revalued and export earnings centralized and reallocated by the Central Banks to eliminate the anarchic exchange auctioning system which has only served to fuel speculative activities in the adjustment period. Privileged access to foreign exchange must be given to the agrarian and industrial sectors but efforts must be made to increase sectoral linkages and reduce the dependency on foreign inputs. Therefore, emphasis must also be placed on investment in a capital goods sector. Interest rates must be reduced in order to facilitate productive investment. Marketing boards must be reinstated but restructured under popular control since despite their historical inefficiency and mismanagement the reasons for marketing boards, namely to cushion rural producers from the vagaries of the world market persists. The state should further provide supportive investments to boost food production, for Africans cannot continue to depend on the importation of food as it leaves them prone to perpetual food-shortages and at the 'mercy' of international relief agencies in the event of a natural disasters.

Trade must be rationalized. Africa's fledgling industries

²⁷⁶ Bangura and Beckman, "African Workers", p.123. See also Adebajo Adedeji, "Structural Adjustment with a Social Face?" in African Forum, vol.2, no.2, 1992.

cannot be expected to increase capacity utilization, generate employment and increase the local utilization of inputs when they are undercut by the dumping of cheaper foreign inputs on African markets. Unessential imports must be banned, while incremental tariff changes must be made to the importation of capital goods in order to encourage their domestic production. Transnational capital should be encouraged into sectors of the economy that meet domestic priorities and to reinvest profits in African economies. Serious efforts to recoup national resources deposited in international banks by a legion of corrupt elites must also be made. Additionally, the unfettered emphasis on the export of primary commodities must be tempered as it makes little sense to continue increasing export production for rapidly declining commodity earnings. In this light, the absurdity of the 'export first rule' again recommended to African countries by the World Bank's 1993 Report should become quite clear. On its own admission in the 1989 LTPS, the Bank clearly stated that international prices for primary commodities are poor and will continue to be low during the 1990s, an observation the Bank has made yet again in Adjustment in Africa while still advocating the need to boost export commodity production. Of course, Africa will still have to export commodities into a hostile international division of labour in order to earn much needed foreign exchange to fund internal development, but this must be complemented by state efforts to diversify the export base,

while also giving priority to production for domestic markets. Another element that must be included to support Africa's development is the establishment of a ceiling on the escalating debt-servicing obligations to multilateral and bilateral donors, which continues to drain scarce resources. Initiatives should also be pursued within Africa and elsewhere in the Third World towards eventually forming a debtor cartel.

Though some of these prescriptions may seem unrealistic given prevailing international and domestic realities, what is clear is that two decades of IMF/World Bank guided SAPs have done little to revive African economies, expand the domestic productive base or to improve the living standards of the majority of Africans. While civil society and popular forces may be too weak and fragmented to transplant the social project of domestic elites, transnational and national, and to dictate the direction of economic recovery and development, they are certainly strong enough to obstruct the full implementation of neo-liberal designs as ten years of adjustment have illustrated. Nonetheless, despite constricting objective parameters they are never immutable. Increasingly popular forces have been galvanized to agitate for the democratization of their society and to have a determining influence on development processes.

SECTION FOUR: PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES AHEAD FOR DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA IN THE 1990s

In this exposition we have critically examined the

problematic of civil society and democracy in Africa, focusing especially on the internal factors and forces that hamper or strengthen civil society and increase the prospects for democratic renewal and consolidation. The new international division of labour and the global power configuration in which Africa is becoming increasingly marginalized is a formidable exogenous constraint to democratic and self-reliant development in the 1990s, fraught with dangers but portending new hopes. It would appear that Africa is increasingly "*falling of the map*", as a recent review article on the continent's political economy was appropriately titled.²⁷⁷ The region's principal export commodities are in less demand globally, given their abundant production by other Third World countries. Moreover, with scientific and technological advances in the West and the resultant development of numerous synthetic products, Africa's exports have become even less relevant. Reflecting a rapidly dwindling share of world trade, between 1986 and 1990 the continent lost over US\$50 billion in much needed resources to fund internal development. Concomitantly, Africa is faced with the contemporaneous realities of the contradictory processes of market globalization, regionalization of trading blocs and Western domestic protectionism, all of which restrict market access for the continent's export commodities. The conclusion in December 1993 of the Uruguay Round of GATT began the

²⁷⁷ Callaghy, "*Falling Off the Map*".

consummation of a new world trading order in which the interests of particularly Africa but other Third World regions have again been subverted in the self-interest of Western countries and transnational capital.²⁷⁸ Under the new GATT agreement in which the West is expected to reap US\$135 billion or 64% of total annual gains from trade deregulation, it is anticipated that already crisis-ridden African countries will lose US\$2.6 billion annually in the period to 2002, resulting from the dissolution of preferential access to EU markets under successive Lome Conventions but also from the survival of Western protectionist measures such as the Multi-Fibre Agreement -- which has long blocked the expansion of African textile exports -- under the new trade arrangement.²⁷⁹ For Africa, the double standard evident in the Western drive towards global market liberalization, yet with the Western retention of domestic protectionist measures, is exacerbated by the simultaneous break-up of the global trading system into powerful regional trading blocs such as the European Union, the US-led North America Free Trade Agreement and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations under the leadership of Japan. Increasingly Africa will "find itself becoming ever more vulnerable and isolated...[its nations,] small competing exporters, dependent on these regional giants to purchase

²⁷⁸ Kevin Watkins, "GATT: A Victory for the North" in ROAPE, no.59, 1994.

²⁷⁹ anon., "Africa Seeks Redress for GATT Losses" in Africa Recovery, vol.7, no.3-4, December 1993-March 1994, p.9.

[their] outputs and supply [their] needs."²⁸⁰

At the same time, official development assistance and foreign direct investment to Africa have been on a precipitous decline during the 1980s, but peaked at \$19.7 billion in 1990 and \$2.2 billion in 1989 respectively.²⁸¹ However, with the end of the 'cold war' and the opening up of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, the competition for Western aid and investment has sharply increased. Given Western geo-strategic and economic interest in this region, resource flows which may have otherwise supported African and Third World development have increasingly been redirected to bolster market transitions in Russia, other CIS and Eastern European countries. As a consequence, ODA to Africa has drastically declined from the 1990 levels to \$12.1 billion in 1992.²⁸² Similarly, with the political and economic environment in Africa increasingly uncondusive to doing business, transnational capital has steered away and/or shifted investments from Africa such that foreign direct investment dropped drastically from the 1989 level to \$0.6 billion in 1990 and marginally increased to \$1.0 bn in 1992,²⁸³ with

²⁸⁰ Browne, "Continuing Debates", p.36.

²⁸¹ World Bank and ECA statistics cited in Africa Recovery, vol.7, no.3-4, December 1993-March 1994, p.36,40.

²⁸² World Bank and ECA statistics cited in Africa Recovery, vol.7, no.3-4, December 1993-March 1994, p.36,40.

²⁸³ World Bank and ECA statistics cited in Africa Recovery, vol.7, no.3-4, December 1993-March 1994, p.36,40.

disinvestment becoming a growing trend. The disinterest in Africa is such that in the 1992 alone, foreign direct investment to Indonesia exceeded the total investment to Sub-Saharan Africa. Simultaneously, Western geo-strategic interest in Africa has been drastically devalued after the end of the 'cold war', reflected in the disinterest of the West to broker resolutions and support peace accords to quell regional conflicts exacerbated by former superpower rivalries. Beyond the scale of intervention in the 1992 Somalian crisis, the West has shown an ambivalence towards civic conflict on the continent evident in the recent response to the Rwandan debacle and the general neglect of other regional conflicts, - - Angola, Liberia and the Sudan for example -- in contrast to the response to geo-strategic regions such as Eastern Europe.

But although the West has increasingly shown a disinterest in Africa, it has retained a strong influence over economic and political processes on the continent. Concomitant to the continent's geo-strategic and economic marginalization, Africa's mounting indebtedness and dependency on external resource flows has maintained Western leverage and latitude to dictate the content and design of development policies on the continent via the IFIs. The former Secretary-General of the UNECA, Professor Adebayo Adedeji, may indeed be correct in the previously cited statement that the IMF and World Bank have now become more powerful in Africa than the former colonial

masters.²⁸⁴ If the imperial tone of the World Bank's 1993 Study is any indication, it appears that in the current global conjuncture in which Africa's room to manoeuvre and to access financial assistance outside the domain of the IFIs and bilateral donors has become severely constricted, the Bank and the Fund may have a *carte blanche* on decisions that influence African development, as they continue to zealously advocate further market reforms and the presumed supportive liberal democratic political framework.

Yet, it has become increasingly clear that market reforms in Africa are incompatible with democracy, even in the limited liberal democratic form. The policy recommendations of adjustment which promote downward wage restructuring and retrenchment, cut backs in social expenditures, subsidy removals and the imposition of users fees have and continue to be resisted by popular forces that remain the bedrock of democratic campaigns in Africa. In as much as it would appear that the proprietors of Africa's debt, buyers of the continent's exports and managers of development assistance flows do not seem willing to entertain African human-centred and participatory approaches to development, popular democratic struggles will increasingly confront repression by the *ancien regime* or the new multiparty states attempting to force through market reforms. Already, as our study indicates, the new democratic regimes in Zambia, Benin and Cape Verde,

²⁸⁴ Adedeji cited in Ake, "Rethinking", p.41.

have become increasingly repressive in response to popular resistance to government efforts to implement SAPs. Commenting on the on-going endogenous drive towards market reforms and the current global economic and political environment, Salim-Salim aptly notes, that democratization in Africa "...will be hamstrung by the non-democratic international economic system in which we operate and which militates against our development."²⁸⁵

However, reflecting the contradictory nature of external processes, a growing viewpoint in the West has suggested that "the African crisis really should be left to the international financial institutions, and if their salvage efforts work, fine; if not, so be it, the world economy will hardly notice."²⁸⁶ Herein lies the potential opening of opportunities for democratic, self-reliant and sustained development in Africa in the 1990s. With Africa's growing strategic and economic marginalization, the West may leave African countries to their own designs, neither supporting democracy or authoritarianism. In any case, the movements for democratic development have long existed. In the current conjuncture they have intensified and will inevitably face set-backs, but are ultimately irreversible. Confronted with external constraints and internal conflict and contradictions,

²⁸⁵ Salim Salim cited in Salim Lome, "Africans Adopt Bold Charter For Democratization" in Africa Recovery, vol.4, no.1, April-June 1990, p.29.

²⁸⁶ Callaghy, "Falling Off the Map", p.32.

ordinary people and their movements in Africa's burgeoning civil society are overcoming objective constraints and increasingly transcending subjective limitations such as geo-ethnic and religious cleavages, democratizing their internal structures, developing a popular democratic culture, building politically significant networks, horizontally and vertically, and articulating development and democratic strategies beyond structural adjustment and narrow multipartyism. Popular movements are emphasizing empowerment, popular participation, human rights and civil liberties, gender equality, social justice and greater national and community self-reliance. It is at this level that the foundation for popular democracy and the restructuring of state, economy and civil society are being forged in order to foster democratic development in the last decade of the millennium.

APPENDIX

NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS, CIVIL SOCIETY AND DEMOCRACY: THE CASE OF NIGERIA

A central inquiry of this thesis related to the democratizing potential currently accorded to the operations of NGOs in Africa. With specific reference to Nigeria, I investigated the role of NGOs, both indigenous and international, in the intensified democratic contestation in the country in recent years. Of particular importance was the manner in which NGOs contribute to the strengthening of civil society and their capacity to mediate between popular movements and political institutions. A number of factors were of crucial importance in assessing the impact on NGOs on the democratization process in the Africa.

1. Internal Structures of NGOs
2. Relationship between NGOs
3. Relationship between NGOs and INGOs
4. Relationship of NGOs to the A) State B) Other Social forces, and, C) Donor Community.

I limited the scope of the investigation of NGOs in Nigeria to specifically human rights NGOs and self-defined people-oriented NGOs. Due to the limitations of time and resources, I conducted 14 open-ended questionnaire interviews with NGOs, relatively balanced along the three tiers highlighted by Aina (Chapter 1:4), and all concentrated in Southern Nigeria.

APPENDIX

NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS, CIVIL SOCIETY
AND DEMOCRATIZATION IN AFRICA:
THE CASE OF NIGERIA
QUESTIONNAIRE INTERVIEW
DECEMBER 10, 1993 - JANUARY 31, 1994

NAME OF ORGANIZATION:
NAME OF REPRESENTATIVE:
POSITION OF REPRESENTATIVE:
DATE OF INTERVIEW:
TIME AND PLACE ADMINISTERED:

QUESTIONNAIRE INTERVIEWS:

The questionnaire interviews administered was organized around six areas.

1. INTRODUCTION

i. Brief history: What needs were identified that led to your organization's activities in Nigeria?.

ii. Nature of NGO's operations: What is the nature of your organization's activities; specifically what, projects and/or programmes do you conduct?

2. INTERNAL STRUCTURE:

i. Manner of decision-making: How are decisions made in your organization; specifically, how are projects and programmes evaluated? Supplementary: Do Nigerian NGOs (in the case of INGOs) or the people (irrespective of category of NGOs) participate in the decision-making and/or evaluation process?

ii. Composition of Membership: What is the composition of the membership of the organization and the general educational background of individuals?

APPENDIX

3. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NGOS:

- i. INGOs and AfrNGOs: What is the relationship between your organization and African (or vis-a-versa)?
- ii. AfrNGOs and AfrNGOs: What is the relationship between your organization and other Nigerian NGOs? **Supplementary**: What is the relationship to other African NGOs?
- iii INGOs and INGOs: What is the relationship of your organization and other International Non-Governmental Organizations?
- iv. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NGOS AND UMBRELLA NGOS What is the relationship of the organization to (NAVDO) Nigerian Agency for Voluntary Development Organizations?

4. NGOS AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

- i. Relationship Between NGOs and Social Movements: Do any linkages (horizontally or vertically) exist between the your organization and other civic associations?
- ii. Character of Linkages: What are the nature of these links?
- iii Relationship to the Pro-Democracy Movement: Does the organization have any affiliation with the Campaign for Democracy or support its activities?

5. NGOS AND THE STATE

- i. NGOs AND THE TRANSITION NIGERIA'S THIRD REPUBLIC: What is the position of your organization on the current democratization process?
- ii. RELATIONSHIP WITH THE STATE: Are there any linkages between your organization and the former Babangida administration, Interim National Government, or the current Abacha regime?

6. NGOS AND THE DONOR COMMUNITY

- i. NGOs and SAP: What are your general perceptions on the current structural adjustment programme in Nigeria?
- ii. SOURCE(S) OF FUNDING: What are the sources/structure of the organization's funding? ie. donations, self, foreign aid.

APPENDIX

1. Interview with Chief (Mrs) Soyeye, Oyo State Branch President of the National Council of Women's Societies (NCWS), Agbowo, Ibadan, Oyo State, January 17, 1994.
2. Interview with Ms. M.A. Feyisayo, National President of the COWAD, Agbowo, Ibadan, Oyo State, January 18, 1993.
3. Interview with Ms. Eva Murray, National Director of CUSO-Nigeria, Iyaganku GRA, Ibadan, Oyo State, December 16, 1993.
4. Interview with Prof. Bade Onimode, national director of IFAA-Nigeria, Ibadan, Oyo State, December 10, 1994.
5. Interview with Prof. Bolanle Awe, Coordinating Chairperson of WORDOC, held at the Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan, Oyo State, December 10, 1993.
6. Interview with Ms. Rita Ayaegbu, Programme Assistant of the NEST, Bodija, Ibadan, January 18, 1994.
7. Interview with Prof. Sotonye Amakiri, national secretary of the Friends for the Preservation of the Delta Environment, Port Harcourt, Rivers State, January 7, 1994.
8. Interview with A.Y. Yahaya, Administrative Secretary of NAVDO, Ojoo, Ibadan, Oyo State, December 17, 1993.
9. Interview with Glory Kilanko, National Co-ordinating Secretary of the WIN, Yaba, Lagos, January 12, 1994.
10. Interview with Segun Maiyegun, former National President of the NANS Anthony Village, Lagos, January, 13, 1994.
11. Interview with Pastor Isaiah Ogundele, (Chairman) of the Farmers Development Union, Agodi, Ibadan, January 17, 1994.
12. Interview with Canon. Ogbonna, Coordinator, Nalt United Self-Help Organization, Nsukka, Enugu State, Jan. 6, 1994.
13. Interview with Prof A. Akinyele, Coordinator, of the Food Basket Foundation, Ibadan, January 18, 1994.
14. Interview with Uzomha V.C. Uzomha, President, Umudaduru Youth Association, Orlu, Imo State, December 29, 1993.

These taped interview of NGOs in Nigeria are yet to be transcribed but are available from the author upon request.

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