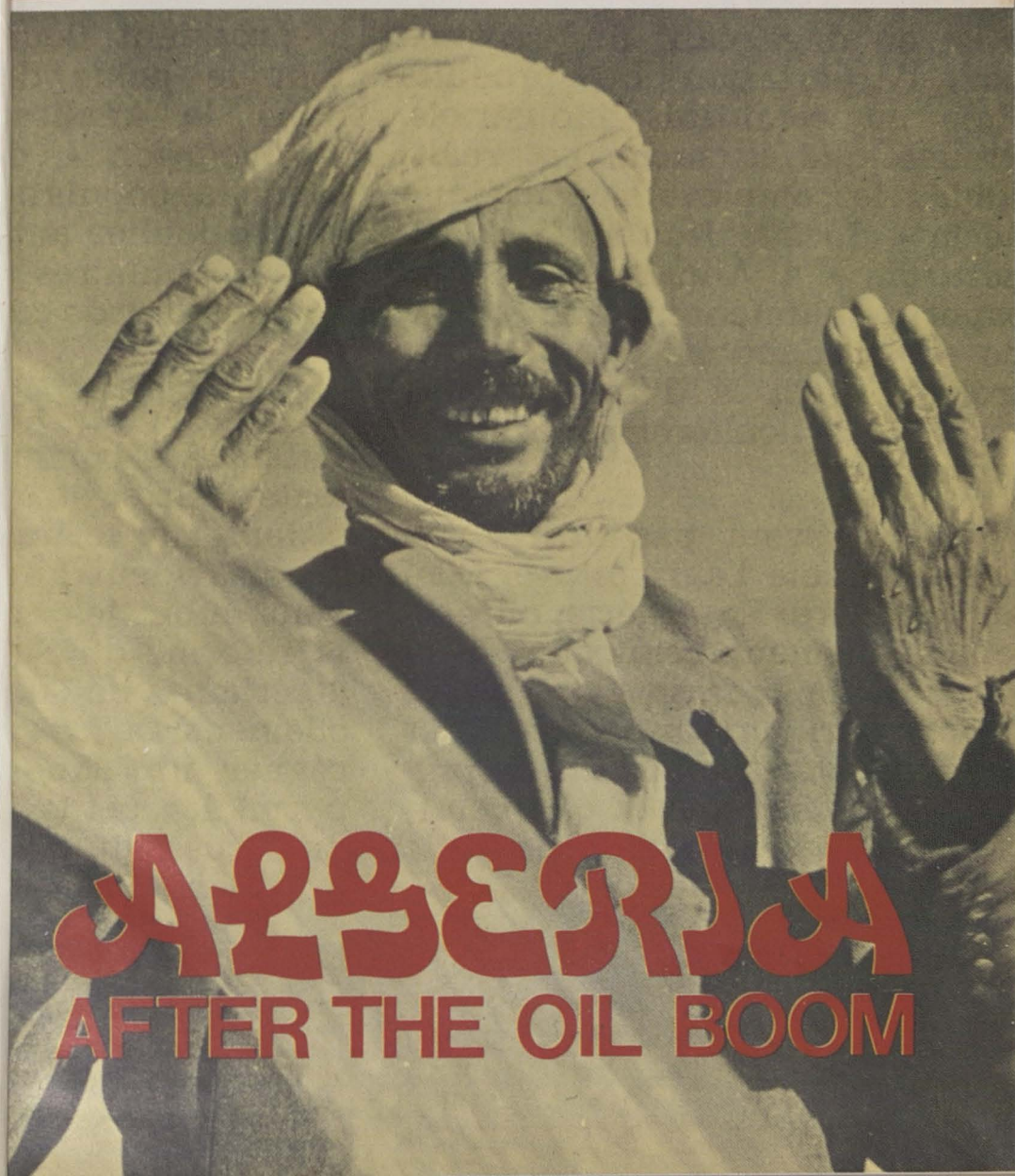


third world

Southern Africa
The Economic War

Monthly • Number 4 • October/Nov. - 1986



ALGERIA
AFTER THE OIL BOOM

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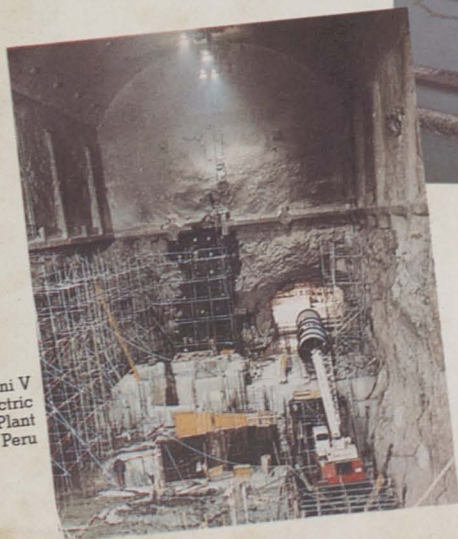
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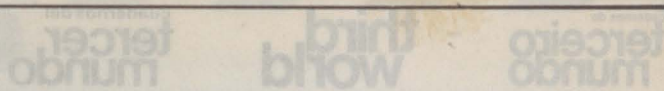
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What world contains information on and analysis of the conditions and aspirations of emerging nations, with the aim of consolidating a New International Information Order?

tercer mundo
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The Megacorporations and the Third World

Almost unnoticed and without public debate, a process has begun in the Western world which would astound even the very founders of the capitalistic system. We refer to the billion-dollar merger and buyout operations which have lately given birth to so-called "megacorporations" – unbelievably powerful industrial behemoths capable of dominating and devouring rivals worldwide.

Behind this process is a frantic race for strategic positions in a new order of Western capitalistic production based on microelectronics, information and automation. The most alarming upshot is that the trend runs counter to some of the most basic principles of free competition and economic liberalism, and may have

dire short-term consequences for the Third World. Our special report in this issue is intended to promote discussion on the phenomenon, while highlighting an apparent contradiction: megacompanies increasingly join forces to monopolize their areas of activity, while at the same time they redouble their efforts to prevent Third World nations from uniting to pursue common goals.

Our cover story on Algeria, however serves as a counterpoint in this discussion. Nearly 25 years ago, Algeria fought a valiant battle to expel the French. For a quarter of a century, it has striven for independent, self-sustained development. "third world" magazine now reviews the achievements of the Algerian revolution and the challenges it is preparing to face in the years ahead.

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Cover: Abaeté Propaganda

Yugoslavia and Afghanistan today

First of all, I want to congratulate *third world* magazine for the good work in the area of information. I would like to suggest two stories for your next issues. Participants in the last Communist Party Congress in Yugoslavia criticized Tito's self-management methods which have reportedly brought the country a number of economic problems. If I am to believe the scanty information appearing in the Western media about Yugoslavia in the Western media, the country's CP position vis-à-vis the international Communist movement was also discussed, and greater cooperation with Socialist block countries was recommended.

In addition, significant changes have occurred within the CP's Central Committee, which might be indicative of a movement toward a renewal of socialism along Polish lines. I believe Yugoslavia deserves a good coverage on the part of *third world* magazine, if for no other reason because Tito was one of the founders of the Non-Aligned Countries Movement. You might take stock of the Yugoslav situation in the six years following Tito's death, and analyze the country's self-management methods, its political changes, its relations with neighbor countries, the trend within the CP, etc.

My second suggestion has to do with Afghanistan. Here also a analysis could be made of changes occurring there, the Afghan struggle against underdevelopment and the progress the country has made in the areas of education, health and housing. Another interesting point is the Soviet presence in Afghanistan, which in contrast with imperialist interventions in other parts of the



world has contributed to local development. **third world** magazine published some material on Afghanistan sometime ago—in 1980, I believe—and now a comparison could be made for your readers' benefit.

Carlos Alberto, Brasília, DF, Brazil.

Brazil: a racial democracy?

As a steady reader of the Portuguese edition of **third world** magazine, I would like to express my outrage at the hateful advertising campaign promoted last May in Bahia by Dr Elsiemar Coutinho, the founder of a Center for Research and Assistance in Human Reproduction of more than doubtful reputation.

In his ads, Dr Coutinho uses such slogans as "A manufacturing defect... Some children are born artists, while others are born delinquents," side by side with the picture of a blindfolded black youngster with a heavy captive's chain around his neck and brandishing a pocket knife. Another slogan, "There are people who cry on a full belly," is placed above the picture of a pregnant black woman whose body is only partly covered by a white sheet.

Such slogans and ads are an unfortunate reminder of white superiority doctrines which attempted to justify the colonial domination and repression of other peoples. Brazil—and especially Bahia, where most of the population is black—seems to have found in Dr Coutinho one more of those ideologists who by now are most likely developing some means of "whitening" the population in order to correct its "defects," just as an imperial Brazil did in the latter half of the nineteenth century by

promoting the massive migration of European white workers at a moment when racist theories about white superiority were much in the public's taste.



What is this advertising campaign really about? Is it just one more exception in our "racial democracy" or does it express a strong racial feeling that has always been present in Brazilian society?

The Brazilian government promotes the myth of a "racial democracy" (as well as the myth of Brazilian easygoingness, friendliness and non-violence) as a means of retaining control over the oppressed. Problems and feuds are dismissed as if they did not exist; and since they do not exist, there is nothing one should bother to rise against.

Yet, daily instances of racial hostility towards non-white people, as well as racist campaigns such as Dr Coutinho's, and even the recent emergence of far-rightist organizations

in the Klu-Klux-Klan style, show how inane it is to say we live in a racial democracy in Brazil.

These instances must not be forgotten, and they must not go unpunished. Let us Brazilians question the elitist and demagogical character of our society, which should take a better look at its own face, since we are a colored country.

Iiza Helena Tels — Rio de Janeiro, RJ — Brazil.

Third World countertrade

I have recently read about trade between Third World countries in the form of barter which dispense with the use of foreign exchange. Although I am not an economist, I believe this may contribute to increased cooperation between underdeveloped and indebted countries. I wish **third world** magazine would cover this subject and discuss its implications.

Felisberto Suárez, Córdoba, Argentina.

South-South relations

"Third World" provides excellent material for my courses in the Master's Degree in International Relations and Global Development. I would be particularly interested in articles on South-South Relations and Cooperation, and would welcome hearing from readers with an interest in the field.

Michael Wilson — International Relations and Development — Institute of Social Studies — The Hague — Netherlands

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Algeria:
Preparing for a new era



Chile: Brutal repression



Megacompanies:
The electronic rush

BRAZIL

Illegal Foreign Debts

□ In an out of court decision that could have major repercussions for the entire Brazilian foreign debt, Brazil's second largest creditor, the Bank of America (BofA), agreed to desist from collecting on three loans originally totaling US\$ 13.65 million to CENTRALSUL an agricultural enterprise in the southern Brazilian state of Rio Grande do Sul. The settlement, which was formally recognized by the court in September, may set a precedent for 82 similar cases currently under investigation by the Brazilian Central Bank.

BofA agreed not to collect a sum of US\$ 22 million, representing the principal plus interest, when it became evident that the three loans had violated both Brazilian and US income tax laws. In addition, they had violated a provision of Brazilian law which stipulates a minimum maturity period of eight years for agricultural loans, while the BofA loans carried a 12-month maturity.

Granted in 1979, the illegal loans came under investigation in 1982 when Brazilian Central Bank authorities were pressured by BofA officials for registering the debt even though they were unable to prove that the money had actually entered Brazil. According to BofA, the total due by CENTRALSUL amounted at the time to US\$ 22 million, in-

cluding interest accrued between 1979 and 1981. Under the out of court settlement, BofA officials agreed to return the promissory notes to CENTRALSUL and suspend the mortgage of assets which the company had offered as collateral. Both the bank and CENTRALSUL declined to comment on the agreement, with CENTRALSUL claiming that disclosure of its clauses might harm the bank's image in Brazil and abroad.

Actually, the Brazilian Federal Police had determined that, under pressure by of BofA officials, CENTRALSUL had opened a clandestine account

In addition, former CENTRALSUL director Alton Dionisio Dalmolin, a rancher from Rio Grande do Sul, used part of the money in speculative operations in the Chicago stock market. The operations eventually cost CENTRALSUL US\$ 68 million.

In 1981, when Dalmolin resigned from the cooperative, the new board of directors began an investigation. Several CENTRALSUL farmers filed a class action suit, based on their own two-year's investigation that collected 5,000 documents in the US and Brazil in support of the allegation of improper conduct on the part of BofA and former directors of CENTRALSUL.



with a BofA branch in Houston, Texas as a precondition for the loan operation. Dollar revenues resulting from soybean and wheat exports were to be deposited in the Houston account. Federal auditors demonstrated that approximately US\$ 350 million had gone through the clandestine account, with BofA using the money for short-term loan operations that earned the bank approximately US\$ 1.6 million in 1980-82.

The affair may have had unpredictable consequences, it was also determined that Brazilian financial officials encouraged debt contracting by CENTRALSUL and scores of other Brazilian companies as a means of promoting foreign exchange inflow. Many Brazilian debtors are now expected to question the validity of debts incurred with international creditors on the same basis as those of CENTRALSUL.

SOUTH AFRICA

The Rent Rebellion

Denied direct forms of protest by the state of emergency decree, residents of South Africa's black townships are resorting to rent strikes as a form of resistance to the white minority government. The movement which has grown since the June 12 declaration of the state of emergency to include approximately 300,000 families in nearly 40 townships, is costing the government US\$ 380,000 a day, according to *Time* magazine. The rental rebellion is also discrediting the control system established by Pretoria in the country's black urban neighborhoods.

The boycott began in some townships as early as 1985, but the new form of protest became widespread after public meetings were recently outlawed by the government. Led by the United Democratic Front (UDF), the new movement combines the tactics of civil disobedience with active political resistance. The strikers' immediate goal is to force the apartheid regime to remove white soldiers who began patrolling the black townships in June, as well as black councilors who have been appointed to collect rent and electricity bills.

In the past few years, the government had built thousands of primitive dwellings and sheds in black neighborhoods on the

periphery of large white cities. Some ten million black South Africans are forced to live in these slums, miles away from their workplaces, while paying rent to the government. South African authorities have tried to evict a number of black families that refused to pay rent, but their efforts proved futile against the large number of rent strikers and the strength of their organizations within the townships, especially in urban centers like Capetown, Durban, Johannesburg and Natal.

The rent strike movement is stronger in the townships of Soweto and Sebokeng, where the government decreed the eviction

By changing its tactics, the three-year-old UDF has withstood the violent repression following the implementation of the state of emergency. Instead of calling massive public demonstrations, the organization has since June concentrated on promoting a number of civil boycotts. Eagerly sought by the police, UDF leaders have managed to escape arrest and gone underground in black neighborhoods. Although government censorship has prevented South African newspapers from reporting on the magnitude of the passive resistance movement, an increasing number of copies of clandestine

J.B. Pictures



Over 300,000 people in 40 black townships have joined the rent boycott

of approximately 40,000 dwellers but has succeeded in removing only 1,200. Government action has also proved ineffective in black schools, where 300,000 students have boycotted classes for nearly a year. This increased resistance on the part of blacks may be an indication that the country's leading anti-racist organizations are determined to render black townships ungovernable in South Africa.

reports have been circulating in the black townships. On the official side, the only indirect recognition of the new surge of resistance has so far been the announcement last September that the government-appointed black councilors will soon be replaced by white officials. Black councilors had, in fact, been resigning en masse as a result of intimidation on the part of radical organizations with links to the UDF.

AFRICA

Zaire plays "dirty tricks" on Angola

□ Despite a non-intervention and border security agreement signed in 1978 by Zairean President Mobutu and Angolan President Agostinho Neto, Zaire has repeatedly been accused of supporting UNITA armed activities against the Luanda government.

Late last August, diplomatic sources in Kinshasa and London revealed that an unidentified military air transport plane in flight from Saudi Arabia had landed in Zaire carrying weapons and supplies destined to Angolan counter-revolutionary groups believed to be operating in either the Gabinda province or northern Angola. Included among the weapons were sizable amounts of RPG-7 rocket launchers, AKM rifles, anti-tank and anti-personnel mines, camping equipment and food supplies. The cargo was supposed to be trucked by night to Gabinda via the Kinshasa-Matadi-Shela and Miconge roads under the escort of UNITA personnel. The report, which was not denied by the Kinshasa government, was made shortly after a one-day Mobutu visit to Luanda, during which the Zairean president assured Angolan authorities that the 1978 agreement remained in force.

African diplomats have mounting doubts with respect to the real intentions of the Mobutu government. In the

past, Zairean behavior in relation to Angola has been less than reassuring. Even before Angolan independence, Zaire allowed the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to use its territory as a base of destabilizing action against Agostinho Neto's People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA). At a February 1976 meeting with Neto in Brazzaville, Republic of Congo, Mobutu promised not to support the Angolan counter-revolutionaries. In turn, Neto vowed to restore traffic on the Benguela railroad. Nevertheless, Mobutu avoided formally recognizing Agostinho Neto's government on that occasion.

Relations between the two countries were formalized only one year later, following threats of a joint US-South African attack on the Angolan province of Cabinda. The purpose of this maneuver, called "Operation Cobra", was to install an "independent government" there.

"Operation Cobra" failed, but the Angolan village of Pangala, near the Zairean border, was attacked in February 1977 by members of a Mobutu-supported group which called itself the "Cabinda Liberation Front." One month later came the Shaba upheaval in Zaire, when opposition groups tried to overthrow Mobutu. The Zairean president turned to the US, Morocco, France and Egypt for help, having insinuated that Angola might have been responsible for the incident.

Violent repression following the rebellion contributed to increased popular discontent in southern Zaire, and led to a second attempted coup against Mobutu in June 1978. Three months later, as tensions mounted in Zaire, Mobutu went to Luanda and signed a non-intervention agreement with Neto.

Doubts, however, still persist regarding Mobutu's behavior. As early as 1981, he allowed a Military Committee for Angolan Resistance (COMIRA) to establish its headquarters in Kinshasa. One of the COMIRA founders is Armand Agnarelli, a former French mercenary and Biafran war veteran who has been acting in Kinshasa as a French secret agent since 1975. Agnarelli is known to have made numerous contacts with Colonel Pretorius, the South African military attaché in Paris, to arrange arms shipments to northern Angola. Those deliveries were made by a South African Air Force Hercules-130 transport plane. In 1981, Agnarelli was named as Mobutu's private adviser.

News of a second arms supply, also carried by a Hercules C-130, transpired shortly after a CIA Director William Casey's secret visit to South Africa in March. The CIA Director's visit was confirmed by US Diplomat Robert Frasure during testimony before the British House of Commons. Casey had been in Pretoria precisely to discuss the provision of weapons to UNITA by the South African government.

COLOMBA

Reuter

to breach between government and the CRAF

A wave of murders and assassination attempts by Colombian right-wing paramilitary groups launched against the legal representatives of the country's revolutionary forces have failed to thwart the truce signed recently by the government and the Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces (CRAF). The Patriotic Union (PU), the legal political arm of the CRAF, has withstood the attacks and ventured into preliminary talks with the government to prepare for a meeting between presidential delegate Carlos Ossa and CRAF commanders.

On September 1, shortly after the murder of PU Senator Pedro Nel Jiménez Obando, Colombian President Virgilio Barco welcomed top PU leaders to a reception at the presidential palace. On the occasion, the president referred to a conspiracy to undermine peace and democratic institutions by a "terrorist and violent" action. He urged PU leaders to adhere to the peace accord. In return, CRAF leader Jacobo Arenas promised that the CRAF will uphold the peace agreement. He emphasized that, despite the crimes committed against PU members, the CRAF has no intention of "embarking upon any political adventures."



The projected meeting between Ossa and the CRAF chiefs of staff will be the first since President Virgilio Barco took office on August 7. It is expected to be held at the CRAF camp in La Uribe, a mountainous region 100 km south of Bogota. Ossa will probably meet with CRAF leaders Manuel Marullanda Vélez and Jacobo Arenas. Ossa and the revolutionary leaders are already talking by phone via the hotline installed between the presidential palace and the "Green House" in the La Uribe camp.

CRAF leaders Manuel Marullanda and Jacobo Arenas (above) held their scheduled meetings with President Virgilio Barco (left) in spite of provocations

The projected meeting was announced amid alarming rumors that an operation called "Red Ball" is being planned by right-wing paramilitary groups to "physically eliminate the Patriotic Union." Braulio Herrera, a member of the PU National Coordination Committee, has denounced former Minister of Defense Fernando Landazábal as one of the mentors of the plan, designed to foil the truce. He also denounced the participation of certain members of the Armed Forces in such paramilitary groups.

In early September, a group calling itself the "Red Berets" telephoned Bogota newspapers to claim responsibility for the murder of PU representative Leonardo Posada Pedraza in Barrancabermeja, in the southern part of the country. Eight other PU members have been murdered since early September.

GATT: A Mild Triumph for the Third World

□ The outcome of the latest meeting of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) held in Punta del Este, Uruguay, last September, turned out to be slightly favorable to the Third World. The meeting was attended by foreign ministers of all 74 GATT member countries. From the outset, the US representatives strongly insisted that GATT terms should equally apply in the case of services. This met the opposition of the

Group of Ten led by Brazil and India, who argued that there is "a clear legal distinction" between services and trade.

Although the final declaration signed by the conference members allowed for discussion of the supply of services by the trade committee, it specified that services should remain outside the scope of GATT trade regulations.

A second controversial point was agriculture. The GATT members pledged to enforce "increased discipline in the granting of any direct or indirect subsidies to agricultural production" and promote "the liberalization of agricultural trade."

Having settled these two major disputes, the GATT members issued a final declaration announcing the next round of talks, scheduled to last from 1987 to 1991. These talks, which are already being referred to as the "Uruguayan Round," are expected to establish the framework for a new trade agreement which will apply to world trade until the end of the century.

Both the Brazilian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Abreu Sodre, and the Brazilian representative in Geneva trade organization Paulo Nogueira Batista, declared themselves pleased with the results obtained at Punta del Este. In their opinion, Brazil and the Group of Ten scored a significant point in the negotiations.

He added that, although they agreed to discuss the matter of services, they had done so on the quality of "policy" rather than on the quality of "policy" representatives of the Brazilian government, and not as GATT members."

The final declaration issued by the conference also states that the object of future negotiations is "to stop and reverse protectionist measures and thus eliminate trade distortions," as well as to develop a "more open, feasible and durable world trade system." In the area of services, the document states that negotiators "shall take into account pertinent national policies, aims, laws, and regulations, as well as to establish a set of multilateral principles and procedures for the exchange of services, including disciplinary norms in specific sectors "that will lead to gradual liberalization."



GATT-rich members were unable to overcome Third World resistance

NICARAGUA

US seeks to thwart debate on constitution

Carlos Núñez, the speaker of the Nicaraguan National Assembly, recently accused US diplomats in Managua of coaxing the local opposition to delaying the preparation of the final draft of the new Nicaraguan constitution. His charges were apparently confirmed in September, when, after being visited by US officials, five of the seven local opposition parties issued a declaration proposing the post-

ponement of nationwide discussions of the draft until November 3. The parties claimed that they needed additional time to prepare their own recommendations.

The declaration surprised Nicaraguans, since draft discussions have already been held throughout the country. Attended by over 100,000 people, they elicited some 3,000 written and verbal proposals for constitutional reform. Moreover, the five opposing groups signing the declaration—the Liberal Independent Party, the Social Christian People's Party, the Socialist Party, the Conservative Democratic Party and the Communist Party—

actively participated in the earlier meetings.

The new Nicaraguan constitution is scheduled to go into effect in January 1987. Supported by local public opinion, Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) leaders have repeatedly declared that they intend to meet the January deadline, come what may. In all probability, the draft of the new constitution, comprising 198 articles and including political pluralism and non-alignment as basic principles of the Nicaraguan revolution, will be approved by the National Assembly, since two-thirds of all its members are FSLN representatives.

The Philippines: 'Cory' negotiates with armed groups

In only two weeks, Philippine President Corazón ("Cory") Aquino succeeded in signing truce agreements with two armed groups as a preliminary step to negotiating peace. One of the groups, the 100,000-strong Moro National Liberation Front (FLNM) headed by Muslim leader Nur Misuari, had been engaged in a guerrilla war for the past 14 years. The aim: winning independence for the Philippine area occupied by the Moro people in Mindanao and neighboring islands. "Cory" Aquino persuaded the FLNM to accept autonomous status for the lands instead of total independence.

To sign the second truce, "Cory" travelled by helicopter to the Benaware mountains with an entourage of eight, including Cabinet ministers and military officers. There she met with missionary Conrado Balweg who, since 1979, had opposed the Manila government over greater autonomy for the island of Luzón. Last April, he broke away from the New People's Army (NPA) and formed his own Liberation Army operating in the mountains.

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Double Standards in World Trade

After much wrangling and bitter argument, a group of developed countries finally signed a new trade agreement with Third World textile exporters in Geneva last August. On September 15, a new round of global negotiations under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) took place in the Uruguayan beach resort of Punta del Este, in one more confrontation between developed and underdeveloped nations.

Trade being the topic on both occasions, one might expect the industrial nations to adhere to identical positions in both cases. Yet, while advocating free trade at the global negotiations, the developed countries insisted on import restrictions in the case of textiles.

The only reasonable explanation for this apparent contradiction is that industrial nations cater to their immediate interests first. When these are at stake, they do not hesitate to sacrifice their much advertised principles, even if it means inflicting heavy losses on the the less developed world and ultimately undermining their own long-term benefits.

Textiles are one of the few industrial sectors in which a group of Third World countries have a

definite advantage over Western nations. Thanks to this advantage, Third World textile products have found a profitable market in Western Europe and the United States. Major exporters now include Brazil, India, China, Singapore, Sri Lanka and North Korea.

What this "definite advantage" really boils down to is, of course, the large difference in wages paid in developed and underdeveloped nations. In the Third World, a textile worker makes only one dollar an hour versus the ten dollars paid their counterparts in advanced countries. Given this lower cost component, textile products from underdeveloped countries might penetrate even further in foreign markets, and eventually replace all of the local production there if trade barriers did not exist.

Ironically, the current situation is the opposite of what prevailed in the early days of the Industrial Revolution. Industrial nations were then the first to urge underdeveloped countries not to set import limits. In turn, representatives of underdeveloped countries claimed this would eventually mean the end of their incipient industries.

The same argument was used by Europeans at

Americans when they opted in Geneva for restricting their imports of Third World textiles, even as they prepared to demand trade liberalization in Punta del Este. Their aim at the GATT global negotiations was to have Third World countries eliminate import barriers in the area of services and high-technology products—two of the most important factors of economic growth in the past decades, and major determinants of future economic prosperity everywhere. Labor costs being irrelevant in this case, all advantages are on the side of exporting industrial countries.

Were underdeveloped countries not to protect their economies in the area of services and high-tech products, the history of world industrialization would repeat itself all over again in these two major sectors: both would end up in the hands of large transnational corporations.

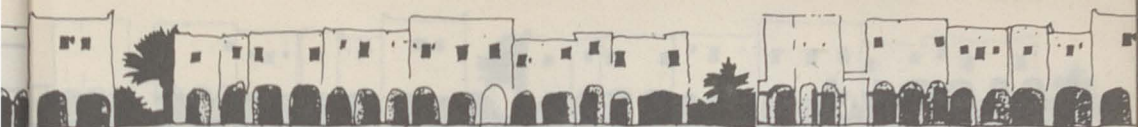
No wonder, then, that Third World countries should resist the pressures being applied on them by the industrial nations, and especially by the United States.

These problems are central to both the MFA and GATT negotiations, the two major world trade forums. In the Geneva talks, the advanced nations had much more bargaining power than their interlocutors. If no agreement had been reached, they could have unilaterally established import restrictions as a matter of domestic policy. In that case, textile exporting countries would have no choice but to yield, and perhaps retaliate later with some trade restrictions of their own.

Eventually, although they made a number of concessions, European and US importers managed to impose their will. The MFA-4 protocol signed on August 1 will be in force during the next five years, establishing a greater number of restrictions than any previous trade agreement. In the past, constraints referred to imports of cotton, wool or synthetic fibers and products, while the fourth MFA extends its limitations to all natural fibers, with the only exception of silk.

To be sure, the MFA-4 provides for a regulated increase of textile sales by Third World countries, but such increase is contingent on bilateral agreements between exporters and importers. Evidently, in spite of high-sounding statements in favor of free trade, advanced nations continue to tend to their own interests first of all, using their bargaining power to the disadvantage of the weaker economies. Though similarities exist, conditions are not the same in the two cases. At the GATT global negotiations, the keys to the market were in the hands of Third World countries. By joining efforts and finding a common ground of action, the latter tried to obtain concessions and enforce such principles as would favor their particular trade interests.

Equality must prevail in international economic relations. Otherwise a situation will be perpetuated in which rich nations consistently consolidate their privileges, while the poorer countries only reaffirm their traditional disadvantages.



As the nation prepares to celebrate the 25th anniversary of its independence next year, the Algerian government embarks on an ambitious development project aimed at food self-sufficiency and reduced dependence on

oil exports. Algerians admit that these are the most serious challenges facing their

socialist system since its inception. The new emphasis on the economy includes efforts to consolidate past achievements in areas such as education and health, according to our special envoy Artur José Poerner.



ALGERIA

Future Challenges

I visited Algeria for the first time in late June 1965, as the country prepared to celebrate the third anniversary of national independence. At the time, Western observers were still uncertain as to the real meaning of an episode which had made headlines the world over. On June 19 President Ahmed Ben Bella – one of the nine

“historic leaders” of the November 1954 uprising against French colonial rule – had been ousted by Colonel Houari Boumedienne, Vice-President of the Revolutionary Council, Minister of Defense, and a former Chief of Staff of the National Liberation Army (ALN).

My second visit to Algeria in November 1969 illustrated the point I had made in my book, *Algeria: On the Path of Independence*,¹ written after that first visit that, although Ben Bella was a civilian and Boumedienne a military chief, the June 19 upheaval had not been a military coup in the Latin American style. There were several differences, beginning with the formation of the ALN. Neither had I seen in Ben Bella's downfall the workings of Peking, Moscow, the Pentagon or General De Gaulle as suggested by Western news agencies.

What I saw were differences in style which can be important and perhaps decisive in the history of revolutions, especially in times of crisis. Ben Bella was the *zain*, the charismatic man of words, the populist leader with an eye on world affairs, while Boumedienne was the *rais*, the ascetic man of action, the austere, nationalistic leader who

Since 1983, Algeria has imported almost 60 percent of the grain consumed by its population. These imports eat up US\$3 billion a year, about one-fifth of the country's oil revenue



former Oran Military District Commander amounted to a compromise on the part of National Liberation Front (FLN) following the death of Boumedienne on December 27, 1978. Bendjedid was the only man who could reconcile the proponents of a more radical socialism, headed by FLN Party leader Mohamed Salah Yahiaoui, and the moderates led by Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdelkader Bouteflika.

Challenges in the countryside

Boumedienne lies buried in a row of the El Aouf cemetery, not far from the tomb of Amir Abderkader, who led the resistance against French military occupation in the 19th century, and is such “historic leaders” as Larbi ben M'hidi and Didouche Mourad. In 1980, Ben Bella pardoned by Bendjedid in 1980, has since lived

exile as an Islamic fundamentalist.

What can be said about Bendjedid? To be sure, with, he has surprised those who supported his candidacy at the FLN's 4th Congress in the hope of eventually manipulating him. Algerian institutional stability was confirmed during the presidential



succession, thus proving wrong those who predicted chaos after Boumedienne's death. Boumedienne died at the early age of 46, the victim of a strange blood disease, before he had sufficient time to prepare a successor.

Despite his sudden departure, the country's constitutional principles were strictly observed. Having announced the presidential vacancy, National Assembly Speaker Rabah Bitat – the last of the "historic leaders" still leading an active public life (five are dead and three remain in exile) – acted as the provisional head of state for 45 days.

Bendjedid, chosen by his party during this transition period, was elected to his first term as president in February 1979. At the age of 49, he was the oldest and perhaps the most self-effacing Army officer on active duty. Like Ben Bella, Boumedienne and Bitat, Bendjedid came from a poor peasant family. The Algerian peasantry had cooperated with most of the FLN combatants during the liberation struggle. Paradoxically, it is now in the countryside that Bendjedid and the Algerian revolution face their most serious challenge. The same part of the country that had produced so many guerrilla fighters – and had been a breadbasket for the Roman Empire at a time when North Africa was the most prosperous

agricultural region in the West – has proved unable to solve its population growth problem.

Algeria ceased to be a food exporter in 1983, when 60 percent of the national consumption of cereals had to be imported. Now the country also imports beef, potatoes, beans, peas and lentils. According to three of the directors at the Ministry of Agriculture and Fishing (Bouawke, of Vegetable Production, Chentouf, of Planning, and Alloum, of Factors of Production) Algerian food imports totaled US\$ 2.6 billion in 1983 and have been growing at an annual rate of 5 percent as a result of both populational growth and increased purchasing power. Food imports are expected to cost some US\$ 3 billion in 1986, or one-fifth of the country's oil revenue, with oil accounting for 98 percent of total exports.

A nationalistic people fully committed to "Algerianizing" their society, Algerians find it awkward to admit that they depend on imported food. The economic development model introduced by Boumedienne, which emphasized accelerated industrialization – and thus favored heavy industry and huge industrial complexes – was held responsible for this situation in 1980. In that year, a special FLN Congress decided agriculture should be



Food imports are growing at an annual rate of 5 percent due to population growth and increased purchasing power

ALGERIA

placed much higher on the country's list of priorities if food dependence was to be reduced. The present target is a 4 to 5 percent annual growth in agricultural production, which would be equivalent to the sum of the birth rate (3.2 percent) and the rate of increase in purchasing power. To meet this goal, the government plans to reduce technological backwardness in rural areas, and to increase the total acreage of arable or cultivated lands. In a country with a total area of 2,381,741 square kilometers, arable lands amount to only 3 percent. And of a total 7.5 million hectares of agricultural land, only 4.6 million hectares were being tilled in 1984.

Irrigation, which currently benefits only 3.5 percent (270,000 hectares) of all agricultural land, is expected to retrieve another 400,000 hectares in the coming years, largely in the south. And a "green wall" now being extended from the Tunisian to the Moroccan borders – a forestation project coordinated by the Armed Forces – may drastically reduce desertification.

Few people these days ever mention the "agrarian revolution" which Boumedienne started in November 1971 in an attempt to modernize rural areas. Yet, although his reforms did not introduce mechanization to the desired extent, they did contribute to the democratization of land ownership. Over one million hectares of agricultural lands have since been turned over to approximately 100,000 peasants in 6,000 cooperatives. The socialist self-management program, originally created in March 1963 to promote the use of 1.8 million hectares that had been left idle by the French colonists, now handles 2.3 million hectares that are being cultivated by 2,080 agricultural production units. The remaining 4.1 million hectares are privately owned by about 700,000 farmers. Basically made up of family units, this sector continues to be the country's most important beef producer, accounting for 80 percent of the country's herds.

In spite of past mistakes, with industry supplanting food production for so many years,

20 – third world

Algerian agricultural output has increased by 37.5 percent since 1981, considered to be a record for an agricultural year. In the 1984-85 period, the increase was 37.5 percent. Unfortunately this has not been enough to reduce food dependence to acceptable levels.

The oil revolution

There are no hungry people, beggars or social contrasts and inequalities in Algeria. Surveys of household consumption habits suggest Algerians are faring increasingly better, both qualitatively and quantitatively. To a large extent, however, this is due to income paid for with oil money.

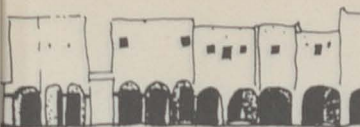
Consumption has increased 8 percent per year in real terms since the early 1980s. The problem now is to determine consumption priorities. Algeria has the necessary purchasing power, but the domestic supply of goods is still inadequate – which is the opposite of the situation



Former President Boumedienne

in Morocco, where supply is ample but people cannot afford to buy all the things they need. By fostering the growth of the domestic market, through the creation of other things like the creation of new jobs and the completion of socioeconomic programs recommended in previous plans (the 1963-66 three-year plan and two four-year plans, 1970-73 and 1974-77), the 1980-84 Five-Year plan calls for a 70 percent growth of the average income per capita, now estimated at US\$ 2,400.

Life expectancy increased from 47 to 57 years between 1962 and 1980. The country had only one doctor per 10,000 population in 1966; by 1982, the proportion was one to 2,500, and now it is one to 1,200. Spectacular gains have also been made in education (see the accompanying article). A total of 1,650,000 new jobs were created between 1966 and 1982. The country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) grew by 7 to 7.5 percent a year from 14.6 billion dinars in 1967 to nearly 232.0 billion in 1983. Since 1965, the year officially viewed as the beginning



by the current era of national development, the country has experienced high rates of economic growth. GDP is expected to grow by 8 to 10 percent this year, with an annual inflation rate of 10 to 15 percent. The country's foreign debt has dropped from US\$ 26.5 billion in 1980 to US\$ 16.0 billion in 1984.

These impressive results, which very few Third World countries can match, are primarily due to the decision made by President Boumediene 15 years ago, under the first Four-Year Development Plan, to "bring the revolution to the oil sector."

In the early 1970s, having protected Algerian oil wealth through nationalization of French oil companies operating in the country (with the government assuming control of 51 percent of their stock), as well as pipelines and natural gas reserves, Boumediene was able to put together the funds required to finance his agricultural, educational and industrial reforms. A fourth reform, which was nearly complete when he died, required less money. It was the institutional reform.

Boumediene created most of the Algerian government infrastructure, and virtually all of the country's state-owned enterprises. Investments required to turn the country into what it is today were largely made in the 1969-75 period - with the government contributing no less than 99 percent of the total. At present the government is still responsible for 70 percent of the Gross National Product (GNP). Revenues from oil and natural gas exports (and Algeria has the world's fourth largest gas reserves) increasingly contributed to public investments in the 1970s. By 1982, despite the deterioration of world oil prices, Algeria was still turning US\$ 12.4 billion from oil and gas sales.

Self-sustained development

The nationalization process introduced by Boumediene did not stop at oil and gas. It had already included, back in 1963, agricultural lands



Oil sales, which account for 98 percent of Algerian exports, finance all of the country's food imports

owned by a small group of French colonists who had remained in the country after independence. Foreign mining companies were nationalized in 1966; the next year, it was the turn of foreign oil distribution consortia, banks and insurance companies; and, in 1968, a total of 69 private manufacturing companies, most of them French-owned, as well as the last French military base in Mers-el-Kebir were also nationalized. At present, foreign trade is 100 percent controlled by the government. The same is true of domestic trade, with the exception of the retail business. Foreign investments are permitted only in the form of joint ventures with state-controlled Algerian companies.

President Bendjedid has lately been promoting the role of private initiative, although a privatization process can hardly be said to exist in Algeria. "What the President would like to do," explains Algerian Minister of Information Bachir Rouis, "is to transfer part of the State functions to private individuals. This would allow the government to further concentrate on basic development work. Only through a growing participation of private citizens will we cease to be a welfare state - a country that, for instance, finances between one and 1.5 million scholarships for children who often do not need them. This is the only way Algeria will be able to withstand the impact of declining oil prices, which has forced us to slow down the pace of national development. A number of projects requiring expenses in foreign exchange have had to be postponed or cancelled."

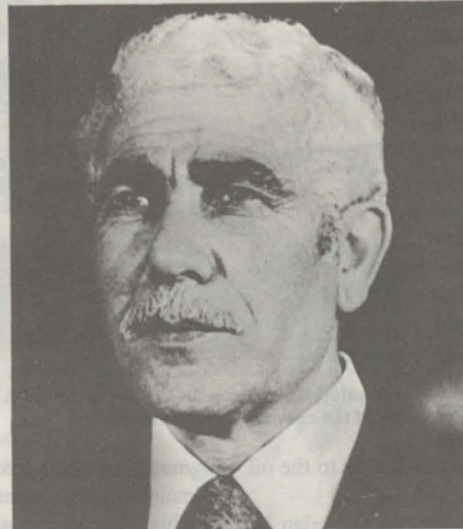
ALGERIA

Priority is now given to projects calling for disbursements in dinars, especially in the area of manufacturing. Thus, paradoxically, the oil crisis has acted as a catalyst in the mobilization of national resources, and some Algerians now talk of a new industrial boom, similar to the one that changed the whole country in the 1970s.

The local press, including *El Moudjahid* (Algeria's largest newspaper, with a circulation of 400,000 in Arabic and French), is optimistic about the future.

There is talk of fairer oil prices and diversification of exports. The order of the day, however, comes in harsher and haughtier tones: *Ne compter que sur soi* (To count on oneself alone), meaning that Algeria must be made more self-reliant and less dependent on the vagaries of the world economy. This motto has replaced the old slogan that helped promote the creation of hundreds of industrial enterprises in the Boumedienne era: *Sémer le pétrole pour récolter des usines* (To sow oil in order to harvest manufacturing plants).

Industrialist Djillali Mehri, one of the four or five wealthiest men in Algeria, told me once in Paris: "Boumedienne did much for Algeria, but perhaps less for Algerians. He emphasized education, health and housing while neglecting whole economic sectors such as agriculture, tourism and artisanal production." An Algerian Cabinet Minister adds: "In the oil boom era, Boumedienne had more resources at his disposal than his predecessors, and certainly did many good things. But he also made mistakes. He is no doubt to be credited with the country's industrialization process. Under him, Algeria was able to correct some serious maladjustments in the areas of education and housing. But in the process of creating an industrial infrastructure for oil and gas, for instance, he



President Chadli has been encouraging private initiative

Ben Bella's downfall, to the disadvantage of the FLN Party. Jean Lacouture, a renowned French political commentator, suggested in his eulogy of Boumedienne which appeared in the French *Monde*² that Ben Bella's "dictatorship of the pen" and "oratorical style of government" has been replaced in 1965 by a "bureaucratic dictatorship" or a "government of dossiers," alluding to the historical transition from charismatic to bureaucratic leadership described by Max Weber. As a matter of fact, Boumedienne had admitted, one year before rising to power, that he did not aspire to being elected and applauded by the people.

Actually, following the April 1964 Congress which marked a strengthening of the revolutionary and socialist directives of the Soummam Platform (1956) and the Tripoli Program (1962), the FLN suddenly began to decline. Its position deteriorated after the ousting of Ben Bella, and reached an all-time low in the early 1970s with the resignation of FLN Secretary-General Kaid Ahmed. Boumedienne did not hesitate to transfer the task of implementing the party's land reform project to "volunteer student groups".

Reinstated by the 1963 Constitution as the country's only political party, expurgated and reorganized by Boumedienne in 1967, the FLN



ortclaimed in 1976 as "the main guide of the Algerian
r socialist revolution and a steering force in Algerian
le society," as well as a "vanguard of conscientious
wizens whose final objective is the triumph of
tribcialism." Nevertheless, only in late January 1979
ound the party reassume a leading political role by
fecting Boumedienne's successor.

Third World leadership

If under Boumedienne the party played a
subsidiary role on the domestic plane, it was under
ingn that Algeria rose to its present leading position
ria the Third World. Surrounded by the romantic
fora of a foe of colonialism, the Algerian Revolution
rocon the Third World's sympathy and support

cia, beginning with the November
e 1954 insurrection. Algerian
plomats were quick to capitalize
Cou this mood even before
y independence had been formally
ofon. In less than a week, Ferhat
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ogid won diplomatic recognition in
nchunisia, Morroco, Yemen, the
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ic become formally independent
faaly four years later were, of
arourse, the international policy
glidelines of the Soumman
platform. As early as 1965, this
ongeological document issued by
tite FLN stressed the need for
latlarity not only among North
efrican countries, but also

ward those nations that, in the previous year, had
romoted the Third World as a political entity at the
gandung Conference in Indonesia. An additional
ector favoring Algerian integration in the world
ommonwealth of nations was its African, Arab,
lamic, Maghrebian and Mediterranean background.

After independence, Algerian behavior was
onsistent with the principles which had formed the
asis of its emancipation struggle. Algeria became a
Non-aligned country whose foreign policy opposed

any form of colonialism, imperialism, racism, and
foreign intervention in domestic affairs, while
advocating self-determination for all peoples. Hence
its unconditional support of several national
liberation movements throughout the world. Despite
the general uneasiness following the ousting of Ben
Bella and the cancellation of the II Afro-Asian
Conference which was to have taken place in
Algiers in June 1965, Boumedienne maintained and
strengthened these foreign policy principles.

Algerian leaders recognized the limitations of
political independence alone, and acted accordingly.
They signed the Charter of the Group of 77 in
October 1967, and hosted the IV Conference of
Non-Aligned Countries in Algiers in September
1973. At this meeting, socialist countries were



The FLN slogan "For a better life" symbolizes the effort to improve the country's standard of living

proclaimed allies *par excellence* of underdeveloped
nations and of any struggle against colonialism and
imperialism anywhere in the world. The results of
the conference, which proved decisive for the future
of the Non-Aligned Countries Movement, led
Boumedienne to call a Special General Meeting of
the United Nations in May 1974 for discussing
commodity prices and development - and it was on
that occasion that the UN declaration in favor of a
new world economic order was approved.



The late President Boumedienne at the 1973 Non-Aligned Summit Conference

Algeria played a major role in imparting a more definite economic content to claims made by nations in the southern hemisphere before international organizations, and was the first country to use a commodity (oil) as a political weapon following the Arab-Israeli war of October 1973. In addition, Algiers was selected as the seat for the First Summit Conference of the Organization of Oil Exporting Countries (OPEC) – the first cartel organized by Third World nations – in March 1975.

The Algerian struggle side by side with Third World countries in international organizations has proved more arduous than its own independence war. Rich nations are reluctant to forgo their advantages and privileges, unless this represents the lesser of two evils. And other obstacles may arise, sometimes among Third World nations themselves, as was the case with the protracted creation of a commodity prices stabilization fund, a product of the so-called North-South dialogue.

Yet Algerian foreign policy, which has not undergone any noticeable changes under Bendjedid, is deft and persistent. Algerian diplomats have often been called upon to mediate in such imbroglios as the

abduction of American citizens at the US Embassy in Tehran – an embarrassing situation lasting from October 1980 to January 1981 – or in such unending international conflicts as the Iran-Iraq war.

Algeria in the post-oil era

Bendjedid's Algeria proposes to be more democratic, more competent and more objective than Boumedienne's. Algerian policies have changed on the international front because the country's domestic and foreign policy goals remain the same. But some changes can be detected domestically especially with respect to the methods employed to attain such goals.

Decentralization, for one, has been a process since 1984 both in the country's territorial administrative reorganization and in the dismantling of huge public enterprises inherited from the Boumedienne era. For instance, the National Society for Research, Transportation, Processing and Marketing of Hydrocarbons (SONATRACH) created in December 1983, which had grown from



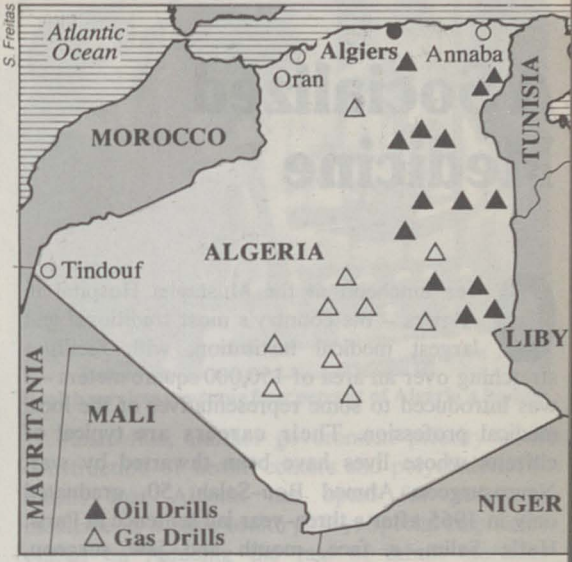
total of 33 employees in 1964 to 103,000 in late 1981, has been split into 17 different companies for the sake of greater profitability.

Ultimately, Bendjedid plans to prepare the country for the post-oil era, 15 or 10 years from now, when the level of Algerian oil reserves, now conservatively estimated at 10 billion barrels, will run out exports. Toward this end, an in-depth analysis of the Algerian economy has been made, and the First Five-Year Plan (1980-84) has been extensively reviewed. The plan originally called for investments of the order of 400 billion dinars, mainly in agriculture, water and food supply, housing, health, economic decentralization, reorganization of public enterprises, and greater administrative efficiency – all in accordance with guidelines adopted by the FLN after Boumedienne's death.

The Second Five-Year Plan (1985-89) will of course take into account a less favorable international scenario. Its basic guidelines, approved at the FLN's Fifth Congress and later elaborated on at the 12th Session of the Party's Central Committee, include such goals as food self-sufficiency through the development of agriculture and irrigation, the consolidation of the country's industrial infrastructure, and increased productivity. Any measure or activity capable of reinforcing the country's economic independence is viewed as a priority. The Fifth Congress slogan reveals the dominant preoccupation in present-day Algeria: "Work and austerity to ensure our future."

However, in spite of such austere language, Algeria is now a more easygoing and freer country than ever. Bendjedid's policies are more oriented toward the population and its well-being. "For a better life" is another slogan I heard among the new generation in government cadres. The heroic days of the Revolution, of military feats and victories belong to the past. Success is now measured in social and economic terms, and will determine how Bendjedid's government and the Islamic socialist model³ adopted by Algeria will be judged by the next generation.

In the words of Algerian historian and diplomat Mostefa Lachera, "A revolution worthy of its name must belong to its century, to those who inspired it



Area: 2,320,000 km²
 Population: 21,500,000 (1984)
 Arabs are the largest ethnic group (80 percent of the population), followed by a Berber-speaking minority (17 percent). Islam is the state religion

and carried it out."⁴ Following the military, political and diplomatic victories of the war of independence 25 years ago, Algeria was able to begin to solve the socioeconomic problems it had inherited from 130 years of colonial domination. But it was then that the real difficulties began, as had been predicted by Revolutionary Hero Larbi Ben M'hidi before he was arrested and killed by French colonial repression.⁵ •

Artur José Poerner

1 Printed by Editora Civilização Brasileira, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.
 2 December 28, 1978 issue.
 3 Socialism and Islamism are conceived in Algeria as meaning the same thing. Class conflicts have no place in Algeria, in contrast with Syria and South Yemen. The latter is the only Arab country adopting a "scientific" brand of socialism.
 4 *Algérie: nation et société*, Editions Maspéro, Paris, 1965.
 5 The murder of Ben M'hidi is depicted in *The Battle of Algiers* by Italian movie producer Gino Pontecorvo.

A Socialized Medicine

Over luncheon at the Mustapha Hospital in Algiers – the country's most traditional and largest medical institution, with facilities stretching over an area of 150,000 square meters – I was introduced to some representatives of the local medical profession. Their careers are typical of citizens whose lives have been thwarted by war. Neurosurgeon Ahmed Bou-Salah, 50, graduated only in 1965 after a three-year jail sentence in Paris. Hafiz Salim, a face, mouth and jaw surgeon, interrupted his studies in the 1960s to join the underground resistance, and now bears the scars of serious skull wounds.

"Looking back at those times, you marvel that the country has been able to accomplish so much," General Recovery Service. (A heart surgeon specializing in extracorporeal operations, Drif is says Professor Mohamed Drif, head of the hospital's

Algeria has one doctor per 1,200 inhabitants




getting ready to perform the first kidney transplant in Algerian history.) In 1962 Algeria had only 6,000 doctors, and only 287 were nationals (Drif was one of them); hospital beds totaled 37,000 and approximately 50 medical institutions. In 1986 the number of doctors has nearly tripled to 17,000 (one for every 1,200 Algerians), while 80,000 beds are available in the country's 500 hospitals.

This is way above the target set in the 1976 Algerian Charter, whose aim was to equip the country with one doctor per 2,000 population in no more than ten years. In large cities like Algiers, Oran, Constantine and Annaba, the average is one doctor per 900 or 1,000 population, and one nurse per 250 population¹. Few European countries can match these figures. Bouabdellah Boukheloua, a Child Surgery professor at the University of Algiers, proudly points out that "it took Algeria only 25 years to accomplish what France needed several centuries to do."

Like all independence war veterans, Professor Boukheloua, who now heads the Algerian Health Services, tends to reminisce about the past. "The medical equipment left behind by the French was in a deplorable shape. Hospitals were largely obsolete. Above all, they were poorly distributed: only the bigger cities had hospitals. Since the whole system had been conceived by the *pieds noirs* (European colonists), only 15 percent of the Algerian population had access to health care. Furthermore, most of the medical personnel was French, and after their departure we couldn't have kept the hospitals going if it hadn't been for the aid of friendly nations. The new staff came mostly from Arab and Socialist countries."

There are still a number of foreign doctors in the country – mostly Indians, Palestinians, Chileans and even a few Brazilians – but they are no longer indispensable. At present, 20,000 Algerian students are enrolled in medical schools, and the Ministry of Higher Education is now planning to control the growth of the medical class. The emphasis is beginning to shift to paramedic technicians. A total of 15,000 students are currently enrolled in the country's 37 paramedical schools and institutions. Over 40,000 paramedics graduated between 1980 and 1985. Constituting the bottom level of the country's health structure, they are the first resort for anyone requiring medical care in Algeria.



Health as a priority

At a higher level are the health centers, says pharmacist Cherif Benkhelifa, head of the Minister of Health's Office. Algeria has one medical center per 12,000 population, each with a staff of two general practitioners, two obstetricians and one dentist. Each health center has its own clinical tests laboratory and x-ray equipment. Paramedic personnel and general clinics provide 80 to 90 percent of all medical assistance in the country.

On a more specialized level are the polyclinics, of which there is one per 48,000 population. Designed to handle the basic specialties, each is staffed with at least one gynecologist. At the top of the health pyramid are, of course, the hospitals.

A total of 54 new hospitals were built in 1985-86 alone, three of them for psychiatric patients. Each is equipped with 150 to 240 beds. The Saharan region, previously deprived of any hospitals, now has 15 of them providing medical assistance to nomad populations like the Tuaregs. There are also twelve eye clinics to fight sand-induced trachoma. "We inaugurated four hospitals in the *wilaya*² of Mascara two weeks ago," says Professor Boukheloua. "You don't have to travel more than 35 kilometers to go from one hospital to another. I don't know of many countries that can build over 50 hospitals in only two years."

The infant mortality rate will be 40 per 1,000 by 1990



Health services consume four percent of Algeria's budget

Meanwhile, another government priority is the construction of health centers and polyclinics. This means that Algeria has opted for preventive medicine as a basic health policy. Special emphasis is placed on reducing the rate of infant mortality, which was as high as 150 per 1,000 births in 1962, and has now declined to between 40 and 80 per 1,000, depending on the region. The aim is to reduce it further to 40 per 1,000 in the entire country by 1990, and to 10 per 1,000 by the end of the century, among other things by fighting water-transmitted diseases such as diarrhea.

Professor Boukheloua predicts that, four years from now, Algeria will be free from most diseases that are typical of underdeveloped countries. "We have a young population," he points out, "and I wouldn't be surprised if our health statistics were to surpass those of most European countries in a few years." For the Algerian government, health is the number two priority, next only to education. Under the 1980-84 Five-Year Development Plan, the equivalent of US\$ 4.1 billion, or 4 percent of the government's total expenditures, has been allocated to health and sanitation.

Greater spacing between births is another emphasis in the Algerian health program.³ With an annual growth rate of 3.2 percent, the Algerian population has increased from 9 million in 1962 to 22 million today. Health centers and polyclinics promote birth spacing while fighting infant mortality and encouraging breast feeding. Another priority of the Algerian health policy is medical assistance in schools and at work.

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The government has built over 50 hospitals in the country since 1984

Free medical care

Algeria tries to keep itself abreast of new developments in the area of advanced medicine, or *médecine de point*. Cardiac surgery with the help of extracorporeal circulation was introduced in the country in November 1985. Radiocobalt equipment is being installed, 18 dialysis centers are in operation, and a second cancer prevention center is expected to be inaugurated soon.

With his experience as a medical executive, Professor Drif quotes a few additional figures. "Every heart surgery patient requiring extracorporeal circulation costs the government some 34,000 dinars, since most of the materials used in the operation have to be imported. And then there are hemodialysis treatments which are no less expensive, with each weekly session costing 1,100 dinars." He points out that, if faced with the same conditions as Algeria immediately after independence, few countries would have bothered with the problem of hemodialysis. "After all, we have only 500 such patients in the entire country, or 20 per 1 million population. But our aim is wholesome, balanced development in the area of

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health. Free medical care for all is one of the achievements of our Revolution⁴. And the quality of medical care is the same for everybody. If a patient cannot be treated in the country, he is sent for treatment abroad, with the government taking care of all expenses."

To be sure, there are a number of self-employed private doctors, dentists and pharmacists in Algeria. University education also being free for all, the government requires graduates to do two years of military service, plus five years of social service on a modest doctor's pay. Having compensated the government in this manner, the new doctor can then, if he prefers, start his own clinic — but not before.

1 The first Algerian-born nurse graduated in 1950.

2 Algeria is divided into 48 *wilayas*, or provinces administered by a *wali*, or governor. *Wilayas* are subdivided into *dairas*, each *daira* being made up of several *communes*.

3 The June 1980 Special Congress held by the FLN emphasized the need for "a family planning program based on individual and communal consent."

4 Medical care was made free in Algeria on January 1, 1974.



A Break with the Past

Even the most severe critics of the Algeria revolution will admit that the country has proved highly successful in the areas of education and health – the two highest points in a chain of achievements where agriculture, housing and transportation are the weakest links. Education, especially in professional fields, has always been the top priority and the major concern of Algerian leaders. Nearly one-fourth of the national budget, or over ten percent of the country's Gross Domestic Product, has been allocated to education since independence.

And for good reason. Education in Algeria is not only a means of social promotion: It is also a tool of retrieval of Algerian national culture and identity, both of which had been but obliterated in 132 years of French colonial administration. The French made several frustrated attempts to "integrate" and "assimilate" Algerians. As soon as they arrived in the country, books were destroyed and *modersas* (the Muslim schools founded by Algerian education pioneer Abdel Hamid Ben Badis¹) were closed. When they left in 1962, they set fire to the library of the University of Algiers.

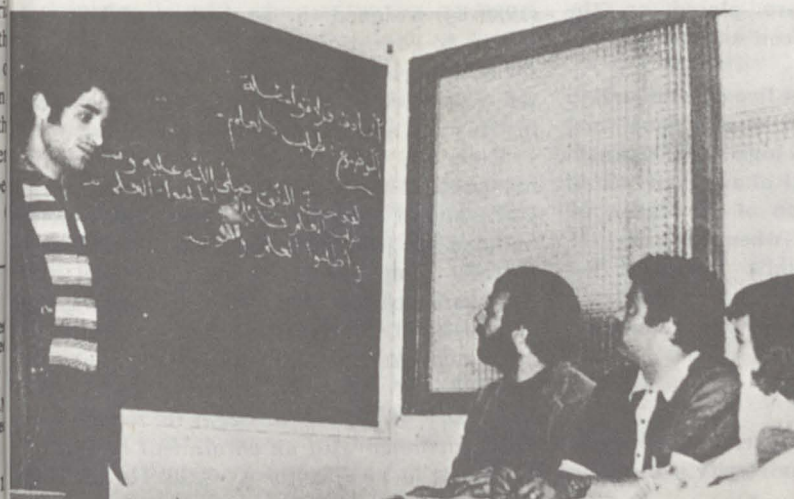
Massive school attendance

Candid or misinformed individuals who still believe in the so-called "civilizing role" of Western colonialism in Africa and other Third World regions might well be advised that, in 1961, while school attendance in Algeria ran as high as 100 percent among the French population, it was less than 15 percent among Algerian children. To keep colonized peoples ignorant seems to have been a basic objective of European colonizers, even when they came from countries with a tradition of high education like France.

In his classic *L'Algérie: Nation et Société*, Algerian historian and diplomat Mostefa Lacheraf, who is now the Algerian ambassador in Peru, quotes Eugène Fourmestreaux, a top French colonial official, as writing in 1880 on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of Algerian occupation: "We allowed indigenous education to fall far below what it was before we arrived." Marcel Emérit, also quoted by Lacheraf, tell us that, "By 1830, all Arabs could read and write. After half-a-century of colonization they are now completely ignorant." After 132 years of daily contact with the French culture and language, 85 percent of all Algerians were illiterate.

In present-day Algeria, school attendance is 100 percent among six-year-olds and more than 80 percent among children six to thirteen years of age.

In a country with a high populational growth rate and perhaps the youngest population in the world – over 70 percent of all Algerians are under 20 – this means that some six million Algerian children now attend school. Adding the young and adult



Political guidance begins in the third year of basic school

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population also being trained at other levels, this means that one out of every three Algerian attend one of the four schooling stages prevalent in the country: basic, general or technical high-school, professional, and higher education.

An ideological struggle

The nine-year basic course, which is compulsory for all children of six years of age or more, is now completely "Algerianized", i.e., there are no longer any foreign teachers in the country, and all classes are delivered in the national language, Arabic. Curricula, however, include two foreign languages, one beginning in the fourth grade and another in the eighth grade. Children can opt for French, English, Spanish or German.

A privileged group

□ "Algerian university students are the most pampered in the world," said a foreign diplomat in Algiers recently. To Algerian Minister of Education Abdelak Rafik Bererhi this may be an overstatement. "What happens is that our university scholarship holders are paid the highest allowances in the world," he explains. "For some sectors where personnel is most scarce, students are placed on the government's payroll as soon as they join the university."

Entire Algerian families live off scholarship payments extended to their sons or daughters, whose allowances can be as high as 4,200 dinars per quarter.¹ This is well above their actual expenses: an annual tuition of 50 dinars, 40 dinars for living quarters (when necessary), 15 dinars per year for public transportation (within a radius of 50 km from the university), and one-dinar meals at the university canteen.

Making up for lost time

After the first year of Algerian independent life, there were only 578 university students in

I am told by Fatima Saidani, the Soc Communications official at the Algerian Ministry of Education, that all basic and secondary schools adopt a coeducational system, girls being more numerous (and better students) than boys. In her company I visited a third-cycle (seventh to ninth grades) boys' school in El-Harrach, a low-income neighborhood of Algiers, Algeria. The school, named after Algerian revolutionary leader Mohamed Lamine Lamoudi, keeps 47 classes going for a total of 1,891 students. Girls predominate, especially among those who raised their hands to answer questions in the schoolrooms I went by.

In all, there are in the country 1,750 third-cycle schools like the one in El-Harrach, and 10,000 first- and second-cycle schools. Each cycle lasts three to four years. The first two concentrate in awakening social awareness among the children and helping them

the entire country; they now total 110,000 or more, including those doing post-graduate work and 2,000 foreign scholarship students from Arab and African countries. Thirty-five percent of all university graduates are girls.

These figures illustrate the enormous effort being undertaken by Algeria to make up for the time lost under colonial rule. Special emphasis is placed on scientific and technological studies at the university level. The first Five-Year Development Plan (1980-84) assigned the equivalent of US\$ 8.2 billion to education, with 28 percent going to the building and equipping of four universities, ten polytechnical schools, 15 technical institutions, and five university hospitals.

Recently, President Bendjedid Chadli inaugurated the Scientific and Technological University of Oran. Its counterpart in Algiers, founded in 1974 and renamed in 1980 after Houari Boumedienne, was designed by Brazilian architect Oscar Niemeyer, as was the University of Constantine (18,500 students, 13 multidisciplinary institutes). Originally planned for 8,000 to 10,000 students, the University of Oran will begin its school year in this September with an enrollment of 18,000 according to Vice-Reitor A. Gaid. Its teaching

interact with their environment. In the school year of 1985-86, 186,000 students completed their basic course, and approximately one-half of them are now registering in secondary school.

The Ministry's Director of Primary Education, Makhlouf Zemmouri, points out that polytechnical education is being introduced throughout the country, in line with the three basic principles of Algerian educational policy: Algerianization, democratization (free education at all levels for all students), and scientific orientation (for technical training of future Algerian workers).

Political guidance begins in the third year of basic school and goes on at all higher levels. The National Constitution bill approved earlier this year emphasizes the importance of an ideological component at all schooling levels, due to "the emergence of a new-bourgeois trend [among us] ...

body totals 1,200, including one hundred foreign teachers.² Occupying an area of 105 hectares in the suburb of Ezzouar, the university is surrounded by three student "towns" and serviced by a special railroad station. The government offers all kinds of facilities to students; in exchange, seriousness of purpose is demanded, and students may be excluded if they miss three classes without proper justification.

Minister Bererhi, who was the first rector of the University of Constantine and an active proponent of the 1971 university reform, is proud to note that, "For the first time in our history, enrollment in technical courses surpasses enrollment in the medical and social sciences. This goes to prove that the University has become a productive force in the development effort." Until 1977, 24.4 percent of all students were studying law.

In addition to the priority assigned to technology and the dissemination of information science, Bererhi has another ambition: to reinforce national identity while encouraging the study of modern foreign languages. Higher education tries to respond to



School attendance is now more than 80% among children 6 to 13 years of age

the needs of social and economic development and the actual demand of the local labor market. The teaching of modern languages, for instance, has kept pace with the demand of national enterprises such as Air Algérie. Toward this end, a coordinating council was created by Bererhi in 1983 to act as an intermediary between the schools and the labor market.

A member of the National Liberation Front Central Committee, Bererhi does not have to worry about "the brain drain," which is a lesser problem in Algeria than in other Third World countries. Reason: few Algerian students take prolonged courses abroad (most of them attend only brief post-graduate courses), while unemployment among university graduates is very low. ●

¹ This includes 1,200 dinars per month, and two additional monthly payments at the beginning of school year for books and other expenses. One dinar is equal to US\$ 0.20.

² "Arabization" and "Algerianization" of education is not yet complete at the scientific and technological university levels. Delay in this program gave rise to student strikes and other forms of protest at the University of Algiers in 1970-80. The rate of Algerianization among university teachers was 77 percent in 1985.

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whose political and ideological influence must not be underestimated." For the bill authors, underestimating the importance of the ideological struggle is one of two dangers threatening the revolution at this stage (the other being "populist and leftist trends"), since it favors "indifference, lack of commitment, opportunism, careerism, and diletantism." Consequently, the new bill recommends that political guidance at schools imbue students with the need for a socialist option. The aim of such political orientation is "to educate citizens away from tribal influence by enabling them to cope with the risks of alienation and play a role in national reconstruction and the formation of a socialist society."

A school in every village

Having finished basic education, the Algerian young can make one of four options: general secondary, technical secondary or professional education, or on-the-job training at business enterprises or artisan groups under the guidance of the Ministry of Education.

The three-year-long secondary course, which is a compulsory stage on the way to higher education (see table), as well as to employment as a qualified worker, is now ridding itself of the negative image it had acquired for having neglected technical instruction in the past. Since the 1984 reform, secondary education has become less academic and eliminated a number of conflicts by diversifying its disciplines, introducing technological education (in accordance with the needs of the various economic sectors concerned), and creating optional studies for the development of vocational abilities. As a result, secondary schools have been putting out agricultural, biochemical, electronics, civil construction, accounting and information technicians, in addition to the administrative managers it had been producing since 1982.

There is no dichotomy between basic and secondary education. "Both have the same objectives and principles," say Ministry of Education Directors Mostefa Benzerga and Mokhtar Hasbellaoum. Secondary education is still bilingual, but all courses will be delivered in Arabic starting in 1987. The next step will be to unify basic schooling by

eliminating segregated institutions (for boys or girls) which have subsisted as a colonial legacy.

Before independence, only very few Algerians succeeded in attending one of the 35 professional schools in the country (there are now 450 of them, 40 in Algiers alone). Technical training was provided by five schools only; at present, 75 technical schools are attended by 66,000 students, including 12,000 girls. There were only six normal teachers' schools, now a total of 61 schools have just put out 98,000 primary teachers. Back in 1962, there was only one teacher for each 200 students at this level.

With the mass departure of French colonialists, Algerians had to build an entire educational system in a very short time, while retaining and reforming some of the old schools in order to avoid a breakdown in education. Lecturers were recruited en masse for a brief, one-year training in Arabic and French. Technological institutes were created in 1970 to prepare secondary school teachers; in the meantime, education was provided through correspondence courses, and a literacy campaign was conducted on radio and television. A social structure was created to meet students needs, such as scholarships, canteen networks, and boarding schools. Basic education was reformed in 1976 to avoid a gap between schooling and living conditions between the world of students and the world of rural and urban workers. The initial preoccupation with quantity was replaced by concern with quality. Currently, the pragmatic new leaders keep an eye on the cost/benefit aspect of the country's higher educational programs and budgets.

After nearly 25 years of independent life, Algeria now has a school in every village, even in the farthest mountain areas and oases. Free, universal education is now both a symbol of the victory over colonialism and a means of retrieving Algerian national identity. As a matter of fact, Algerian students seem to be the number one beneficiaries of a struggle begun in 1974 by generally illiterate independence fighters.

¹ Benbadis, a wealthy *ulema*, is reported to have said: "Algeria is our country, Arabic is our language, Islam is our religion."



Opting for South-South Trade

Algeria would like to step up exchange with the Third World and thus depend less on trade with the rich Western nations, especially France

Algerian foreign policy has remained unchanged since the 1956," said Algerian Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs Mohammed Berkane at an interview with *Third World* magazine last July. "But we are not happy with the fact that 90 percent of our foreign trade places with rich Western countries.

present, Algeria's main trade partner is France, which absorbs some 30 percent of the country's total exports, followed by the United States and West Germany. We would like to see more of an exchange with Third World nations."

He added that President Chadli Bendjedid intends to take a step in exactly that direction during his visit to Brazil in early October. There is no reason, he added, why Third World countries could account for only 4 percent of total Algerian trade.

Algeria is decidedly interested, for instance, in joint ventures with Third World countries that will contribute to meet the needs of the Algerian domestic market. Although such joint ventures would necessarily involve Algerian government-owned enterprises which dominate the country's administrative, economic and financial activities, they would certainly contribute to

increase the access of Third World exporters to foreign markets. Berkane pointed out that this form of South-South cooperation is consistent with the principles agreed to in Geneva in 1964 on the occasion of the I United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD I).

Algeria, said Aberkane, would like to become less dependent on Western Europe. In the case of natural gas exports, for instance, 97 percent is absorbed by France, Italy, Belgium and Spain. In addition, as a result of the drop in world oil prices, Algeria is keenly interested in importing from countries offering lower-priced products

than the richer industrial nations in the West.

The barrier of vested interests

A little over one year ago, Aberkane proposed five-year countertrade contract with Brazil in the amount of US\$ 2-3 billion, under which Brazil would import a total of 15 to 10 billion cubic meters of liquefied petroleum gas at the rate of three to four billion cubic meters a year. In exchange, Brazil would render US\$ 2-3 billion worth of services to Algeria, including the construction of 800 kilometers of railroads, a steel-rolling plant in Ain M'Lila, two hydroelectric power plants, an airport in Algiers, and at least part of the Algiers subway. The deal is still awaiting the green light from the Brazilian government.

Blessed with the world's fourth largest reserves of natural gas, and with local gas processing plants running at only 30 percent capacity, Algeria would not have to make any further investments to comply with its part of the deal. The ships required to transport the gas across the Atlantic are already available. Brazil, in turn, would have to invest some US\$ 50-100



An Algerian steel-rolling plant

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million in the construction of a storage terminal in São Paulo. The disbursement, however, might prove worthwhile. Payment in services are bound to open the Algerian market to Brazilian construction companies that also face idle capacity problems at home.

By promoting a number of gas sales projects, Vice-Minister Aberkane believes he can increase South-South exchange. Cooperation with Third World countries, however, is not always easy to come by. There are problems having to do with the vested interests of foreign companies in underdeveloped country markets and, in some cases, with traces of colonialism and neocolonialism within the Third World itself. Public officials in underdeveloped countries seem to prefer to engage in trade with capitalistic powers, which often offer their products in attractive "packages" including personal financial profits and other advantages to government buyers.

Relations with France

With varying degrees of success, Algeria has in the past made several moves toward a closer relationship with Third World countries. But in the process it has often stumbled upon a strong competitor - France - which, according to Aberkane, "still employs neocolonialist methods in many areas of the world, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa." At present French-Algerian relations are reasonably undisturbed, despite a few instances of racial violence against the one million Algerian workers living in France.

In July 1962, after eight years of one of the bloodiest separatist wars ever fought in the world, France reluctantly accepted Algerian independence. Ever since, French-Algerian relations have had its ups and downs, depending on who held the presidential post at the Champs Elysées. Algerians have not lost their respect for Charles De Gaulle, who recognized Algerian independence. "His policy toward the Third World usually took Algiers into account," recalls Aberkane. Under Georges Pompidou, relations between the two countries deteriorated following nationalization of Algerian oil in 1971, and remained sour under Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, who ordered the bombing of Polisario

Front troops in Western Sahara.

The first and only visit paid by an Algerian of state to France took place in 1983, President Bendjedid went to Paris to congratulate Mitterrand's socialists on the occasion of political victory at the polls. Three years later, initial euphoria had given way to disappointment. Algerian officials became convinced that socialists members in the French Parliament did not think differently from their capitalistic colleagues.

The struggle goes on

President Bendjedid was also in the United States last year, and paid a visit to the USSR in May 1986. The Soviets have been supplying the bulk of Algerian military equipment, but Algerians would rather have an arms industry of their own, technology probably coming from a Third World country.

The United States is Algeria's number one trade partner and a major oil client. Ninety percent of airplanes flown by Air Algérie were made in the United States. Algeria also imports US cereals and raw materials.

For Aberkane, Algerian relations with the United States - which remained stagnant for seven years from 1967-74 - are based on mutual interests "and are shaped by Washington's political and military influence."

Last May's US attacks on Libya - which Algeria views as a sister nation that supported the Algerian liberation struggle two-and-a-half decades ago - were harshly criticized in Algiers. The Algerian government stands against all forms of terrorism, but so far remains unconvinced by US claims that the Libyan government promotes terrorism in the world.

The country extends unconditional support to the Palestinian cause. To justify the Algerian position, Aberkane quotes Franz Fanon: "Anyone who has been deprived of everything becomes absolutely free." And he adds: "No one can expect Palestine to respect international law after the historical injustice committed against them."

At present, Algeria heads an effort to reunify the Palestinian movement, and fully supports SWAPO in Namibia, the South African ANC (which keeps a representative in Algiers), and the Polisario Front in Western Sahara.

Non Aligned Movement

Diversity and Unity at the Harare Summit

The 101 member countries agreed on the approaches to solve the debt crisis and to fight the apartheid, but didn't reach an agreement on the site for the next summit conference.

“Aligned and spineless” was the heading of an editorial in the *New York Times* of Sept. 13, referring to the Non-Aligned Movement's eighth summit which had just ended in Harare, Zimbabwe.

“Too divided to pick its next meeting place, too aligned to condemn the Soviet occupation of a member state, too spineless even to expel a nation whose leader all but spat at the members,” the editorial continued.

The *New York Times* editorial represents the latest example of persistent Western cynicism towards the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) since its inception in Belgrade, Yugoslavia 25 years ago.

Despite the cynicism (and sometimes vitriolic attacks), the NAM has not only survived, but has grown in strength from an original 25 members to its present 101. And even more importantly, the NAM has, in the words of noted Sri Lankan political scientist Archie Singham, “transformed itself from a small protest movement into a major international social movement in world politics.”

Few would claim that the Harare summit, which gave the

chairmanship of the NAM to Zimbabwean Prime Minister Robert Mugabe, was all smooth sailing. Differences persisted particularly on the venues for the next summit scheduled for 1989, and for the next foreign ministers meeting, which normally takes

which dragged the meeting into an extra day, Cyprus was asked to host the next foreign ministers meeting in 1988. North Korea, which put in a strong bid, failed to win consensus.

The decision on the next summit was postponed until the Cyprus meeting because Nicaragua's candidacy was opposed by a number of countries. Two other contenders, Argentina and Indonesia, also failed to win consensus.

On two other issues, the summit found common ground: debt and apartheid.

Given the gravity of the debt crisis for the Third World, it was hardly surprising to hear speaker after speaker address this issue passionately. The developing



Gadhafi's and Khamenei's criticisms fell short of dividing the NAM summit

place the year prior to the summit.

But it would be naive to expect anything else from such a large and diverse body, whose members represent a multitude of political and economic systems or from a body in which all decisions are reached by consensus.

After a prolonged debate

world's combined external debt in 1985 stood at US\$ 950 billion, with African countries spending 32 percent of their export revenue on debt service and Latin America spending 44 percent.

In his opening address, Prime Minister Mugabe underlined the importance of the debt crisis



Mugabe's speech emphasized the foreign debt and apartheid issues

facing the Third World. "The truth is that the economies of the developing south are subsidizing those of the developed north," Mugabe said, pointing out that between 1980 and 1985 the price of commodities produced by developing countries declined by an average of 7.4 percent per annum.

Cuban President Fidel Castro reiterated his position that Third World countries should renege on their debt payments.

"External debt is unpayable and uncollectable. It is politically impossible, economically impossible and morally impossible for these countries," Castro told the summit in an impassioned and powerful speech.

Although President Castro's call for mass defaults was rejected, the final economic declaration warned that "unless urgent, just and durable solutions were found by the international community, for some of them those obligations would become beyond the capacities of their earnings."

The declaration called for measures to ease the debt burden, including the limitation of debt service payments to a suitable

proportion of export earnings, a course already taken by Peru.

Even before it started, this eighth summit was hailed as the "Southern African summit," a reference to the choice of Zimbabwe, which sits on the doorsteps of racist South Africa, as the site for the gathering.

Certainly, apartheid and the Pretoria regime's military aggression in the region were featured on the agenda, with speakers calling for action rather than mere moral condemnation.

Prime Minister Mugabe set the tone in his opening address when he declared: "What is needed now is action. Action to eradicate the evil system of apartheid. Action to resist Pretoria's aggression against the neighboring independent states, and action to stop South Africa's illegal occupation of Namibia."

Also attending the sessions was Oliver Tambo, president of the African National Congress (ANC), which has observer status in the NAM. At a press Conference during the summit, Tambo challenged Pretoria to accept an international commission which could be set up

by the NAM to investigate regime's state of emergency.

However, the ANC president remained cautious about how much the NAM could do on concrete terms to assist the South African people to eradicate apartheid.

Surprisingly, Tambo was given the opportunity to address the summit. Instead the text of his speech was circulated among delegates. Observers were baffled by this omission as the ANC is widely regarded as the central actor in the South African struggle.

However, to keep the focus on South Africa, the Zimbabwean government in the midst of the summit unexpectedly invited Harare Alan Boesak, the leader of the United Democratic Front, South Africa's largest anti-apartheid organization.

Boesak, as a representative of a non-member/observer organization, was unable to address the summit. But he addressed heads of state and delegations at a dinner hosted by Prime Minister Mugabe.

According to informed sources, Boesak made a deep impression with vivid accounts of police brutalities against ordinary township residents, including children.

The week-long outpouring of words on South Africa ended with a special "Southern African declaration" which urged NAM members to adopt a list of sanctions against South Africa similar to the package agreed upon by a group of Commonwealth countries in London in August.

However, the new NAM chairman Robert Mugabe at a closing press conference noted that there were no compul-

measures to force NAM members to implement the sanctions. "It is up to them to decide whether to apply them or not," Mugabe said. In concrete terms, perhaps the summit's most significant achievement was the establishment of a solidarity fund to help frontline states likely to be severely affected by sanctions and to provide possible South African retaliation against their dependent economies. All four continents represented at the summit committed themselves to regional fund-raising.

Mugabe himself felt confident that there was going to be "considerable assistance from the NAM countries in helping us fight apartheid."

The meeting also undertook to send a delegation of eight foreign ministers to four of South Africa's major trading partners - Britain, the United States, West Germany and Japan - to press for sanctions. But their only weapon will be the force of moral persuasion - a weapon already tried and found wanting against the stubbornness and selfishness of the likes of U.S. president Ronald Reagan and British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher.

Disarmament was another issue which elicited unanimity from the summit. The conference drafted a letter to be sent to President Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, urging them to reduce international tensions and end the arms race.

Urging the two leaders to hold a second summit, the letter expresses the hope that both parties will "enter into the negotiations with the determination to reach an accord on a permanent moratorium on nuclear tests."

"Never before has humanity been so near to self-destruction," the letter concluded.

Libyan leader Muammar Gadhafi's attack on the movement and on some member states received considerable coverage in the Western media - evidence to them, no doubt of the NAM's division and disunity.

However, after Gadhafi was gently chided by both Mugabe and the outgoing NAM chairman



Paul Weinberg



Oliver Tambo (left) and Alan Boesak (right) demanded full boycott of apartheid

Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, the summit passed a resolution condemning the U.S. bombing of Tripoli and Benghazi in April as "an act of state terrorism."

It called on the United States to pay compensation and to end naval maneuvers in the disputed Gulf of Sidra.

That resolution was one of 54 condemnations of the United States. The barrage raised the ire of the author of the aforementioned *New York Times* editorial, particularly as the Soviet Union was mentioned only once - for its presence in Afghanistan.

The *New York Times* hopes that the NAM will rethink "its reflective, self-injuring hostility

to America."

But as Prime Minister Mugabe correctly pointed out, the NAM is consistent in its condemnations and pointed to United States aggression against and interference in Nicaragua, Grenada and Angola.

U.S. opposition to the NAM began with the inception of the movement in 1961 when then-Secretary of State John Foster Dulles denounced it as

reflective, self-injuring hostility "immoral." U.S. opposition has remained consistent, with the latest maneuver being the cutting off of aid to Zimbabwe just days after Mugabe assumed the chairmanship of NAM, allegedly for critical remarks made by the Zimbabwean prime minister about the United States in his opening address.

But no such act against the movement or a member state is likely to destroy the NAM. As Rajiv Gandhi told a special session to commemorate the organization's 25th anniversary: "Non-Alignment symbolizes the courage to be ourselves and proclaims our faith in a world of equals." ●

Govin Reddy



SADCC member countries approved emergency measures in Luanda to cope with South African pressure

The Economic War

South Africa's racist policies at home and toward its neighbors have evolved from a mere political and military issue into an economic war whose outcome may change the entire strategic balance in Southern Africa

The prevailing sentiment among delegates to the summit meeting of the Southern Africa Development Coordination Committee (SADCC), held in Luanda in late August, was that never before in the history of the organization had unity become so necessary and so urgent. There was a firm conviction among the nine member countries—Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Lesotho, Malawi, Swaziland, Tanzania and Botswana—that they now face a struggle for economic survival, and that this

struggle will lead to a protracted and difficult war.

At first sight, the sole enemy is the racist South African regime. But for the heads of state attending the meeting the matter is more complicated. They feel that as long as the United States insists on its "do-nothing" attitude toward South Africa, Pretoria will feel sufficiently secure and strong to proceed with its policy of delaying Namibian independence, and use all means at its disposal to sabotage its neighbors' economic development plans. The

SADCC countries may be unable to put an end to South African military incursions in the territories, given their scarcity of troops and arms; but, on the other hand, South Africa is in a condition to invade and occupy neighboring countries, by virtue of its own domestic crisis and lack of international approval.

Thus, with the military force more or less limited to permanent friction and pressure tactics, the main weapon available to the apartheid regime is economic intimidation. It is by economic

means, and with the strong backing of the US and Britain, that South Africa plans to bring down anti-racist resistance in the nine SADCC member countries. This situation, which had been anticipated since the founding of the organization in 1980, has now become a dramatic reality as the South African government tries to transfer to its neighbors the impact of economic sanctions being imposed on it by a number of Western countries.

"Our governments' survival depends exclusively on ourselves," noted a Botswana diplomat in one of the halls a few meters from the Luanda Conference room. "International aid will never be sufficient to meet all of our needs. We are certain to suffer South African reprisals, and the only alternative we are left with is national mobilization on an unprecedented scale to cope with the enormous difficulties which certainly await us in the future."

War damages

Of the SADCC countries, Angola and Tanzania are the least economically dependent on South Africa. All other members of the regional organization are heavily or totally reliant on South African distribution routes, due to obsolete transportation and communication networks inherited from colonial times. This situation, coupled with South African military attacks, especially against Angola, has resulted in approximately US\$ 28 billion in damages to SADCC member countries in the past ten years. According to an SADCC study not yet fully released to the press, damages amounted to US\$ 11.36 billion in the 1980-84 period alone.

Costs inflicted on SADCC

member countries through a combination of economic pressure and military aggression on the part of South Africa in the past few years include:

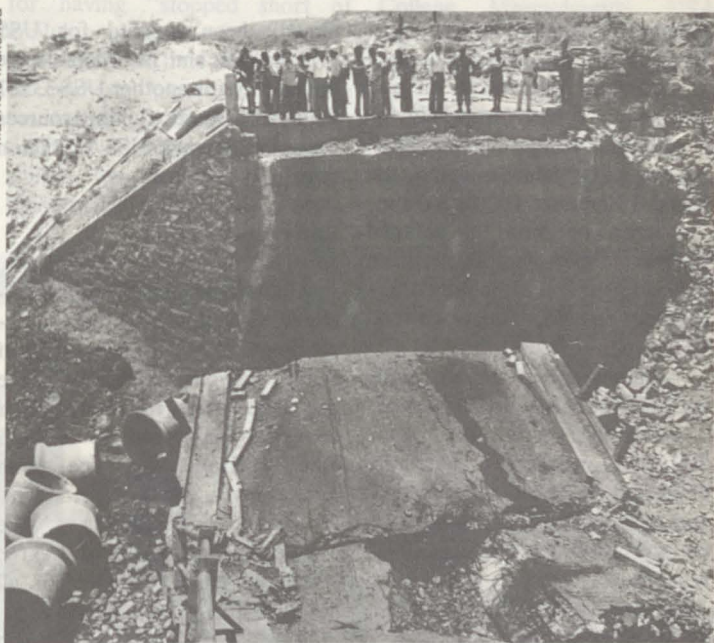
- increased military expenditures: US\$ 3.6 billion
- higher transportation and energy costs: US\$ 193 million
- refugee relief: US\$ 750 million
- losses from a decline in exports and tourism: US\$ 261 million
- losses from trade embargoes: US\$ 295 million
- losses from reduced economic growth: US\$ 2.27 billion
- contraband and sabotage: US\$ 215 million

past years. This figure does not include some US\$ 20 billion in damages suffered by Angola resulting from repeated South African raids since it became independent in 1975.

Sabotage alone has caused Angolans the equivalent of seven times the total value of the country's 1980 exports. It is estimated that a full one-sixth of the combined value of SADCC members' foreign trade was lost in 1980-86 as a result of South African aggression.

Yet, if the past six years have been extremely difficult for South Africa's neighbors, the near future seems even bleaker. As the white minority government feels

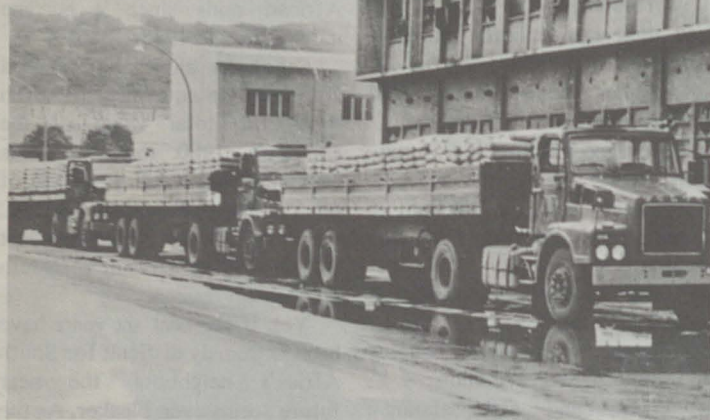
Mauricio Makeneda



South African attacks have cost Angola US\$ 20 billion to date

This adds up to approximately US\$ 7 billion, or the equivalent of the combined 1980 export revenues of the nine SADCC member countries. Additional damages in the amount of US\$ 4 billion have been caused by South African military invasions in the

threatened by world public opinion, it is even more willing to use its full economic weight against SADCC members as part of its cat-and-mouse game. In turn, committees of SADCC specialists have planned a number of emergency measures since the



Bottlenecks at shipping ports are the result of sabotage at railroads

Arusha Ministerial Conference in Tanzania in 1985, which include:

- creating alternative oil and fuel supply routes (especially for Botswana, Lesotho, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Malawi), using the ports of Beira and Dar es Salam;
- interconnecting the national electric energy transmission networks of Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Botswana and Swaziland;
- finding new foreign trade partners to replace South Africa;
- creating jobs for some 300,000 workers, currently employed in South African gold and coal mines, who are likely to be expelled in the event of racist retaliations.

SADCC technicians have not yet estimated the total cost of such economic measures. The price tag of current projects which will meet only immediate needs such as electric energy and transportation is approximately US\$ 5.36 billion, according to a report submitted by SADCC Secretary-General Simba Makoni, of Botswana, at the Luanda Conference. Financing has

already been secured for US\$ 1.77 billion, and negotiations are under way for another US\$ 335.31 million. However funding sources for approximately US\$ 3.2 billion remain to be found.

Emergency needs

Unofficially, SADCC technicians estimate that, depending on the intensity of South African reprisals in the next three years, the nine member countries may need up to US\$ 7.84 billion to cope with emergency situations. This represents something like one-fourth to one-third of the combined annual exports of all SADCC member countries.

But the concern of African leaders threatened by military and economic aggression on the part of South Africa goes beyond these huge sums of money. Very few of the ongoing projects are likely to produce results before two or three years. Until then, the population of the nine member countries—some 60 million people—will have to absorb the

impact of South African reprisals without the benefit of massive external aid. Relief operations in the event of a total blockade on the part of South Africa will require an air bridge three times as large as the one that was put into effect to help West Berlin during the 1948 European blockade. At the time, approximately 10 million tons of food and supplies were flown to Berlin over the period of 15 months—the equivalent of one third of the sugar goods going through South Africa for reshipment to SADC countries every year, according to the South African *Star*.

Southern Africa does not expect rich Western countries to offer the victims of a South African blockade the same level of help extended to Berlin years ago. Neither do they expect that the financial resources necessary to repair damage inflicted by a racist South Africa will be sufficient nor quickly released by credit institutions and governments in Western industrial nations.

There was virtually unanimous agreement in Luanda that the brunt of the sacrifice in the struggle against racism will have to be borne by South African neighbors themselves. Yet, an overwhelming majority of heads of states present at the SADCC meeting, especially those who have been more strongly pressured by South Africa, reaffirmed that the high economic and social cost resulting from racist retaliations will be offset by regional stability following the elimination of apartheid. While being overly optimistic, Zimbabwean Prime Minister Robert Mugabe compared the struggle against racism with "a toothache pulling the tooth, but sometimes being very painful, but eventually

goes back to normal as soon as the infection is removed."

A political trap

Since they are on the front line of the war against apartheid, SADCC members have been chided in the Western press for not being the first to apply sanctions against South Africa. The nine SADCC member countries have avoided falling into such a trap. The final declaration coming out of the Luanda Conference states that, "Although some governments may individually not be in a position to apply sanctions, the vulnerability of SADCC countries especially Lesotho, Swaziland and Botswana must not be used by Western nations as an excuse not to apply sanctions against South Africa's racist regime."

What SADCC member countries were saying to Europeans and Americans was that they are

willing to pay whatever price such sanctions may entail, and that tolerance of apartheid cannot be justified by claiming that reprisals are bound to cause further suffering to neighboring countries. At the Luanda meeting, the nine SADCC members pledged not to do anything that might undermine the effect of sanctions imposed against South Africa by the world community—meaning that they will deny South Africa access to goods and services eventually supplied to them by a country applying sanctions against the apartheid regime.

The Western press unfairly criticized the SADCC members for having "stopped short of applying sanctions of their own." Actually, at no time the possibility of applying joint sanctions was envisaged by African nations. To SADCC members, the responsibility for sanctions lies with Western industrial nations, whose

flourishing trade with South Africa provides the basis for the survival of apartheid.

South Africa also loses

But if the nine SADCC member countries will face growing difficulties in the event of South African retaliations, the Pretoria government also stands to lose, said SADCC specialists. Not the least among such losses is a US\$ 700 million surplus currently earned by South Africa in its trade relations with neighboring countries. A renowned specialist in African economic affairs, Professor Stephen Lewis, of Williams College, Massachusetts, USA, estimates that South Africa may lose approximately US\$ 1 billion per year in exports of manufactured products and services to Zambia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Lesotho, Botswana, Swaziland and Malawi.

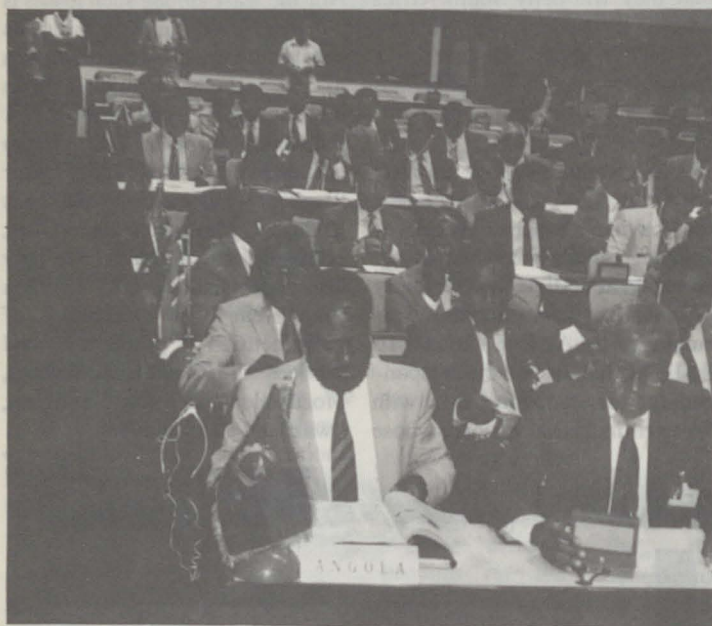
Keystone



South Africa stands to lose up to US\$ 1 billion as a result of its economic war against SADCC countries

The eventual repatriation of migrant black workers is likely to cause a 30 percent increase in labor costs at major South African gold and coal mines, at a time when the country's economy is going through one of the worst recessions of the past 40 years. In an article appearing in *Africa Notes* published by Georgetown University, Professor Lewis says that, although the South African

mission among neighboring countries and offsetting their efforts to apply pressure against apartheid. Nevertheless, a white Zimbabwean industrialist told the *African Economic Digest* magazine that "Breaking economic relations with South Africa is not only politically desirable, but it is also necessary for the survival of private enterprise in SADCC countries."



SADCC experts believe they will get US\$ 3.2 billion to make up for losses

press and some major Western newspapers persist in pointing out the dependence of SADCC members on South Africa, retaliation against the nine countries "may boomerang on the apartheid regime itself."

One of the worst blows suffered recently by South African business interests was the decision made by the Zimbabwean Industrial Federation, led by white entrepreneurs, in favor of severing economic ties with Pretoria. The federation was viewed by South Africa as an important agent in sowing divi-

The continued operation of the so-called Beira corridor has now become a matter of vital importance to both Prime Minister Robert Mugabe's government and the Zimbabwean industry. Extending from Mutare to the Mozambican port of Beira, the corridor is comprised of a railroad, an oil pipeline and a paved highway. They are favorite targets of armed groups in the pay of South Africa, who are determined to sabotage the distribution of Zimbabwean products. Until recently, South African ports had been the main

outlet for Zimbabwean production.

Zimbabwe spends approximately US\$ 7 million a month to deploy some 5,000 troops along the Beira Corridor in Mozambique. The two countries have formed a partnership to expand the port's capacity through investments of over 100 million.

Increased cooperation between Zimbabwe and Mozambique is one of the first results brought about by the new mood within SADCC, an organization that is becoming increasingly important for the economic survival of South Africa's neighbors.

In the past, regional cooperation promoted by SADCC was aimed mainly at reducing costs and rationalizing the communications system, retarded behind by colonial rule. But confrontation with the apartheid regime became increasingly radical, the SADCC evolved into an important political organization. The prospects of economic war have already triggered certain political changes in member countries, as witnessed by the attitude of Zimbabwean white entrepreneurs who have recently been adamantly opposed to a breach with South Africa.

Because of the current situation, SADCC member governments will be forced to demand further sacrifices from their respective peoples. Moderate sectors will sooner or later be confronted with a choice between collaboration with apartheid and full commitment against racism. As a result, moderate regimes such as those of Malawi and Swaziland will have to align themselves with Angolan Zimbabwe, Tanzania and Mozambique.

Burkina Faso

The Revolution Turns 3 Years Old

With a number of socioeconomic reforms, Captain Thomas Sankara's government tries to change the face of this former French colony which is now one of the world's poorest nations

August 4, 1986, marked the third anniversary of the young officers' uprising which ousted President Uedraogo, himself a military man, in the former Upper Volta in 1983. Uedraogo had adopted a policy of compromise with the conservative military and with French colonial interests; in turn, the young Army officers led by Captain Thomas Sankara were intent on introducing deep social reforms and put an end to corruption, political dependence and underdevelopment.

Early last April, at the First Meeting of the Revolutionary Defense Committees (RDCs) held in Ouagadougou, the revolutionary leaders themselves took stock of the results achieved in the past three years. The meeting was an effort to consolidate and coordinate revolutionary action within the RDCs, and to remove "the bad apples," as the now President Sankara put it. With a record of "good services" rendered to the August 4 Revolution during implementation of most social changes introduced to date, the RDCs were expected by many to review and reinforce their own by-laws.

None of this happened, however, and the RDCs continue to have no decision-making

power. They merely follow the guidelines established by the government, since the National Revolutionary Council (NRC), the highest authority in the revolutionary process, has proved unwilling to share its powers with the lower echelons.

Agricultural production

In the area of economic policy, there seems to be some difficulty in reaching medium-term decisions. The delay in preparing the 1986-1990 five-year plan seems to be indicative of problems at the top. Basic issues remain to be resolved, such as

what material means should be provided to state-owned agricultural and agribusiness complexes so that these may effectively contribute to food self-sufficiency.

Another unsettled point has to do with the form of organization of small farmers. Should the traditional "village associations" (*groupements villageois*) be maintained, or would it be preferable to institute farmer cooperatives?

Problems seem to exist also with regard to other basic agricultural incentives such as the price system - especially where it relates with prices being practiced in neighboring countries - and marketing outlets. On the occasion of the 1985 harvest, an attempt to determine producer and consumer prices at the Provincial Assembly level failed because of the large discrepancies this created between regional prices. Also still to be solved are such matters as the need to improve the distribution of



Revolutionary reforms introduced by Captain Sankara (left) are viewed with suspicion by neighbor leaders such as Moussa Traoré (right), of Mali

agricultural products throughout the nation. In fact, the State-controlled grain marketing company (OFNACER) has proved unable to place more than one-fifth of the country's total production. Most transactions are carried out at the initiative of private businessmen. Farmer associations, which have had some experience in distribution, could therefore make a valuable contribution in this area.

Foreign aid is another major consideration if food self-reliance is to be achieved. A number of measures were recently proposed to replace grains imported from outside of the continent by grain surpluses purchased from neighbor countries - a move that may prove to be more delicate than it seems, both at the domestic and foreign levels.

Notwithstanding, one of the goals established from the outset by the new regime is beginning to materialize, and the country's agricultural survival may depend to a large extent on its success. The land reform law, announced in 1984 and published in 1985, is now being enforced experimentally. The governmental decree, which includes 666 articles and should meet some long-felt needs, tackles a broad range of issues from water supply, forestation, pastures, mining activities, etc., to a new

distribution of the territory and the use of urban and rural lands.

The law also deals with changes resulting from the elimination of full land ownership rights, which have been replaced by a mere concession for use of the available land. Here too full authority has been assigned to the RDCs and the government, while the role played by the population in managing the local lands and forests is kept at a minimum.

What really is at stake in this type of land reform is the government's ability to change local man's relationship with his environment in the next ten years. With the population growing faster than agricultural production, and with overworked lands and overcrowded areas, the challenge is to move away from extensive agriculture and inefficient cattle-growing and introduce intensive, associated agricultural and cattle-raising activities in which each producer will contribute with his own efforts and ingenuity. The new land reform sets no land limits or tributes; each farmer can use his own piece of land without paying rent to anyone.

An educational reform is also under way. A move in this direction was announced last February by President Sankara, who pointed out the high annual costs per student of the current

educational system: F 18,000 for primary school, 160,000 for secondary school and 700,000 at universities. In contrast, the average peasant earns no more than F CFA 61 per year.

The educational system reform is seen as selective, individualistic, competitive, culturally alienating, in addition to failing to prepare students for the labor market or for prevailing social conditions. Only 22 percent of all children attend school. Yet rural migration, unemployment and juvenile delinquency have reached alarming levels in the past years.

Structural reforms are being introduced in other sectors such as public administration, civil law. The reforms aim at efficiency, speed and lower cost while attempting to establish closer links with the population.

In particular, the so-called Revolutionary People's Committees (RPCs) have been the trademark of the new regime since their inception in 1984. Conflicts that had been pending for years in conventional law courts have been settled by the RPCs, which ensure equality and social justice in addition to simplifying legal procedures. Jury members are common citizens selected by

Burkina in figures

Area: 274,000 square kilometers.

Population: 6,610,000.

Population Density: 24.1 people/sq.km.

Capital: Ouagadougou.

Languages: Mossi and French.

Economy: GNP - US\$ 1.26 billion; income per capita - US\$ 240; 81 percent of the population lives off agriculture; exports -

cotton, oilseeds, cattle and rubber; foreign debt - US\$ 330 million (1982).

History: A French colony since the nineteenth century, the country became independent in August 1960. In 1983, the Upper Volta colonial designation was dropped and the country adopted the name of the People's Democratic Republic of Burkina Faso.

RDCs, under the guidance of a career magistrate. Lawyers are no longer allowed in the new courts, and the accused themselves must speak in their own defense. Independent of other national powers, especially the National Revolutionary Council, these courts have ruled on proceedings involving RDC members and government officials accused of irregular behavior, as well as former public authorities and common criminals.

Contributing to the popularity of the RPCs is their pursuit of justice and common sense, as well as their conservative, unbiased rulings on political frauds and crimes against society.

The key to popularity of the current government, however, will be success on the economic plane. In fact, its austerity policy and its curtailment of public expenditures are somewhat reminiscent of IMF prescriptions



Revolutionary People's Courts are the trademark of the new regime

— although this may be so only to avoid having to resort to the IMF.

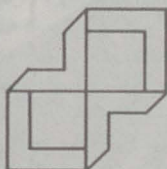
From a political viewpoint, the option is between isolation of power and a renewed appeal to popular support, now that the ardor of the early days has cooled down. Indicative of the end of Sankara's "state of grace" is a sign put up in the Ouagadougou public market: "I have nothing to fear, the NRC knows what my problems are." What these problems boil down to is how to

ensure economic growth and improve the living standards of the population.

The end of the New Republic's state of grace does not mean that its potential has been exhausted. In the past three years, the country has witnessed an unprecedented struggle against underdevelopment and desertification, though much remains to be done. ●

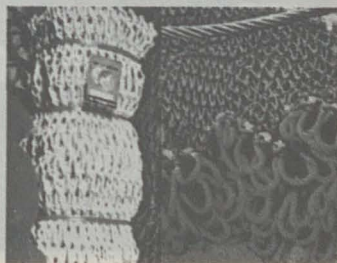
Mota Lopes

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General Pinochet and National Insecurity

After thirteen years of oppression and rigid control of the media, the Pinochet regime has lost all credibility and Chileans now live amid a climate of conjecture and insecurity

Chile lived through an incredible series of events in the 30-day period ending September 7. First the country's security forces claimed to have found an enormous amount of clandestine weapons and ammunition "belonging to subversive groups." Then, during a visit of the head of the U.S. South Command in Panama, a Chilean army colonel was kidnapped. Over 20 Chilean Army officers were publicly and formally accused of the torture and murder of political prisoners in the early years of the Pinochet regime. And the dictator himself miraculously escaped a vicious assault on his life carried out by one of the country's underground organizations.

Although violence is becoming increasingly commonplace, this most recent chain of events was nevertheless remarkable. For one thing, too many questions remained unanswered. How many of the weapons actually belonged to Chilean resistance fighters, and how many had been planted by the police in order to justify the harsh measures that were to follow? How had the security officers learned about the alleged arsenals? Did Pinochet's men locate them by themselves or had they been tipped off by US agents? For

what reason was an Army colonel kidnapped as a top US officer was visiting the country? And who would dare to fire a bazooka at the aging dictator?

Despite the government's subsequent gush of propaganda in the media, a desperate Chilean Secretary-General Francisco Javier Quadra had to admit that most Chileans were skeptical about official versions of the events. To begin with, the enormous amounts of M-16 automatic rifles, home-made bombs, rocket launchers, bazookas and plastic explosives allegedly seized by the police seemed absolutely unbelievable.

The country's entire official information apparatus was mobilized to convince the people—and the world—that Chile was at war. Cameramen were dispatched in specially chartered planes to film Soviet ships that were supposedly "on maneuvers" in Chilean waters. The ships turned out to belong to a fishing fleet operating in international waters, 350 miles off the Chilean coast.

Fear and perplexity

In addition to the credibility crisis, the regime went through several hours of general perplexity and confusion following



The vicious assault on Pinochet surprised the Chilean secret service

the attempted assassination. Having emerged physically unscathed from the attack on him staged by the Manuel Rodríguez Patriotic Front (FPMR), Pinochet quickly sought refuge in his hideout in the mountains. According to information leaked subsequently, the president was in a state of stupor and fear. No one around him had any idea of who had been responsible for the assault, which might well have been the work of any of the country's political factions. The general was understandably shaken by the fact that he would have been killed if the guerrilla who aimed the bazooka at him had not been so close to his

the National Television station to ask why they were not reporting the assault on the president. The fact was that, for a full hour, Chilean officials were uncertain about who was really at the head of the government.

After the initial shock, having been attended by his personal doctor, a nervous and tired "Supreme Commander" emerged from his bedroom to tell his entourage about the ordeal he had been through. The following day, however, in full regalia and spirited by the state of siege he had just decreed, an apocalyptic, menacing Pinochet appeared on TV. "Gentlemen," he said, "we are a

commanders. Yet, despite a show of solidarity, a detail not go unnoticed by observers: none of the members of the government junta explicitly condemned the attempted assassination.

It took an additional 24 hours for other government members to be seen meeting with Pinochet. The official TV turned off its microphones so that viewers could not hear the proceedings but a frowning Pinochet was shown shaking and admonishing forefinger at the military junta. Naturally this only added to the confusion, and Chileans asked themselves what on earth was really going on in the country.

Forty-eight hours after the attack on his life, Pinochet's supporters organized another of those public demonstrations which he enjoys so much. For several hours, thousands of Chileans brought from various Santiago neighborhoods, as well as from the north and south of the country, were paraded before the presidential palace. The general and his wife Lucia, who heads the country's welfare organizations and associations, mothers, were applauded and shouts of "Give 'em hell, President."

Pinochet cannot be accused of being kind to his opponents. For he prefers to crush them whenever one is looking. Through the Ministry of the Interior, he has made the country know he does not approve of the series of murders which have taken place since the death of Journalist José Carrasco Tapia the day following the assault on his own life. But the MIR and other more left-leaning opposition groups have no doubt that the culprit in the murder of the international editor of *And*



Reuter

General Pinochet was in a state of stupor and fear after the attack

armored car. The would-be assassin fired at Pinochet from a distance of only four meters, while the projectile does not explode before reaching a distance of twelve meters.

The state of perplexity was particularly evident at the government's own communications center. University TV channels were the first to broadcast the news, though they themselves were none too well informed. Several Army officers telephoned

country at war. I have been saying this for a long time, but people refuse to believe me. We are at war against Marxism-Leninism and the Soviet Union. This is a war between chaos and democracy."

Following this solemn preamble, TV viewers were treated to a parade of top military officers appearing in order of importance—first the Army generals, then the admirals, next the brigadeers, and finally the police

magazine is none other than Pinochet himself.

in search of a solution

Surprisingly, the assault on the dictator occurred amid negotiations which had led to a proposal for a Chilean return to democratic rule. Eugenio Ortega, son-in-law of the late President Eduardo Frei, as well as Moderate Socialist Party leader Jorge Molina and right-wing National Party President Pedro Torrea, had all played a major role in the negotiation process.

What ensued was an exhibition of sheer political surrealism. On September 9, most Chilean newspapers, including *El Mercurio*, carried full front-page color photos of Pinochet in civilian clothes, and invited their readers to join the demonstration at the palace. On the inside pages were news on the democratization process as represented by the proposed National Accord to a return to Democracy. Nevertheless, two days later both the agreement (supported by the church) and the Democratic Alliance (led by the Christian Democrats) were violently attacked by Pinochet, who vented his fury at his opponents by calling them "degenerate politicians."

Faced with such a bewildering succession of events, even the average Chilean citizen can feel there is more in the air than is revealed by the official versions. The story is being concocted behind his back, a story that can have many different endings. It is true that the Popular Movement (MP) has suffered a serious blow, and that there is hardly room any more for opposition in Chile. It is also true that the



Violent police repression began immediately after the assassination attempt

dictator's initial reprisals were directed against magazines and newspapers that sided with the democratic opposition. In addition, three priests working in the *poblaciones* (slums) were expelled from the country, while the death toll mounted. But one question persisted: how long will Pinochet be able to hold down the top of a pressure cooker that is about to explode?

With discussions on the foreign debt scheduled for mid-October with World Bank and IMF officials, a visit of Pope John Paul II scheduled to take place sometime in the next seven months, and growing pressure from the European Economic Community and the United States for a return to democratic rule in Santiago, the Chilean regime cannot possibly insist on the state of siege and the "war against the Soviets" as

long-term policies. Sooner or later, Pinochet and his junta will have to face reality—and when they do, they will find a population eagerly organizing to recover its full civil rights.

Evidence of this were two innocent incidents in August and September which reminded Chileans of what it used to be like to live under a democratic government—the broadcast of a recent videotaped interview with former Chilean President Alessandri on the occasion of his death at the age of 90, and a special edition of *APSI* magazine carrying 100 photographs taken during the Salvador Allende regime. To recall such times amid paranoiac speeches, kidnappings, torture and murders helped to give Chileans an idea of how sick their country is under Pinochet.

Fernando Reyes Matta

Chile

Opposition: the Struggle for Unity



Marcos Ramos

For Germán Correa, Chilean opposition agrees on three basic points

Germán Correa, president of the left-leaning Chilean Popular Democratic Movement (MDP), was one of the first political leaders to be arrested following the Pinochet assassination attempt. A few days before his arrest, Correa made a brief visit to Brazil, where he commented on his country's political situation and the prospects for the opposition struggle in Chile during an interview with *third world* magazine.

At the time, Pinochet had already announced the discovery of arms caches in northern Chile and launched his propaganda campaign against "domestic subversion" and "the Soviet threat."

Although subsequent events have altered somewhat the Chilean political scene, we offer below some of the most significant excerpts of Germán Correa's declarations.

The Chilean opposition and mass movement have undoubtedly made some progress in 1986. What do you think the prospects are for the future?

The struggle against the Pinochet dictatorship has been a mass movement since 1983. Until then we had gone through a long and difficult process of rebuilding our political parties and social organizations.

The dictatorship's response to the first national strike in October 1984 was to call the state of siege. Repression was directed mainly

against the MDP. Over 50 of our leading members were thrown in jail and we had to go underground for five months. In March 1985, when three comrades of the Communist Party were murdered.

That event represented a watershed in our struggle. From then on, the strength and frequency of the mass movement increased, forcing the dictatorship to suspend the state of siege in 1985.

The Civilian Assembly (AC), a coalition of 18 of the country's leading mass-based groups organized in 1986. With more than 3.5 million members, the AC represented the consolidation of a very broad social alliance including the organized working classes, the urban poor, the unemployed, as well as the middle class, businessmen, transport workers and industrialists. They were the forces that joined together to call the general strike on July 2 and 3.

Since the founding of the AC, the 24 opposition parties have met periodically to find ways to work with the mass movement and demand democracy now.

What might be the alternative political solution to the present crisis?

When the AC established its economic, political and social program—the so-called *Chilean Demands*—it made it clear that an agreement was needed to put an immediate end to the crisis. At the request of the AC, the dictatorship drafted a proposal including three basic points: first, Pinochet's resignation; second, the installation of a transitional government, headed by

individual who would represent the interests of the people to prepare for the return to democratic rule; and third, the holding of general elections within the next six months.

The country's major social groups approved the MDP proposal. The resulting political promotion led the Democratic Alliance (AD)—an organization congregating center and right-wing parties—to present a proposal of its own for the resolution of the crisis. Their proposal turned out to be basically the same as that of the MDP. It can thus be said that the entire Chilean opposition agrees with the basic points for the resolution of the crisis.

Could you elaborate on the form of this transitional government?

It would be democratic, provisional and represent a wide national consensus, so as to lay the foundation for a real democracy in Chile.

Renewed repression

How did the dictatorship react to this new harmony within the opposition?

The government has made the use of violence and repression a permanent practice. The only thing that was new was the use of all kinds of subterfuges to divide the opposition, among other things by manipulating the debate on the forms of struggle and promoting discussions about the right to armed resistance.

The latest innovation was a plan put together by the dictatorship and the CIA: the announced discovery of clandestine weapons in the north of the country, supposedly belonging to the

Manuel Rodríguez Patriotic Front (FPMR). An attempt was also made to involve the MDP in the affair.

By making so much noise about the alleged arsenals, don't you think Pinochet was also trying to get a message across to the Armed Forces?

Yes. With the disclosure of this apparent subversive threat,



Reuter

Chileans are fed up with dictatorship

Pinochet intended to reunite the armed forces, especially the upper echelons of the Army, Navy and Air Force. By telling his soldiers that the country is "at war," he apparently hopes to remain in power forever. In addition, he has taken other measures, such as replacing most mayors in the country by men in his personal confidence, men who will support his efforts to remain in office. In fact, he has already begun his 1989 electoral campaign by contracting advertising pro-

fessionals to build his image as a "candidate".

Cordial relations with the IMF

And on the economic plane?

The Pinochet regime has been trying to stay on good terms with the international banks. At an unbearable cost to the Chilean people, it has managed to keep the economy under tight control. Trade balance surpluses have enabled the country to continue to pay interest on its foreign debt. Pinochet is determined to be a good boy vis-à-vis the IMF and commercial banks.

At present, he is keenly interested in restoring his prestige with the entrepreneurial class. Chilean businessmen know that the end of the Pinochet era is near, and they have tried to keep at a distance from the government. This is especially true now with the release in Chile of a report signed by high US officials explicitly demanding a return to democracy.

What was Pinochet's reaction to that report?

He had probably been aware of the US position for some time, and he has been trying to hold on to whatever power is left to him. On the other hand, center and right-wing Chilean conservatives, as well as the Church itself—and even some segments within the US government—fear that mounting popular resistance may render a controlled solution unfeasible. Washington has thus put increased pressure on the Chilean armed forces and on the more sympathetic political factions, in an attempt to avoid the radicalization of Chilean opposition.

Alejandro Tumayán

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Middle East/Lebanon



Car-bombings have undermined President Gemayel's position in Lebanon

A Light at the End of the Tunnel

In a welcome change of mind, President Amim Gemayel is now willing to consider a division of political power in Lebanon, sparking new hope for a truce in the long and merciless civil war

In December 1985, Lebanese President Amin Gemayel rejected the Damascus Agreement signed by major Muslim and Christian militias following difficult negotiations conducted by the Syrian government. Eight months later, he reconsidered his position. Last August, in a speech at the Fyadieh Academy in Beirut, on the occasion of Army Day celebrations, Gemayel urged Parliament to examine a new formula for dividing power between Christians and Muslims.

Diplomats in the Middle East

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have speculated about Gemayel's change of mind. Two factors may have contributed to his newfound flexibility. First, the new outburst of violence, with car-bombings taking a toll of 200 dead and over 600 wounded in only two weeks in late July and early August. Second, his gradual loss of prestige and support among the military.

The Lebanese Cabinet, made up of members of all political currents and religious communities — supposedly to promote "national unity"— has

failed to meet since January, immobilized as it is by frequent clashes between its own warring groups. The military forces were still loyal to Gemayel (especially the Kataeb militia, the Phalanx Party), have lost much of their power following the victory confrontation between Bortol Hobeika and Samir Geagea. After the Damascus Agreement late last year.

At that time, Hobeika, a hard-line Maronite leader, was indicted by the Israeli commission as one of the

the Sabra and Chatila massacres perpetrated under the cover of the Israeli Army—signed the Damascus agreement with the Shi'ites of the Amal militia and the Druse forces led by Walid Jumblatt. For the first time, an agreement was reached with the recurrence of Christian armed forces over a new form of power-sharing by Maronites and Muslims. Under the agreement, a Maronite president was to share power with a council made up of members of all local communities. Parliamentary seats were also distributed in favor of the Muslims, who are an overwhelming majority in Lebanon. Initially, to ensure compliance with the agreement and make peace possible, the militias were to be mobilized and their weapons turned over to the government within one year. After this initial phase, the country's constitution could be altered to abolish religion-based power-sharing in Lebanon, a system instituted when Lebanon won its independence from France in 1943 and which later led to civil war.

Maronites disagree

When Hobeika submitted the terms of the Damascus agreement to his supporters, the ensuing debate eventually led to armed conflict. "Have we taken up arms in the past eleven years," asked Maronites, "only to turn over power to the Muslims now?" Indeed, that was exactly what they had tried to avoid by resorting to armed struggle. Although this oversimplified reasoning ignored the lessons of a decade of wars, it led to Hobeika's dismissal from the command of the Lebanese Forces, the main Maronite militias are excluded. At a cost of 400 casualties,



President Amin Gemayel

according to Hobeika-linked sources, Geagea replaced him in command and rejected the agreement.

Through his rejection of the pact, Geagea provided President Gemayel with the support he lacked. Although he had gone to Damascus immediately after negotiations between the three dominant Lebanese military forces—Maronites, Druses and Shi'ites—Gemayel refused to ratify the agreement which, without his approval, never became official and was never implemented. This attitude led to the President's political isolation, with Muslim leaders demanding his resignation, since in their opinion he was undermining the peace negotiations.

Gemayel's arguments were not of a political, but of a legal nature. He claimed that a new form of power-sharing required ample discussion by Lebanese legal institutions. In political circles, however, his attitude was seen as a clever way of boycotting the agreement. He could hardly demand such subtle discussion from institutions that did not even manage to agree on routine matters. The general consensus, therefore, was that the president was only buying time.

A multitude of conflicts

Lebanese dissidence and armed conflicts are not restricted to Christian sectors. The dynamics of war and the survival of the fittest also prevail on the Muslim side. This year, however, the sticking point in the struggle between Muslim factions was not the divergence of opinions as to the means of attaining peace in Lebanon, as was the case with the Maronites. The most important clashes between Muslim groups were those that took place in May and June, labeled the "camps war" by the Western press. On one side were the Druse militias and the Amal Shi'ites—on the other, the Palestinians of Beirut's refugee camps (Sabra, Chatila and Burj el-Barajne), who were loyal to Yasser Arafat. The result is well known: hundreds died in one of the worst massacres in modern history.

The invasion of the Lebanese capital by Israeli troops in 1982 and the ensuing siege of Beirut disrupted the country's political structures and led to the withdrawal of PLO combatants. However, in the subsequent four years, for security reasons, armed groups were reorganized among the young detainees in refugee camps who remained loyal to Arafat. Reports appearing in the West but not confirmed by Palestinians claimed that some of the PLO combatants who had left Beirut in 1982 later returned.

Syria's breach with the PLO's Al Fatah led by Arafat was the determinant factor in the "camps war." Arab diplomats, some of which have tried to reconcile the many factions in Lebanon, interpreted this war as an extreme example of the struggle for military supremacy as a way

of gaining political power.

Muslims are convinced that sooner or later President Gemayel will be forced to yield and negotiate. Otherwise, he may have to resign, and in this case Muslims will negotiate from a stronger position. In the battle for supremacy, groups with different tactical strategies confront each other, which explains not only the tragic episode of the "camps war" but also the skirmishes that have taken place between Shi'ites and other predominantly Sunni or secular Muslim groups, such as the Communist Party. The latter suffered several terrorist attacks on the part of fundamentalists, especially the Hizballah (Party of God) last February.

Foreign forces

Since the failure in January of the peace proposal included in the Damascus agreement, the struggle for power between Lebanese factions has gone through a succession of more and less violent periods.

On the Muslim side, all groups have remained active, although each has its own tactics. The most radical are the Shi'ites of the Hizballah group and the Islamic Jihad (Holy War) movement, who identify more readily with Iranian fundamentalist tenets than the Amal group. Both have claimed responsibility for countless acts of terrorism, but their action is always cloaked in mystery, leading many Western newsmen to speculate that they are actually several different groups acting under the same name. The Amal has for months held onto French and American hostages whom they captured on various occasions and whom several Western governments as well as

Syrian officials have been trying to set free.

Amal leader Nabih Berri is the Minister of South Lebanon Affairs (Shi'ites being the majority in South Lebanon), as well as the country's Minister of Justice. The major Amal military forces are deployed in Tyre and Sidon in the south, on the dividing line drawn by Israel between the Israeli-occupied "security zone" and the areas under Lebanese control. The United Nations keeps roughly 7,000 troops along this frail dividing line.

On August 12, French troops of the UN peacekeeping forces clashed briefly with Shi'ite militias. Before both sides stopped shooting, three Shi'ites lay dead and 17 French soldiers were wounded. This was the first incident of its kind since Israeli troops retreated to their

England to call back their troops from Lebanon in late 1983.

With the help of Druse Amal militiamen also control predominantly Western Beirut, having gradually expelled other armed groups.

Linked to the Progressive Socialist Party founded by Kamal Jumblatt (who was killed during an attack in the early years of the civil war) the Druse militias dominate the mountains and keep headquarters in the town of Tyre. The only spot in the entire area not controlled by them is Gemayel's presidential palace and the area surrounding Souk el Garb, eleven kilometers from Beirut. The Lebanese forces installed there are surrounded by Walid Jumblatt's troops, who can thus



Together with Amal, the Druse Muslims control western Beirut

present positions. Previous clashes included bomb attacks against the French general headquarters in Beirut—for which the Shi'ites claimed responsibility—and against US Marines barracks, which led the US, France and

formidable pressure on Gemayel. Druse militias and Shi'ites present the most important perhaps decisive Muslim forces, and it was in that context that they were invited to Damascus to sign the agreement with the Maronites.

The Christian forces

Maronite Christians constitute the majority in the non-Muslim area, although there are also followers of the Greek orthodox rite. In political terms, Maronites tended initially to side with French colonialism. After independence, their sympathies went to the Western powers. They stand for Lebanese alignment with the US strategy for the Middle East, having sided with Israel in all recent conflicts.

On the Maronite side, power was divided among different clans before the civil war—a group led by Pierre Gemayel, founder of the far-rightist Phalanx Party; another group led by Suleiman Franjeh, a former Lebanese president; and a

third group headed by Camille Chamoun, also a former president and founder of the Liberal Party.

During the civil war, the harder line adopted by the Kataeb militias predominated. Controlled by the Gemayel family, these militias were long under the command of Bachir Gemayel, Amin's brother, who was assassinated soon after being assigned to the presidency by the Israeli troops. The Sabra and Chatila massacres occurred shortly afterwards.

Phalanx members are considered by Middle Eastern politicians as the most radical expression of the Lebanese right wing. They are believed to have physically eliminated members of the Franjeh and Chamoun fam-

ilies as a way of consolidating their military power, first over the Maronite community and later over the entire country with the help of Israel. At present, the Kataeb militias and the Lebanese Armed Forces provide the basis of support for the Amin Gemayel regime.

The wear and tear of nearly twelve years of war has also affected the Maronite militias. However, their main problems at present are the internal disputes between those who stand for a more intransigent position, for whom a new division of power is unacceptable, and those who feel that the time has arrived to negotiate. Though living in exile, Hobeika still has considerable support inside Lebanon.

In mid-August, Maronite

Syria's goal: to match Israel in Lebanon

At present, Syria keeps 25,000 troops in Lebanon and controls most of the northern and eastern parts of the country, in addition to keeping a strong presence in Beirut. Since it lost the Golan region to Israel in 1967, Damascus has tried to recover it, either through negotiations or by the force of arms. In addition to the role it plays as a mediator in the Lebanese conflict, Syria sees its military position in Lebanon and the presence of UN peacekeeping forces as an important means of deterring Israel.

The friendship treaty between Syria and the Soviet Union includes a clause on military support. In a speech delivered last May, Soviet Prime Minister Mikhail Gorbachev insisted that the USSR will aid Syria in the event of an attack—an allusion to the US air strikes against Libya, a country with which it has good diplomatic ties but no military treaty. "Any at-

tack against Syria or PLO bases will have unpredictable consequences," said the Soviet leader.*

Not surprisingly, the United States has tried to avoid a direct confrontation with Syria. Yet, the US uses Israel to threaten Syria and to enforce its policy in the area.

During its invasion of Lebanon, Israel destroyed 85 Syrian fighters and a score of SAM-5 missiles batteries in the Bekaa Valley. This evident show of superiority led the Soviets to deliver a more modern version of supersonic fighter and longer-range SS-21 missiles, in addition to replacing the SAM-5's that had been destroyed on the ground. SS-21 missiles can be equipped with nuclear warheads, but the Soviets have refrained from delivering them to Syria.

The lessons learned during the 1982 Lebanese war have since led Syria to review its defense capabilities and to try to match Israel's strategic power in Lebanon. Part of this process is the deployment of new defensive weapons in the Bekaa Valley in Lebanon.

* The Soviet Union has tried to improve relations between Arafat and Syrian President Hafez Assad by actively attempting to promote a dialogue between the two leaders.



Muslim pressure may accelerate a new division of power in Lebanon

leader Fuad Abu Nader, President Gemayel's nephew, was wounded at an ambush as he left a Phalanx summit meeting which had been called to put an end to clashes between the two factions. After a truce beginning in January, Maronite forces both in favor of and against the agreements had resumed fighting.

Future prospects

President Gemayel's proposal to call a parliamentary session to review a new form of power-sharing is the first concrete move in the direction of resuming peace negotiations. Peace is no longer an exclusively political problem or a military necessity: the Lebanese economy itself is giving signs of exhaustion and calls for drastic action.

The Lebanese Central Bank has declared war on speculators who have profited from lack of confidence in the Lebanese pound. Speculation has caused the

national currency to drop to 28 pounds to the dollar, an all-time low in the twelve years of war.

On the other hand, the population reacted to the continued loss of purchasing power by organizing "committees against the cost of living" and by calling a general strike in 1985. Citizens in the largest Muslim cities joined the movement late last year and again this year, with the participation of labor unions. The population also reacted when Minister of Finance Camille Chamoun suddenly decided to increase fuel prices by eliminating government subsidies. Organizers of the movement, all of whom belong to the Muslim community, urged Christians to join the struggle, because "hunger knows no religious barriers". Nevertheless, no successful movement has been organized in the areas controlled by the militias of the Lebanese Forces, due to tight military control.

At the head of a government which he cannot make to work,

surrounded by hostile military forces, and faced with popular discontent over a serious economic crisis and a protracted war, President Gemayel last asked Syrian authorities to participate more actively in the security of the Lebanese capital, thus taking a step to resume negotiations around some form of power sharing. It is believed in Beirut that such measures will give the president additional room to maneuver, by minimizing pressures on the part of the Muslim community leaders who have been asking him to step down and thus averting a defeat which often seems imminent.

In spite of everything, the Damascus Agreement still seems to be the best way to avoid definitive fragmentation of Lebanon. Once they have overcome their major domestic problems, the Lebanese may come back to considering an even greater challenge: the Israeli presence in the country's south.

Beatriz Bis



Xanana Gusmão (center) says his guerrillas control the countryside and keep the cities under siege

An Interview with the Fretilin Leader

East Timor Independence Front (FRETILIN) leader and Revolutionary Council president Xanana Gusmão talks about the current situation in this former Portuguese colony which has been under Indonesian occupation since 1975.

...ast November, *third world* magazine submitted a list of questions to East Timor Independence Front (FRETILIN) Commander-in-Chief Xanana Gusmão, who was to answer them over the radio installed in the guerrilla-occupied territory. However, for technical reasons we were unable to receive the transmission. Later Gusmão sent in his answers in written form, using a school

notebook bearing his signature at the bottom of each page. In addition to the questions raised by us, Gusmão answered others that had been put to him by European newsmen. Following is a transcription of most of the material received. Only a few outdated items have been omitted.

Is all of East Timor under Indonesian control?

— Not at all. At no time over

the past ten years of war did Indonesia gain control of all of our territory. Otherwise, our armed resistance would no longer exist.

What areas have been liberated by FRETILIN?

— In this guerrilla war, given the smallness of our territory, "liberated" areas are those we live in. In general, it may be said that, in every one of our villages

and towns, the Indonesians have demarcated a zone where the population is cooped up within a radius of 500 to 700 meters. In these areas, people are allowed to circulate, keep their vegetable gardens, etc. Outside these limits, there is a one-kilometer-wide "gray" zone which may be viewed as a transition area between the Indonesian-occupied land and our lands. This gray zone is daily patrolled by the enemy, though no regular or normal activities ever occur there. Beyond lies all of the extensive territory controlled by FALINTIL (the East Timor National Liberation Armed Forces).

How would you describe the relationship between guerrilla troops and the population in the



FRETILIN guerrilla fighters are prepared for a prolonged war

liberated territory?

— We share the same blood, thoughts, desires and aspirations, the same apprehensions and hopes. This is true not only of those areas where military action takes place, but also where our influence is only political.

Do you believe you can militarily defeat the Indonesian

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invader, or will East Timor's independence have to wait for a major political change in Djakarta?

— FRETILIN has never nurtured any false hopes of a military victory over Indonesian occupation troops, but on the other hand the latter will have a hard time trying to eliminate us. I think we should attempt to bring about a change in Djakarta's attitude. It won't be easy, but all efforts should be made in this direction. This is because the Indonesian attitude is made possible only by the support extended to the Djakarta government by a number of countries that try to keep in good terms with it. Western governments would contribute to solve our problem if they adopted a policy consistent with the

"aggression" forces, "invaders" etc. In the case of Timor we wouldn't be surprised if started talking about "Indonesian liberation forces," or to use the modish expression, "Indonesian freedom fighters."

(Indonesian Foreign Affairs Minister) Mochtar recently only confirmed that Indonesian generals were intent on annexing our country, but implied that the West is beginning to see the Timorese problem in the context of closer economic relations with Djakarta. He added, somewhat rhetorically, that there was a "mutual understanding" between Indonesia and Portugal to the effect that the people of Timor should be given the opportunity to express their aspirations without having to resort to force, whatever means. According to him, the untimely withdrawal of Portuguese colonial troops from Timor government, which he qualified as "none too dignified a gesture," had led Indonesia to intervene militarily. Now that was regarded as a "dignified gesture" on the part of Djakarta, to have slaughtered some 200,000 Maubere citizens since then. What we can conclude from Mochtar's statements is that some people are convinced it was worthwhile, in the use of force on the part of Indonesia was a legitimate action and that this genocidal war waged by Djakarta is intended to fill the vacuum created by the Portuguese departure.

FRETILIN's foreign relations

In my opinion, Western democratic governments should stop behaving as Djakarta's accomplices. The Indonesian aggression on East Timor violates

principles of international law. The Australian government, for instance, made it known it was "concerned" over France's presence in New Caledonia, but in our case it seems to have no qualms about our becoming Indonesians. In the case of Kampuchea or Afghanistan the Western press mentions "occupation" of the country by troops,

the United Nations' most basic principles. Some foreign governments justify their support of Indonesia with the alleged "instability" that FRETILIN might bring to the area (in their opinion), which would necessarily be followed by Soviet influence in this part of the world. This is the crux, the rationale of all anti-Maubere arguments.

But if Indonesia and Australia keep diplomatic relations with Moscow, how can FRETILIN represent a threat to the area? In these ten years of war, we have shown that we are on our own, that we rely exclusively on our own capabilities. That's how we have been able to put up resistance against a powerful enemy, who besides is generally assisted and supported by some countries trying to benefit from this war of extermination.

As far as we are concerned, we pledge not to contribute to instability in the area. Just as we have remained firm in our resistance, we will remain firm in our commitments and obligations vis-a-vis our neighbors. Our aim is only to rebuild our nation in an atmosphere of peace and security, trying to maintain good relations with Australia and with Indonesia itself in all matters leading to our people's welfare and development.

Does FRETILIN have any political supporters in Indonesia?

- We are convinced that not everyone in Indonesia approves of the aggression on East Timor. However, it should be remembered that the Indonesian government does not allow for a more overt expression of solidarity toward us, as would be the case in a democratic country. Nevertheless, FRETILIN has received and will continue to



East Timor

Area: 14,875 sq.km. Population: 740,000. Populational density: 52 people sq.km. Income per capita: US\$ 201. Languages: Tetum, plus various dialects; also Portuguese. Exports: fisheries, coffee, oil. Economy: 59 percent of the population is engaged in agriculture. Only 5 percent of the land is cultivated, while 74 percent is covered by woods and forests. History: Exploited by the Chinese prior to 1500, Timor was divided in 1859 between Portugal (eastern region) and Holland (western region). In November 1975, following the downfall of Fascism in Portugal, nationalist forces declared East Timor independent. One month later, the country was invaded by Indonesia. Capital: Dili.

receive moral and political support from inside Indonesia, from our Indonesian brothers.

What does FRETILIN expect from Portugal as the administrative power?

- Beyond the mere notion of an administrative power, which has only a symbolic value in behind-the-scene negotiations, FRETILIN sees Portugal in a broader and deeper historical context that has juridical consequences for a process that

will eventually occur in East Timor - one in which the principles of international law will prevail as set forth in the United Nations Charter.

We do, however, accept the current Portuguese position. And considering that Portugal has effectively joined the European Economic Community, FRETILIN hopes that the Lisbon government will attempt more earnestly to persuade the European community to review its stance where Djakarta is



Indonesian attacks have taken a toll of over 250,000 dead on the Timorese side

concerned.

Portugal plays a major role in the solution of the East Timor question. Given the premise of a Portuguese political presence in East Timor for a transitional, indeterminate period of time, it is possible to envisage a set of conditions that will ensure the required mechanisms for establishing a multiparty constitutional system in the country, in line with the interests of both the area and the people of East Timor. In that event,

Portugal would have honored its responsibilities.

Things may change

Present international conditions do not seem to favor Timorese independence. How would FRETILIN react to the offer of an autonomous status, with East Timor becoming a part of the Republic of Indonesia, although retaining control over certain aspects of its political and economic life and preserving its

Indonesian intimidation

In attempting to create a conflict between the population and the guerrillas, the Indonesians have resorted to continued intimidation, violent reprisals and crimes against the people. The following incident is an example of this. Because of the shortage of food at home, three married men from Lebanei in the province of Letemuno, named Domingos, 20, Julião, 25, and another Domingos, 27, decided to go shooting wild hog in Abarisi, in the outskirts of Kelikai. As they were dividing the hog meat among themselves, an Indonesian platoon belonging to the 724th

Battalion came by and demanded that most of the meat be delivered to them. The three refused, saying that their families were starving.

During the heated argument that followed some of the Indonesian soldiers recognized them as members of a group that had refused to bring women to their encampment one week before, whereupon the platoon commander ordered the three shot on the spot. Having returned to the village later on, the murderers told the population that the three men had been killed by guerrilla fighters. Although their families insisted on fetching the bodies in order to give them a decent burial, no permission has been granted so far. This happened in October 19, 1985.

Portuguese cultural background
Would FRETILIN go on fighting
or agree to negotiate on equal
grounds?

- The world vehemently
rejected the creation of a puppet
government in Namibia at
Pretoria, the so-called "interim
administration." Behind this
rejection is the desire to safeguard
the norms of justice and
authority of the United Nations,
otherwise this organization would
be deprived of its *raison d'être*.

The legitimate rights of
East Timor people rule out
eventual concessions on the part
of Indonesia. We are
interested in discussing rhetorical
propositions. Besides, the
historical ties do exist between
Portugal and East Timor, the
struggle is not limited to the
preservation of Portuguese
culture in our country.

To negotiate on such a basis
would run counter to the
sovereign will of our people,
desire to lead a free and
independent life.

Current world conditions are
not very favorable toward
the case and the world shows
no

little interest in our problem. But conditions are made by men and can be changed by men.

We will continue to fight, side by side with the South African, Chilean, Palestinian, Saharan and other oppressed peoples, until we have conquered our freedom.

Any move toward negotiations will be welcome, provided no prerequisites are established.

Is the current Timorese population predominantly Maubere, or have major populational transfers taken place, perhaps at the initiative of Indonesia?

— There is evidence that Dili is "Javanized," and that Indonesian migrants continue to converge on East Timor. Though the August 1983 uprising has to some extent discouraged migration to certain agricultural areas such as Iospalos, Natar Bora and Ué Berek — a populational transfer that would benefit Indonesians only —, Djakarta is now again trying to carry out its plan of eliminating the Maubere identity. The village of Barike, for instance, has been under military occupation since the second half of 1984, and measures are supposedly under

way to ensure the security, housing facilities and settlement of Indonesians there.

People who have been in East Timor recently, especially some International Red Cross personnel, say that things have improved there, and that they have seen signs of some development. What do you have to say to this?

— That such statements lead nowhere. It is not our habit to consistently condemn everything, but our viewpoints are based on moral principles. Otherwise we would deny, for instance, the moral, ethical and political value of sanctions now being proposed against South Africa, and would not welcome the return to democracy of countries that are currently under dictatorial regimes. Maybe South Africa has brought about an even greater economic development in Namibia. Is this to be held above the right of Namibians to independence? This alleged development is used by Djakarta to make international public opinion forget the military occupation of our country and the criminal oppression of our people.

In our view, statements of this kind are biased, no matter where they come from. They are a grave insult to the East Timorese who, in so many parts of the country, have been dying of hunger and disease because they don't receive the necessary aid. This is not meant to negate the valuable assistance extended to us in the past by the International Red Cross, which has lessened the sufferings of our people in some of the most critical periods of our history.

It is nevertheless true that right now, in many areas of the interior of our country, particularly in the east and in the southern part of the central region, a starving and rickety population would like to see International Red Cross people distributing food among them, and the diseased would like to get a more adequate and steady treatment on the part of the IRC. It is our understanding that a basic IRC principle is to render assistance to all parts involved in a conflict, no matter what side they are on. So far we have not asked anything from the IRC on behalf of our guerrilla fighters in terms of humanitarian assistance

Entire villages are being "removed" in Timor by Indonesian authorities



to the wounded or to those who have been maimed in combat, but we would certainly like the IRC to pressure Djakarta to dispense a better treatment to captured or wounded guerrillas. This might prevent the occupation troops from purposefully mutilating their prisoners, though reports to this effect still await confirmation.

Intimidatory practices

Has Amnesty International's last report on the East Timor situation contributed to change the behavior of Indonesian occupation troops?

—To hope that it would be like hoping that, under a minority regime in South Africa, Pretoria can put an end to apartheid, or that an overture to democracy might be possible under a military dictatorship. In a war such as ours, in which the Timorese people have identified with the armed resistance against Indonesian military occupation, the incidence of persecution, arbitrary detentions and torture



Populations displaced by Indonesian troops are starving and homeless

will continue as long as our country is occupied. What can happen is that the enemy will adopt some more guarded means of inflicting the same reprisals as ever.

The pursuit of freedom

How does FRETILIN define itself? As a leftist democratic movement, for instance?

—Efforts made by FRETILIN on both internal and external planes toward the overall mobilization of nationalists of all kinds should not be seen as makeshift maneuvers in an emergency. They are the outcome of a political guideline established at the National Conference in March 1981 for reorganizing the war effort.

Our movement plans to instill in East Timor a democratic regime such as exists in Portugal for instance. We are willing to enter into an agreement with neighboring countries — and with Portugal as the administering power — to ensure that the required control mechanisms introduced to ensure such an outcome.

FRETILIN has aged politically and suffered through war. We have no intention whatsoever of leading the Maubere people toward self-destruction.

We are fighting and will continue to fight in the future for the independence of our homeland and the freedom of our people. And East Timor's political independence rejects any form of foreign domination.



Pro-Timorese demonstrators in Australia

Third World Books

NAMIBIA A VIOLATION OF TRUST

Susanna Smith - OXFAM - Oxford - UK - 1986. Namibia is one of the richest countries in Africa - yet most Namibians live

in extreme poverty. For twenty years the country has been occupied illegally by South Africa. This report is based on OXFAM's 20 years work with the Namibian people. It focuses on their suffering under South African occupation and highlights international responsibility for their continuing poverty. Britain's role in particular is examined and the book concludes with specific recommendations for urgent action to end the international stalemate on Namibia's independence.

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NAMIBIA A VIOLATION OF TRUST

BY · SUSANNA · SMITH

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VAIRWADZA VASARA

Donzo Musengezi
Zimbabwe Publishing House,
Zimbabwe, 1984

This first novel by a brilliant, promising young Zimbabwean

INTERNATIONAL TRANSACTIONS IN SERVICES

- Karl Sauvant - Westview Press - Colorado - USA - 1986.

In the past decade the importance of international trade and foreign direct investment in services, especially data services, has increased significantly. This book examines the rise of data services and their impact on international economic transactions, the policies of different countries

and the general attitude of multinationals involved with transborder data flows. The subject is becoming even more important due to the discussions at the GATT on the regulation of trade and foreign investment in services.

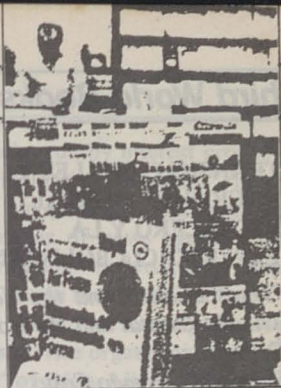
Against this background, the author analyzes the interest position of countries vis-a-vis trade and foreign investment in data services, looking at protection-of-privacy issues as well as competing values and approaches related to the acquisition of data resources.



NO FREE LUNCH: FOOD AND REVOLUTION IN CUBA TODAY

Medea Benjamin, Joseph Collins
and Michael Scott
Food First Books, San Francisco,
USA, 1985

Based on sources not readily available to Western researchers, this book examines the Cuban food and farming systems, confirming that Cuba is the only Latin American country to have eradicated hunger.



Third World Books

TRANSNACIONALES Y NACION: EL CAPITAL PETROLERO Y LA EXPERIENCIA BOLIVIANA

*(Transnationals and the Nation:
The Oil Capital and the Bolivian
Experience)*

Hugo del Granado Cosío

CEDOIN Centro de Documentación e Información, La Paz, Bolivia, 1986

Crucial to the survival of the Bolivian government are the revenues of Yacimientos Petrolíferos Fiscales Bolivianos (YPFB), yet the company's investing capacity cannot compete with that of transnational oil companies established in the country. This is the central theme of this book by an expert in oil matters, who outlines the history of the activi-

ty of transnationals in Bolivia and argues that the country needs "a third nationalization" of mineral and energy resources. In two previous occasions, Bolivia nationalized its major mineral resources but was forced to yield to the pressure of foreign companies.

BEIRUT: FRONTLINE STORY

Salim Nassib

Pluto Press, London, 1984

A vivid account of the horror-filled days in 1982 when the city of Beirut and its inhabitants confronted the military might of Israel, which threatened their very existence. In this collection of photographs by Chris Steele-Perking and dispatches by Salim Nassib and Caroline Tisdall,

complemented by ad ver interviews with Yassir and Druze leader Walid Jum, the author records on paper scenes of the Beirut fro brought to the homes by T

ON TRIAL: REAGAN'S WAR AGAINST NICARAGUA

Marlene Dixon

Zed Books, London, 1985

A collection of witness and testimonials demonstrating the role of the US government in all military and economic maneuvers staged by Somoza forces against the Nicaragua authorities. Outstanding analysis of the influence of US propaganda and diplomacy in the Central American crisis.

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A Latin American Radio Network

Project Chasqui was trying to integrate scores of radio stations operating in low-income communities into a network that focuses on local priorities

Since January 1985, over 150 radio stations in 17 Latin American countries, most of them located in rural towns, have benefited from a Third World News Service, or Servicio Informativo Tercer Mundo (SITN) sponsored by Project Chasqui, of Santiago, Chile.

A major experiment in communications, the project meets a long-felt need in the area of news broadcasting. The objective of SITN is to assist small, rural radio stations in the dissemination of regional and international news, especially those items relative to developmental issues.

The information gap

Over 4,200 radio stations are scattered throughout Latin America. Ninety percent of the region's population tunes in to their broadcasts which, in low-income urban and rural sectors, are the only source of information on socioeconomic affairs. Yet, until recently, their enormous potential was left unfulfilled due to poor access to international news sources.

agencies run by interest groups in the industrial countries. Though they have installed and developed a number of news agencies and information networks of their own, much remains to be done.

Among the recently founded news service organizations are the Pool of Non-Aligned Countries News Agencies, which came into being in 1975; the Acción de Sistemas Informativos Nacionales (1979), the Pan-African News Agency. (1983); the Latin American Agency for Special Information Services (1984); an expanding Inter-Press Service; and a number of new regional publications.

Most of these, however, are run by governmental institutions, and their audiences are largely restricted to official circles and a few governmental offices. The telecommunications infrastructure they require is extremely costly.

For the past ten years, underdeveloped nations have been trying to overcome their reliance on large international news



The front page of an SITN bulletin

**GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF
RADIO STATIONS BROADCASTING "TERCER MUNDO"**

COUNTRY	RADIO STATIONS		TOTAL
	Capital	Provinces	Radios
Argentina	3	12	15
Bolivia	6	13	19
Colombia	4	8	12
Costa Rica	1	7	8
Chile	-	10	10
Ecuador	5	18	23
El Salvador	2	2	4
Guatemala	3	6	9
Honduras	1	6	7
Mexico	1	3	4
Nicaragua	4	4	8
Panama	2	2	4
Paraguay	1	1	2
Peru	3	17	20
Puerto Rico	-	-	1
Dominican Republic	1	4	5
Venezuela	2	3	5
	40	116	156



The SITN focuses on the needs of poor women, Indians and workers

Furthermore, the language of use is intended for the press, for popular radio stations, which restricts their access to world audiences.

Less than five percent of the continent's radio stations quantify as major broadcasting enterprises. Most of them do little more than reword what they read in local newspapers, or repeat a number of news items selected by a major station in the capital, usually excerpts of dispatches originating from foreign news agencies.

Small rural stations, which constitute the basic source of information for the peasant masses, have fewer sources of information. Hundreds of low-budget radio stations were installed for educational and developmental purposes fall into this category, according to the Asociación Latinoamericana de Educación Radiofónica (ALER) and the Catholic Latin American Radio and Television Association (UNDA-AL).

In an effort to correct these shortcomings, and at the request of its own local branches, UNDA-AL implemented the ChasquiHuasi project, guidelines of which were established after polling 400 radio stations and evaluating the response after the first four pilot programs.

SITN features

The Third World News Service is intended to assist small local stations dedicated to rendering of information services to low-income communities. Its basic objectives are:

- to facilitate the dissemination of news on development plans and programs among

target populations, especially the rural poor;

to help create a Third World-oriented awareness and identity in the region via information based on developmental problems and achievements; and

to disseminate results achieved by organizations that, although they aim at full, democratic, self-sustained development, have little or no access to the masses.

A recorded tape is forwarded to radio stations every two weeks. Each tape contains two 30-minute programs, including seven or eight news items which the stations can also broadcast separately if they so desire. The news selection criteria - a key element in the service - are: a) to inform listeners on those world forces that lead to national dependence and underdevelopment; b) to divulge national and international activities aimed at self-reliant development in poor countries, especially through South-South cooperation; and to disseminate information on activities aimed at developing self-confidence and self-sufficiency among emerging nations.

While international news services tend to cater to the interests of world elites, SITN gives immediate attention to the priority needs of the masses as presented by women, children, peasants, Indians, and workers in general.

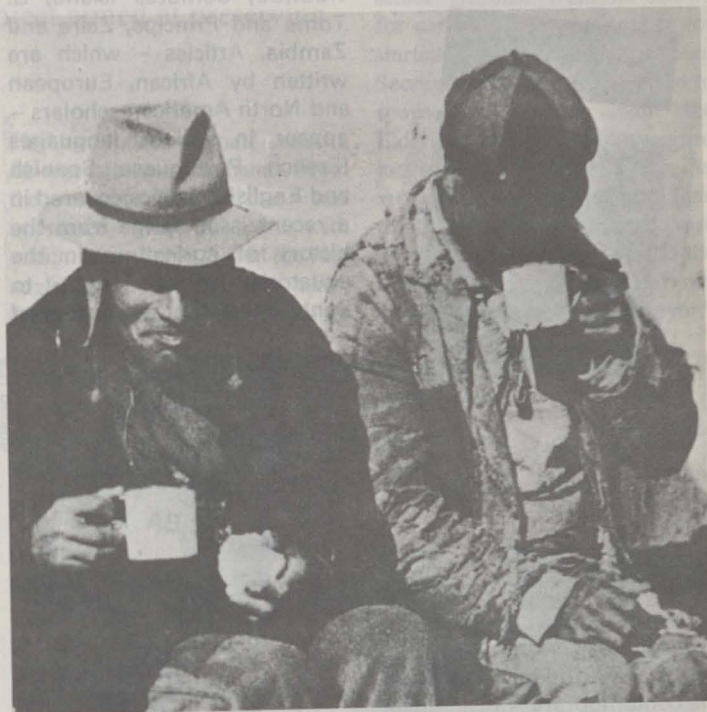
SITN's main news sources are the daily reports put out by Inter-Press Service (IPS), complemented by Alasei, Alai, Noticias Aliadas, Informe Latinoamericano, the Ifda "dossiers," **Third World** and **South** magazines, and other smaller-circulation publications.

Radio stations using SITN services

The directors of Project ChasquiHuasi initially contacted a total of 263 radio stations and 22 producer groups or organizations in 17 Latin American countries. By July 1985, having discarded those that did not respond satisfactorily, (SITN) programs

populations in bilingual broadcasts. Only eight percent are commercial, nationwide radio stations.

From the outset, SITN has been funded by ChasquiHuasi Comunicaciones, with the financial assistance of international institutions. The service would be hard pressed to survive on subscriptions alone, since the



Small rural stations are a basic source of information for peasant masses

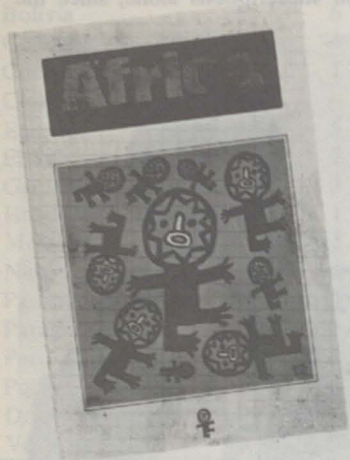
were being sent to an average of 240 radio stations and 10 to 15 institutions.

Seventy-four percent are small-town stations, many of which are of an educational and cultural nature, and mostly Catholic. Of these, 46 percent are rural stations installed in mountain or jungle areas. They cater to peasant and indigenous stations it addresses are usually

low-budget operations. However, one of the principles of the ChasquiHuasi project is to promote self-reliance. In spite of their problems, small radio stations do help to cover the program's costs - and this, for the project's directors, is the best indication of the usefulness of the Third World News Service, evidence that Third World organizations often can solve their problems on modest resources.

Third World Publications

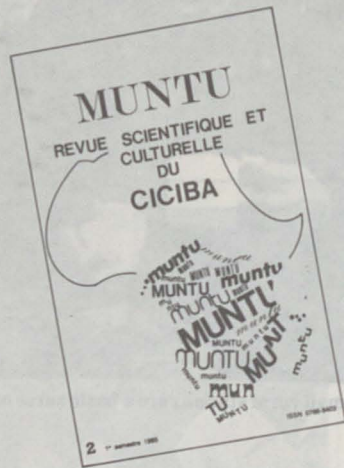
ÁFRICA: LITERATURA, ARTE, CULTURA – After a long period of absence, Africa has resumed publishing. The quarterly published in Lisbon



seems to have regained its position as one of the best publications covering African culture where Portuguese is the official language. In its latest issue, the magazine, edited by Portuguese writer Manuel Ferreira, includes articles on the contemporary African novel and Angolan cultural history. In future issues the publishers intend to branch out into coverage of the cultures of other Portuguese speaking nations. *África: Literatura, Arte, Cultura*; Av. Dom Pedro V, no. 11, 2^oD, 2795 – Linda-a-Velha, Portugal. (In portuguese)

MUNTU: Revue Scientifique et Culturelle du CICIBA – Muntu is the official publication of the International

Center of Bantu Civilizations (CICIBA), an organization which includes representatives from Angola, the Central African Republic, the Congo, Gabon Republic, Guinea, Ruanda, Comores Island, S. Tome and Principe, Zaire and Zambia. Articles – which are written by African, European and North American scholars – appear in various languages (French, Portuguese, Spanish and English). Topics covered in a recent issue range from the history of agriculture in the equatorial Africa jungle, to Bantu linguistics, the history of



Bantu migrations, and the history of the Bantu people in urban Africa. *Muntu, Présence Africaine*, 18, Rue des Ecoles, 750055, Paris, France. (In french)

JERUSALEM – Jerusalem is the publication of the Palestine Committee for Non-Governmental Organizations, which describes itself as "unofficial Palestine organization to which

many Palestinian pop organizations contribute." committee is dedicated to struggle of the Palesti people, taking partic responsibility for coordin the activities of Palesti NGO's and for build relations with NGO's thro out the world. The bulk of magazine is given summaries of news reg concerning the Pales Liberation Organization, is human rights abuses ag Palestinians, Israeli mil operations, and Palest popular organizations. salem, *Palestine Committee* NGO, 6 Rue Mahmoud AL-A El-Menzah VI, Tunis. (In eng

MATE AMARGO – official publication of Uruguayan Tupamaros, Amargo is the country's se largest newspaper in term circulation. It is written simple and direct style an aimed primarily toward wo leftist militants, and stud The newspaper publishes official positions of Uruguayan National Liber Movement on major natul and international issues. *Amargo*, Bartolomé Mitre 14 Of. 203, Montevideo, Uruguay (spanish)

A Reunion with the Elderly

For eight years, two Angolan TV producers have been working on a project aimed at preserving vanishing oral traditions

Manuel Tomás was once a soldier and telephone operator. Henrique Ruivo Alves used to be a stableboy. But at the Angolan People's Television (TPA) where they have both been working since 1977, they are known simply as Fininho (Skinny) and Ritz, respectively. Fininho is back and from the southern part of Angola, having lived in the countryside well into his late teens; Ritz is of Portuguese extraction, has lived mostly in large urban areas, and is more familiar with the country's north. The desire to do something for a newborn nation brought them together one day at the Angolan national television station. Despite their disparate backgrounds, they soon developed a complementary relationship — and out of their exchange of experiences arose some of the most prolific partnerships in the history of Angolan audiovisuals.

"I had just finished my military service," says Fininho, "when I got a job at the TV station's telephone desk. One day, Ritz came by and asked me if I could handle a rifle. I said I could. 'Then you can handle a movie camera,' he said. 'All you have to do is to aim from behind the lens and shoot.'" The next day

Fininho found himself with a 16-mm camera in his hands. From the outset his partner was impressed with the ease with which he was able to find the best angles and film the best takes. Soon the camera held no more

through that talkative young fellow who spent hours chatting with everybody, especially with people who were older than himself."

Ritz cannot remember exactly when they first thought of running a series of TV specials on senior citizens. What he knows for certain is that the project got started when the Angolan Secretariat for Culture decided to sponsor a Meeting with the Elderly. "The event was designed just to entertain the old folks, but we decided it should be more than that. You see, old people are dying, people are moving into the cities, and a large part of our culture is being lost forever."

Arquivo TPA



Talking to old people is Fininho's favorite pastime

secrets for him, and he began to learn about lighting effects.

"Fininho learned everything just like that," says Ritz snapping his fingers. "But what I liked best about him were the stories he used to tell about his folks and past life. They were an endless source of traditions and folklore, and I liked discovering them

explains Henrique Ruivo Alves, who now heads TPA's Broadcast Coordination and Supervision Department.

Luanda, the Angolan capital, had a population between 500,000 and 600,000 at the time of independence. Ten years later, its population now exceeds one million. The overwhelming

majority are people from the rural areas who migrated to the city during the colonial period, attracted by job opportunities and the infrastructure introduced by the Portuguese.

After independence, the appeal of urban areas increased with the advent of free education and medical assistance. More recently the violent attacks of Unita's terrorists have led many people to seek refuge in the big cities. Yet, although they live in a large urban center, the people of Luanda have preserved their ties with the *senzalas* (villages) and *kimbos* (family farms). Anything having to do with the rural environment, where their roots are, easily grabs their attention. This immediate sense of belonging is at the root of the work being done by the Ritz-Fininho TV team known as

Ngengi (meaning "walker" in the Kimbundu language).

"Working with the elderly isn't easy," says Fininho. "First you must have a lot of time to spare, and a lot of patience. Kimbundus or Chocloes will seldom tell you the whole truth during a first interview, but will often give you different versions of the same story. It is their way of guarding themselves against the whites, or even against blacks who have moved into the cities to live among whites. I remember I once spent five hours listening to an interesting story told by an old man; when we came back the next day to get it on film, he told us an entirely different tale, and I was furious. Anyway, I enjoyed listening to stories from my uncles and grandparents as a boy, and I think that's why I

understand the elderly better than most people. When they tell me something I don't agree with, I try not to criticize them; if I think they are wrong, I just tell them talk."

The senzala story

By 1979, combining people's stories, habits, traditions with modern picture techniques and ultramodern videotape equipment, Fininho had helped put together a total of twelve series of documentaries on the elderly. They were what he calls "sausages"; one hour long, finished every week, and available, the two just finished. Later the duo produced a movie called *Luimbi* which dealt with the illusions of urban

TV as a political weapon

□ Even before assuming political control in Angola, the MPLA forces had taken over the country's TPA television facilities. That was the first instrument of power to fall under the exclusive control of Agostinho Neto's troops in October 1975, at a time when the country was still in a confused stage of transition. The TPA takeover had been decided upon by the MPLA with the cooperation of "the 23 hardheads" - the initial group of cameramen, writers, producers and technicians who made up their minds to put the station on the air when most of the other communication media were still under the control of those political groups that planned to install a neocolonialist regime in Angola, following the downfall of Salazarism in Portugal.

Carlos Henriquez, now 33, born in Bié and a graduate of Coimbra Law School, was one of those "hardheads." He and his brother Vitor, another TPA co-founder, maintain the country's most complete video tape files on Angolan major political events since

independence. They also have the documentaries on the death of President Agostinho Neto, whom they accompanied on most trips in Angola. The two brothers' number one specialty is covering the FAPLA military activities. Whenever the Angolan Army engages in a major attack against UNITA or in combat with South African forces, they are usually the first to arrive on the spot.

"Angola's first experiments with TV began in 1972 with cable-TV broadcasts. They failed because it was controlled by Portuguese groups and ran counter to the interests of the Portuguese Radio and Television (RTP), which had the monopoly on TV services in the colonies. RTPA was created by the Portuguese in 1974, and absorbed most of the old RTP personnel. A mere colonial subsidiary of RTPA used British equipment to make it compatible with the South African TV system. But the Portuguese administration succeeded only in introducing the technical structure, since the independence war had already well under way.

"In 1975, when Luandino Vieira joined the staff, the station began to adopt a different policy, with MPLA personnel grad-

taped documentary on contraband entitled *Kan onga-Kyala Mukanga*, in addition to special features on folk dances, music, initiation rites including circumcision of the young, and more recently a documentary on the enforcement of traditional justice in Soyo, a town on the Zaire River in Angola's extreme north.

According to Ritz, the job that contributed most to the birth of the *Ngengi* team was a series of four specials on slavery. "We called it *The Senzala Story*," he recalls. "The first installment described the origin of the *senzala* as told by the rural elders. The second theorized about the problem of slavery, establishing a distinction between slavery as introduced by the Europeans and as it had prevailed at the African



ANGOFOTO
Old folks' accounts contribute to preserve traditional dances

family level for ages. We were able to show that forced labor in the hands of the Portuguese was a violent affair, very different from what existed in traditional black society. The aim of the research

was to do away with the false colonialist notion what Europeans did was no more than proceeding with a pactice that was already prevalent in Africa.

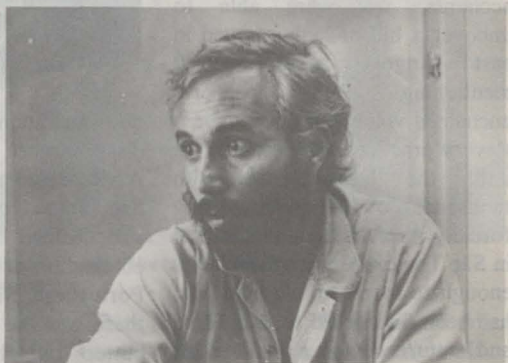
"The third installment dealt do

assuming key positions even before independence. When Dr Orlando Rodriguez took over the direction of the news broadcasts, it became clear to the MPLA that TV could be a key instrument in the struggle for legitimate independence."

Carlos Henriquez was one of the first to be put in charge of the TV news broadcast, which was the most important program in those early days. He admits that it is difficult to appraise the political role played by TV during the transition period, given the small number of TV sets in Luanda at the time. "But because the news programs were also shown in movie theaters and TV-viewer circles, we were able to exert greater influence later, during the 'second independence' struggle," he says.

Ten years later, TPA is experiencing another kind of pain - growth pains. "Through the years, we have stretched our abilities to the utmost, both personally and technically. We have gone as far as we possibly could, because both the TV station and the public's expectations have grown too quickly. TV is now a major factor in the life of the Angolan people, with almost as much influence as the radio and the print media."

Carlos Castilho



Carlos Henriquez, one of TPA's "hardheads"

At present, a central transmitting station in Luanda covers an area with a radius of 60 kilometers, encompassing a population of one million people. Another transmitter in Benguela covers both Benguela and Lobito. A third in the Huambo-Bié area is significantly more powerful than the Luanda facility - with 10 kw, versus the mere 1 kw of the central station. A fourth is expected to go on the air soon in Namibe, making TV accessible to three-quarters of the most densely populated region of Angola.

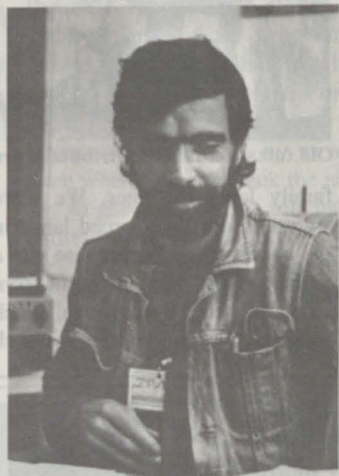


Being white and a city dweller, Henrique Ruivo Alves (Ritz) found it hard to win the confidence of the *senzala* people in the countryside, but now has free access to many black villages

with the perpetuation of forced labor, even after Portugal had officially banned slavery. Slaves were no longer called captives; they became the contracted laborers. Guided by old people's accounts, we were able to uncover a bill of lading issued in east Angola around 1920 mentioning 'six properly enchained volunteers.' Portuguese slavery practices were maintained until the late 1950s, with thousands of Angolans being forcibly sent to cocoa plantations in São Tomé. We were even lucky enough to locate an old man who had been dispatched to São Tomé and returned to Angola after independence."

Ritz adds that the last installment in the slavery series was a collection of testimonials on the "myth of the blackheads." "According to the story, much in vogue in colonial times, the motors used in coffee plantations in the north were fueled by a sort of dough made from the brains of blacks who had been brought in from the south as forced laborers.

"The myth of the blackheads appears in Antonio Jacinto's poem, *Monangambe*. The story



Carlos Castilho

was an attempt to justify the disappearance of thousands of Africans, who later turned up in São Tomé cocoa plantations. It also helped to cover up the elimination of black rebels by the Portuguese. Side by side with it, there was the figure of the 'head cutter' which the Portuguese resorted to in order to frighten the local population into submission. Blacks reacted by creating a personal defense technique similar to the Brazilian *capoeira*. Recently, in 1979, the blackhead myth popped up again when FNLA troops spread the word among northern Angolan populations that the people who cooperated with 'East Germany' were head cutters. The attempt to use the myth once again for criminal purposes eventually failed, but I was impressed by the

fact that such a myth should reappear after four years of independent national life and years of armed struggle."

The old folk's court of justice

Fininho is about to finish his documentary film on the enforcement of traditional justice in the Soyo region, near the border with Zaire. "It's a most interesting story involving a dispute of two men over a woman. Both come from the same family, and official justice had proved unable to solve the conflict. Soyo authorities had decided to submit the problem to the old folk's court of justice. I had to work very hard to win the confidence of the local community leaders. Several weeks went by before I could establish a minimum degree of trust. But finally they stopped being intimidated by the movie and video equipment. We were able to film everything without trouble, and with sensational results."

While he shows us some of his still unedited takes, Mabb Tomás Francisco, 32, married with six children, describes in detail the ceremony that took place in the shade of large trees with judges and lawyers wearing their traditional dress.

Even more difficult to produce was their documentary on the *Mucanda* initiation rites. It was even more difficult to produce. This is a very complex ceremony restricted to participants only. To shoot such a movie, the first to win over the elders in charge of the ceremony. Traditionally, it was a two-day long ritual, during which ten eleven-year old boys were kept in isolation in the woods, learning the secrets of survival. They

learned traditional folk dances. At the end of this educational period, they were circumcised. In colonial times, the ritual was reduced to six months; with the introduction of free education after independence in 1975, it was further shortened to only two months, usually during school vacations.

"But perhaps our most unforgettable experience as TV producers took place shortly after president Agostinho Neto died," says Ritz. He and Fininho were assigned to the Lunda Sul and Namibe provinces to film the mourning of the local people. Fininho says he never saw so much emotion around him.

"We took along with us some video tapes showing the arrival of the president's body," he adds, "and for the first time in Angolan history the eastern people stopped and cry as they had cried over the death of the same man. Funerary ceremonies took fifteen days while the whole country was in mourning. People gathered to mourn and sing incessantly. The words of the songs were absorbed by mourners of all ages. They expressed their anguish at having lost a father, their doubts about the future, and their advice to the new president. I've watched those tapes dozens of times, and I still shiver every time I see them. No movie director could have staged such a dramatic and authentic mourning scene."

The team has also produced a feature film entitled *Luimbi* which has appeared four times on TV, and a dozen times in up-country *kinbos* and *senzalas*. *Luimbi* means "illusion" in Kimbundu, and the film tells the story of a peasant who moves to the city, attracted by the beautiful stories he had heard from a cousin. Fininho wrote the script

based on stories he had heard from old Kizengans. The idea occurred to them in 1979, after the "sausage" phase. In the absence of professional actors, the roles were played by common people who had been through similar experiences.

Dialogues and scenes were improvised by the group as they went along. Once a scene had been taped, it was often shown to the local peasants, both in the country and in the outskirts of Luanda, to check the effectiveness of their approach and evaluate audience reaction.

Angololo



Makeshift actors discuss at length the content and form of movies produced by the Ngengi team

Neither Fininho nor Ritz, however, like *Luimbi*. "We did it," says Ritz, "because we wanted to prove that you can do with video tape everything you do with film. We wanted to show that video tape, the poor cousin of Angolan audiovisuals, is more useful than cinema because it can be seen by a larger public. But once we finished our work, we concluded that, though we had made our point technically, the result was artistically poor. We didn't have, and I think we still don't have, enough training. The whole thing was too makeshift,

but a lot of people saw it and liked it."

Fininho notes that the tape had a broad audience in the countryside, where people were not so concerned with technical slips or imperfections. "There were heated discussions about our work, and we even ran into some problems like, for instance, the one about the bath scene. In it two of the characters bathe together in a river, and according to some local traditions, two cousins couldn't be doing that. They wanted us to change it, but we didn't."

For both Ritz and Fininho, their work is based on intuition and devotion. They refuse to theorize about what they do, noting that "it would be pretentious for a former stableboy and a former soldier, with less than eight-years' experience in TV, to try to formulate proposals or explanations, or even to grant interviews as though they were celebrities." The two "walkers" admit they do TV work because they want to listen and be listened to, just like the old folks.

●
Carlos Castilho

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Third World Newsletters

BOLETIN RAP-AL — Issued by Fundación Natura, Apartado Postal 243, Quito, Ecuador. With a special emphasis on denouncing the harmful effects of the use of pesticides in agri-



culture and food in Latin American countries, the Bulletin contains reports on the worldwide movement against the widespread use of toxic agents in food production. (In Spanish.)

ANTENA — A weekly publication issued by Centro de Comunicación Popular, Calle Ballivian 1323, 4º piso, Casilla 5946, La Paz, Bolivia. Contains articles and information on Bolivian politics, economics and labor movements. (In Spanish.)



occupation, and day-to-day accounts of the armed struggle of the Front de la Resistence Nationale Libanaise against Israeli occupation troops. (In French.)



CENTRAL AMERICA REPORT — A weekly publication issued by Infompress Centroamericana, 9a Calle A, 3-56, Zona 1, Ciudad Guatemala, Guatemala. An informative newsletter on recent economic and political events in Central American countries. (In English.)

LIBAN EN LUTTE — Issued by Association Liban-Solidarité, this publication carries articles on the current domestic situation in Lebanon, documents on Israeli



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Women

The Debate over Nicaragua's New Constitution

For the first time, Nicaraguan women have a say in the discussions on a new national legal structure

In the past few months, a preliminary draft of a new Nicaraguan Constitution has been the object of much discussion in nearly every city in the country. Often broadcast by radio and TV, these debates are attended by government officials, Sandinista Front leaders and local political representatives who hear and ponder over all kinds of criticism and suggestions. Predictably, many of the debates focus on women's issues in a country where machismo is a deep-rooted tradition. In contrast with those meetings where participants are predominantly male, female assemblies have been marked by such an enthusiasm that some have to be adjourned practically by force, given the intensity of the debates. One of the most recent meetings took place in Managua and was presided over by the President of the Nicaraguan National Assembly, Carlos Nuñez. It was a real marathon in which more than 800 women participated and 75 signed up to speak. The following summary of these debated, recorded directly from a Nicaraguan radio broadcast, may give the reader an idea of the current

Sandinista woman's frame of mind.

Esperanza Romano. Chapter IV of the Constitution on the "Rights of the Family" establishes that family relations rest on the absolute equality of rights and responsibilities of men and women. The first question that arises is: How can absolute equality of rights and responsibilities exist if the woman is economically dependent on the man?

Conditions should be established so that this equality can be real, creating the means by which women can participate in economic,

social, political, and cultural life. This would be the real basis for such equality.

There is a division of labor within the family. Usually the woman takes on the responsibilities of motherhood and housekeeping. And, in the case of formally established couples, the man is supposed to provide the necessary means of subsistence, though he doesn't always do so. Often, on top of housework and duties of motherhood, women must also provide for the maintenance of the home.

If the constitution doesn't begin with this reality, recognizing the importance of creating the conditions to break down this division of labor, there can be no equality in the family. Therefore, it's necessary for society to support greater participation by women in economic, social, political, and cultural activities, and create the means to free them from housework and the permanent care of children. The construction of neighborhood CDIs or organizing collectives for the creation of

Harvey McArthur



800 women participated in the debate and 75 signed up to speak



Peasant women in Nicaragua want equality with men in land ownership

SIRs should become a central policy of the revolutionary government.¹

Cristian Santos López. Good afternoon, brothers and sisters. First of all I want to say that my sisters and I are overjoyed to be participating in this women's town meeting. We are still burdened with centuries-old injustices — such as the fact that men continue to have power over and to abuse women. Now on prostitution. For sure, there is no prostitution without the participation of men. *Applause!* So, I'm asking that reeducation programs be established for women and for men who are constant repeaters and who are the ones who promote prostitution. *Applause!*

Another injustice that we women face, even though we are defending the revolution at the war fronts, is that we are mistreated in our homes. When I talk of mistreatment, I don't mean a slap in the face — though we don't deserve that. I'm talking about brutal, savage abuse, physical as

well as mental. It doesn't seem possible, but if the abuse takes place in the home, within the walls of the "home-sweet-home", there is no punishment. And that must be corrected. Within the couple's relationship there must be respect for the physical and mental integrity of the woman and of the children also. There should be reeducation because our revolution is about reeducating our people.

Salvadora Valle. I want to take this opportunity to raise a proposal having to do with the difficulties and legal restrictions that women and men face in Nicaragua in getting a divorce. *Applause!*

Right now in order for a woman or a man to get divorced, either must get a lawyer to take the case to court and request a divorce for the following reasons: mistreatment and grave offense — which means our companion has deeply offended us, impairing our dignity as human beings — or that he beat us or threatened to kill us.

Other than these two reasons a woman can ask for a divorce she proves that her husband is in public cohabitation with another woman. However, the man, by accusing the woman of adultery and proving it, can get a divorce. Then there is another way. You can get a divorce if both agree to it.

So, in order to get divorced you must both agree, or, as a result the woman must suffer terrible experiences and become convinced that if she remains married she will lose her life or be forever degraded as a person. For a man only cohabitation is considered infidelity, while for a woman adultery is; the same is measured with different scales.

It must be spelled out in the constitution that marriage is based on the agreement of both parties. That is to say, when one party does not wish to remain married to the other, a divorce must be granted without necessarily fulfilling any of these requirements.

Lilian Torres. I am a gynecologist and I'm associated with the NAPRO — Heroes and Martyrs.

I am deeply concerned about the position of some right-wing parties that have become standard bearers for a policy of death. They have supported U.S. imperialism's death policy against our people.

As doctors we have seen patients die; we have seen children, our brothers, our friends die [in the U.S.-backed military war]. So we're concerned when these same parties

1. CDIs are child development centers. SIRs are rural child-rearing services. Both are child-care centers.

2. The National Confederation of Professional Associations "Heroes and Martyrs."

raise a "right-to-life" banner. For whose life? The life of the soldier who was just bombed and killed? The life of the mother who died with all her children in an explosion? Our lives which are threatened more each day by those proposed \$100 million?

We want to defend life, but we want to defend the lives of our soldier sons and the lives of peasants who are in the war zones. We want to defend a dignified life for Nicaraguan women. We do not want a demagogic defense of a bunch of cells that have the potential to perhaps yield life in the future. Article 103 of the constitution should say "the right to motherhood freely chosen or freely planned."³ [Applause] And I think women should be given three choices: sex education, family planning, and legalized abortion.

Aura Matute. I belong to a Christian movement. I am the mother of six children. About the proposal on abortion - in these trying days, when our sons march off to defend the nation, how can we join with the aggressor by destroying our children before they are born? [Some applause] The idea of legalizing death through abortion is unnatural and criminal. It would be pathetic if instead of saving lives, our doctors were busy ending them. That's all.

Michel Nasli. I would like to refer to Article 102 of the constitution, which talks about Patria Potestad.⁴ I would like to ask that this term be eliminated from our constitution, because it recalls one of the most shameful institutions that has existed in the course of humanity.

The Roman Empire gave the pater familia, the head of the



... "we want to defend the lives of our sons who are in the war zones"...

family, absolute authority over his children. This even meant the power of life and death. It meant the right to abandon his children in the street - especially those daughters who were not even worth selling. I think it is dishonorable for our revolution to raise this institution, which is the shame of humanity, to a constitutional level.

María Magdalena Morán Pérez. Good afternoon. I'm from the sixth region in Matagalpa, from the community of San Murali.⁵ I am a peasant and president of a service and credit cooperative.⁶

We women have rights, in contrast with the old days when only men or - if you will excuse me - only machismo did.

The Democratic Conservative Party says that agrarian reform should be delayed for 10 years.⁷ I ask that agrarian reform be further pursued now - for us, the peasants. [Extended applause] We peasants are the ones who need the land of those landlords. We don't want any more landlords. Before we lived by renting from those bloodsuckers. Today we want the land to pass forever to the peasants.

We used to have a government that did not care for us, but now we have a govern-

ment that is ours. We want the land so we can grow the basic grains that maintain the people in the cities, that maintain the Nicaraguan people.

Delga Bermúdez. I want to discuss the question of women's dignity. The law does not protect us and, furthermore, it is obsolete.

I want to speak specifically about rape. Given that the pre-

³ Article 103, "The protection of Motherhood," currently reads: "The State will grant special protection to pregnant women. During pre- and post-natal periods, working mothers must be granted leaves with adequate insurance payments and benefits. Parents will have the right to have their children cared for by the State while they are at work."

⁴ Article 102 currently reads: "Patria Potestad will be enforced according to the Law on Relations Between Mother, Father, and Children. Parents must jointly provide for the home and the rounded upbringing of children. Children, for their part, are required to respect and help their parents."

⁵ Region Six is in north-central Nicaragua.

⁶ In Credit and Service Cooperatives, farmers maintain their individual farms but group together to share government services and financing.

⁷ In April the Democratic Conservative Party proposed in the National Assembly that land reform be frozen for 10 years. The motion was defeated by an overwhelming majority.

ers here. They must also be made to take responsibility for the prevailing ideas about rape are myths – that rape is an uncontrollable male impulse, that we women provoke it – the majority of rape cases go unreported. The victims feel ashamed or sometimes guilty.

The current law defines sexual offenses as private crimes. This means that the complaint can only be filed by the victim or her legal representative. If the victim withdraws the complaint, proceedings end and the rapist goes unpunished. The outcome of the crime is catalogued as a private matter that doesn't affect public order.

Therefore, this crime should be considered a public offense, since its consequences are social and not private. [Applause]

María Zúñiga. We women think that housework should be shared, that it is useful and is a duty for all family members and not just women. [Applause] Men are used to being waited on. For women who work outside the home, society has imposed a double workday on us. Housework should be recognized as socially useful and should, therefore, be shared by all family members.

Vilma Sandoval. When a child is born out of wedlock, the woman has a problem. Either the child is not given a birth certificate, or if it is, only its mother's last name appears. We do not agree with this. Here in Nicaragua, because a revolutionary government exists, children are born to be happy! [Applause]

This irresponsible man should be tracked down if he does not show up when his child is going to be registered.

Another thing, with the revolution we have many foreign broth-

children that they have so often. [Laughter and applause]

Magda Enríquez. I would like to warn about falling into the trap of discussing abortion as an issue of life and death. It's really interesting that the great standard-bearers of [the right-to-] life are the same ones who do not defend the lives of all of us Nicaraguans. The great majority of these women and men can go at any time and pay the 100,000 córdobas that an abortion costs in Managua.⁸

Harvey McArthur



Gloria Margarita Largaespada

What we are talking about is simply the right that I as a woman have to decide if I do or do not want to have a child. I want that right to be respected the same way that the right of the woman who wants to have a child is respected.

No one is saying that we are now going to force all women to abort after having a certain number of children. What we are saying is that in a pluralistic society we should all be treated equally. The truth of the matter is that here we are only respecting the rights of those who think that abortion is wrong.

We are talking about a 14-

year-old girl who is not ready to be a mother and who doesn't have the 100,000 córdobas. She goes and aborts with a coat hanger and she dies and the child dies. That is what we are talking about. [Applause]

María Elena Martínez. [Given greetings in Miskito Indian language] I come from the Río Coco and I come representing the women of the Atlantic Coast. [Applause]⁹

The indigenous people of the communities of the Atlantic Coast are not represented in this constitutional bill. The draft does not take into account the multiethnic and multilingual character of the nation.¹⁰

Gloria Margarita Martínez Largaespada. I am the mother of two martyrs. Therefore, I am moved by one point in Article 210 where it says that it will be decided later on if the veneration

⁸ 100,000 córdobas is equivalent to 40 week's pay for a minimum wage worker in Nicaragua.

⁹ The Río Coco is the river separating Nicaragua from Honduras in the Northern Zelaya region of Nicaragua, where most Miskito Indians live.

¹⁰ Article 210 of the draft constitution, "Autonomy of the Indigenous Peoples of the Communities of the Atlantic Coast," states: "It is recognized that the indigenous people and communities of Nicaragua's Atlantic Coast have the full right to preserve and develop their own cultural activities, their historical and religious heritage, their free use and development of their languages, the right to organize their social and productive activities according to their values and traditions."

"The culture and traditions of the indigenous peoples of the communities of the Atlantic Coast form part of the National Culture."

In his report on the draft constitution, Carlos Núñez said that the precise legal statutes on autonomy were left pending so they could take into account the popular consultations being carried out by the National Autonomy Commission.

martyrs of our land remains in law.¹¹

The Social Christian and conservative parties categorically oppose the veneration of our martyrs. As Nicaraguan proletarian women, we gave our children for the struggle to overthrow the oppressive Somoza dynasty. If our wombs are left empty, are our hearts broken because our fruits have been torn away, are we asking permission to have our children venerated? [Applause]

We were freed with the blood of our proletarian children. In my 52 years, I have never seen any party speak so shamelessly as the [Social Christians and Conservatives] now.

I challenge those parties - I, another of martyrs - to tell me what they were doing when the [National] Guard was killing our children. What did they do to defend them? Where were they? Today, they proudly enjoy the fruits of our revolution, they hold good posts, they humiliate us, and they try to pass for Sandinistas in front of us dummies who don't know any better. But they can't fool us mothers! [Applause]

And if our children fell for the sacred ideals of our general Augusto César Sandino,¹² here must be Sandinistas, and our government must be Sandinista forever! Because it is the Sandinista government that supports us and we don't want anything else.

Sonia Castro. [Gives greetings to the Miskito] I represent the Miskito Indians. I would like to deal with Article 210 of the draft constitution where it says that the indigenous peoples are recognized. I think that the word



The new role of sandinista women

people should be changed to indigenous communities or ethnic groups, because Nicaraguans are one people. Although we of the Atlantic Coast are of different indigenous ethnic groups, we are not a different people. We are part of this free Nicaragua because our brothers fight for her on the war fronts, and because our heroes and martyrs have died for her.

I also want to talk about Article 100, which says that a family can be formed through marriage or a de facto union. My question is, what happens with all the women who have children but don't have a companion? Don't we have the right to constitute a family? As an example, I'll cite the other sister from Northern Zelaya, who spoke before me. She has children, and her husband gave his life in the defense of the revolution. I think that she also has the right to form a family.

Sara Marina Rodríguez. I am a member of the Marxist-Leninist Party. We have rejected the definitions of the draft constitution

on two points: who holds power and how wealth is distributed.

My party didn't consider these town meetings legitimate precisely because they do not contain elements of a decision-making character by the masses. Nonetheless, we have rescued them as channels through which the masses can participate and decide what course the revolution is taking. We think these town meetings should be institutionalized, or similar structures created.

Hortencia Rivas. I am a member of the Socialist Party. On abortion, I totally agree that women have the right to decide whether they do or do not want children. We know that prohibition does not keep it from being practiced.

Companies should not be allowed to require women to prove that they are not pregnant in order to get a job.

As a socialist, I think that individuals should not be reelected. The principle of no reelection is not undemocratic. On the contrary, it is highly democratic, and as Doctor Córdova Rivas¹³ said, so the

¹¹ The draft includes an article calling for the veneration of heroes and martyrs. Núñez explained that when the constitution is finalized, it will be determined whether this remains as a separate article or is included in the preamble. The term heroes and martyrs refers to those who have died in the war against the Somoza dictatorship or fighting the present U.S.-backed mercenary war. Some of the right-wing parties have questioned its inclusion in the constitution.

¹² Augusto César Sandino led the fight against U.S. occupation troops in Nicaragua from 1926 to 1933.

¹³ Doctor Rafael Cordova Rivas is a leader of the capitalist Democratic Conservative Party and a member of the National Assembly.

other eight [members of the FSLN National Directorate] will also get a chance.

Margarita Samura. I speak in the name of the women at the Nelson Suárez School for Technical Training, which is today working with demobilized troops of the Patriotic Military Service. Article 119 says that workers have the right to technical-cultural education. I would like to include in some manner a separate paragraph that says women should be treated equally with men for certain job training. At present, when training is available in order to fill certain more important jobs, men are most often selected.

Margarita Felix Salgado. Good evening. I work at HILANICSA textile plant. I am the mother of three daughters, one of whom is mobilized in the Patriotic Military Service first women's contingent.¹⁴ [Applause]

I am not in favor of approving the law on abortion. Today hospitals are full of irresponsible women who are having abortions. What will it be like when abortion is legal? What would happen? It would lead to prostitution. I don't agree with that, because if we had a revolution here it was to make new men and new women out of us.

Secondly, I think the right-wing parties have no right to be in the elections or to vote. During Somoza's time they did not fight against the dictatorship. I even remember a time that a massacre occurred in the San Miguel market. The Conservative Party allowed the National Guard to massacre their people. Therefore, the only ones who

have the right to govern are Commander Daniel and the Sandinista Front. They are the only ones who fought the dictatorship, so, for me, Commander Daniel should continue and there should be no more elections.

(From this point on, most of the speakers do not give their names.)

I do not want to leave without expressing my concern. I am proud to have been born a peasant. I want to talk about Articles 40 and 41 on agrarian reform and cooperatives. The articles do not say that women can be landowners. Therefore, I think it would be appropriate (to add that). You could say it is a right that we have conquered, that we have won.

— Good evening. It is true that we have covered most subjects, but a woman's right to have a job after pregnancy should be written into the constitution. Women have the right to return to their jobs even after a lapse of six or seven months.

— Good evening all. I wanted to speak about abortion to emphasize one more point. We must talk about the men. Many fathers abandon or repudiate their children, or say that the children are not theirs. It has happened to me.

I have five children. Of the five, two children have one father and three have another. Neither of the two fathers helps me. I tried to call one of them at his job and he changed jobs. I even resorted to abortion. It didn't work, but I did try it. When you find out you're pregnant, the guy says, "Who knows whose it is, honey?" and you've got to deal with it alone. I really don't see

why a child who is not wanted should be born.

Ligia Gutiérrez. I come from the Tejidos Nicaragua textile plant. The question I have is about Article 113. I speak for my sisters at work. When they go back to work after childbirth, they lose their vacation time. Vacation time has nothing to do with maternity leave, so it should not be lost. Thank you.

Ligia Altagirano Gómez. I am a gynecologist at the Benito Calderón Hospital. We want to point out what we have already shown with facts, figures, and statistics. Women are still dying (from illegal abortions). The women are not lazy, irresponsible, ill-fated, or prostitutes, as some have said here. They are workers of all sectors of society, of all ages, and of all professions. There are Catholics, Protestants, and atheists. On top of that we have women dying who are human beings, women of the people: laundresses, pressers, cooks who can't afford to go for a safe abortion.

I want to ask, once and for all — let's end the nightmare of women dying of botched abortions. We need to write into the constitution — as human rights — sex education, real family planning methods accessible to the whole population, and legalized abortion.

And we are not for education this year, family planning next year, and legalization in 20 years. No, the three things must appear now in this constitution if we are to solve the problem.

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¹⁴ The first volunteer women's contingent joined Nicaragua's military service on May 29, 1986.

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The Wasted Half

Initiated nearly two years ago, India's ambitious reforestation project has failed so far to produce the desired results: The country is still short of fuel wood

"Continued deforestation has brought us face to face with a sociological and socioeconomic crisis. The trend must be halted. I propose to set up a 'National Wasteland Development Board' with the object of bringing 5

million hectares of land every year under fuelwood and fodder plantations. We shall develop a people's movement for afforestation."

Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi



The annual rate of loss of good forest land in India is about 1.5 mha

Soon after the Indian Minister made this statement on January 5, 1985, the National Wasteland Development Board (NWDB) came into existence under the chairmanship of Rajiv Gandhi himself. Now, some eighteen months later, one may wonder what results, if any, the NWDB has been able to achieve.

For any observer of the Indian environment, it is evident that intentions are one thing, execution another, and the end results are often unexpected and highly undesirable.

There is a certain confusion about how to define and identify wastelands. After sorting out several concepts, it appears that out of India's 329 million hectares (mha) landmass, 146 million mha is wasteland — i.e., land that does not produce biomass consistent with its soil and water potential.

Alone, the Indian States of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra each have over 5 million mha of wastelands. Andhra Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh have over 5 million mha each, with the remaining States ranging from 0.14 to 5 million mha.

Out of a total of 143 million mha of agricultural land, at least 40 million mha are degraded lands. Loss of agricultural land is about 2 million mha per year. In the forestry sector, of the 75 million mha remaining, 10 million mha has lost all tree cover, and another 10 million mha is under scrub only. The annual rate of loss of good forest land is about 1.5 million mha.

For the NWDB, land degradation is caused by population growth and increased herds of livestock, forest fires, industrialization, railways, the bu

of large dams and reservoirs, road construction in fragile mountain areas, poor irrigation and agricultural practices, shifting cultivation methods, and increased use of wood as fuel in some regions. The organization fails to mention any environmental damages caused by mining activities.

The steady degradation of the Indian environment has led to alternating floods and droughts, landslides and desertification — all of which causes further loss of usable biomass. As a result, people are forced into a vicious circle of further exploitation of the remaining land resources, in an attempt to survive in a fast-windling ecosystem.

At present, the demand for firewood in India is about 130 million tons per year, but only 49 million tons is estimated to be available for use. If the present trend continues, firewood requirements will vault to 230 million tons by the year 2000. At the existing levels of productivity, this means the cultivation of 230 mha for fuel wood alone. Over the past two decades, fuel wood prices have gone up by almost 700 percent.

The estimated demand for fodder is about 700 million tons, while supply is only 540 million tons.

Those who suffer most from this environmental degradation are people in the poorer half of the population who depend on the common resources of under-cultivated lands. The greatest burden of all falls on rural women whose job it is to fetch fuel wood and fodder for their animals. A task that was once only a boring daily chore has now become excessively taxing and sometimes dangerous. This largely explains why Indian women are now



The reforestation program has so far benefitted bigger farmers only

acutely conscious (and on occasions very vocal and active) of the urgent need for stepping up cultivation of such species as will produce locally usable biomass. The Indian male peasant can be more easily persuaded into adopting the quick growing of cash crops demanded by industries and urban markets.

Twenty years after independence, India has not shed its old colonial habits of excessive and indiscriminate exploitation of the environment. Very little conscious effort has been made to replace what is extracted from the soil. In contrast with the old afforestation rate of 0.15 mha per year, the Prime Minister's new target of 5 mha may seem overly ambitious, yet its urgency cannot be overstressed.

The NWDB's program calls for an initial, systematic survey of each village and category of land in order to determine the needs of villagers and the adequate cultivation methods for each area. If such work has ever been done, it certainly has not covered the entire country, nor has it been systematically recorded. Deliberate suppression

of information, sheer apathy — whatever the reason, the program has failed to come up with any definite schemes or any sensible evaluation.

The program's guidelines also indicate that the NWDB is well aware of the need for proper selection of species and the ability to offer a timely and adequate provision of inputs, especially seeds and saplings. If the Prime Minister's target is to be achieved, roughly 1,000 crore (10 billion) saplings will have to be provided every year. And this, the NWDB acknowledges, can only be done through decentralized nurseries.

The NWDB has lately admitted that much of the successful work in this area is being done by non-governmental organizations (NGOs), which have greater credibility than the government in the eyes of the local people. It also recognizes the important role of women in developmental activities. This has led the Board to develop a framework for encouraging and supporting NGOs, as well as village-level women's groups. Guidelines have also been adopted for using various

rural employment and development schemes for afforestation and wasteland recovery work. The possibility of leasing land to the landless is also being considered. This would mean the distribution of 60 to 80 mha of degraded land among 300 million people. As far as community and panchayat (village council) land is concerned, the purpose of the program is *not* to assign land to the landless, though it is admitted that "the employment of daily wage earners cannot be seen as people's participation."



India can meet only one third of her annual fuelwood needs

The government is also considering the leasing of more land to the private sector for industrial plantations. At the same time, it is pointed out that "any arrangement that does not take into account the needs of the poorest is not likely to succeed."

To achieve the 5-mha target by 1987-88, the NWDB estimates it will need some Rs 4,000 crores (40 billion rupees). Of this, one-quarter will be provided by the

forest department; another quarter, from the rural development plan. Of the remaining Rs 2,000 crores, the government hopes to be able to provide about Rs 1,500 crores and raise the rest in the form of private investments. NWDB critics, however, believe a substantial part of the total amount will actually come in the form of loans from such agencies as the World Bank and Nabard; and since such money must be repaid, it will tend to be invested in industrial plantations, rather than to improve the environment through afforestation or to im-

prove the life quality of Indian peasants.

What is really happening

Though many a government report makes tall claims with regard to forestry, NWDB officials admit that their social forestry programs have so far benefitted the bigger farmers, and that the poor have been bypassed "as in many other

programs." The primary goal of producing fuel wood for the rural sector seems to have been diverted because of strong market pull in the direction of organized industry — and industrial demand is certainly not declining (see table).

Today, much of the fuelwood produce is bought up by industrial concerns at ridiculously low prices, while the local people are forced to pay through their noses for the same produce — if they have any left. Wherever industry does not make cheap purchases directly it does so through the government, by passing off industrial plantations as social forestry. This is made obvious by the selection of such species as eucalyptus for monoculture, a species that is in great demand in the market but provides only fuel wood for local consumption and absolutely no fodder. The monoculture of eucalyptus, which some experts claim is harmful to the ecosystem, is being intensely promoted at the expense of other tested, proven and more utilitarian indigenous species.

Another way of providing benefits to a chosen few is the selection of beneficiaries through the panchayats. People who are awarded lease or *pana* rights are often a fraction of the local population and active supporters of the political party that happens to control the panchayat. Thus such afforestation schemes passed off as "people's participation", they actually end up privatizing a common base resource and creating a class of *nouveaux riches* among the generally poor rural population.

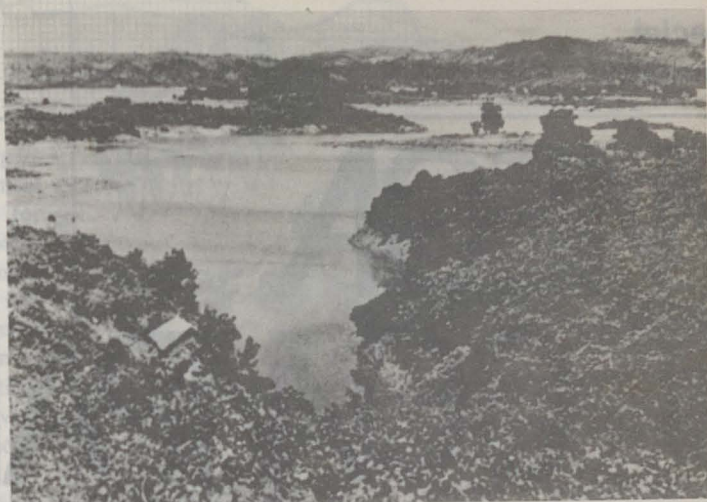
One of the consequences of this scheme that rarely comes under fire is the free distribution of pesticides and chemical fertilizers in the way of incentives

Use of many of these products, especially pesticides, is either banned or restricted in order to protect countries due to their harmful effects on the environment and human health.

The seeds of change the Indian people desperately needs are not merely those that will grow into trees. The rural population are the mainstay of any afforestation movement, yet they are treated as mere statistics when not called insensitive, ignorant or apathetic. To be sure, most of them have not shown any signs of a newly acquired aspiration for wealth in cash. Their values system has evolved slowly over centuries of colonial exploitation and still persists after independence.

Why should they act otherwise? The rural people have watched in awe as huge dams pulp thousands of hectares of arable land, while the benefits of electric power go to the cities. They have seen contractors and governments alike felling down and trucking away entire forests overnight; huge industries causing pollution and disease; powerful landlords who rule supreme over their lives; mines eating into the earth to leave behind only rubble, rocks, landslides and death. These people cannot be "taught" or indoctrinated in isolation and expected to change and become whole while this "development process" continues to benefit only a few.

There are no signs in today's India of a desired reversal of trends; on the contrary, it is clear that urban development is likely to continue at the expense of the rural people. A professor of mining recently told his audience at a workshop on wasteland development at Kharagpur: "Ladies and gentlemen, I



Contractors and governments have trucked away entire forests overnight

Forest raw material requirements of some major wood-based industries

	Current (1985)	In the year 2000
Matchwood	680,000 m ³	1,415,000 m ³
Plywood and veneer	500,000 m ³	1,045,000 m ³
Fiber & particle boards	55,000 tons	155,000 tons
Pulp paper, including newsprint	4,500,000 tons	13,900,000 tons
Sports goods - wood	31,000 m ³	
Sports goods - cane	500,000 canes	101,000 m ³
Sawmilling	13,400,000 m ³	24,940,000 m ³
Furniture and panelling	250,000 m ³	400,000 m ³

Source: Department of Forests and Wildlife, 1985.

Note: By the year 2000, India will need to have 260 million hectares under forest to provide for industrial needs. This calculation does not include amounts given above in tons. One cubic meter is equivalent to roughly 1.3 cubic yards.

would like to tell you how much damage environmentalists have done to mining in this country." He later admitted that a certain amount of indiscriminate destruction has been caused by mining in the past, but insisted that Indians should try to forget it and evolve new and less degrading mining methods.

Some Indians might perhaps forget. But what of the people

who have been displaced with little or no compensation, their lifestyles completely disrupted - the same people who are now expected to set about enthusiastically planting trees? Will they be able to forget? ●

Ajoy Chaudhuri
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third world - 85

Special
economy

MEGA COMPANIES

AND THE THIRD WORLD

Research: Maluza Stein
Final Version: Ana Pessoa



At the rate of 11 mergers a day, the capitalistic world is giving birth to monstrously large and powerful transnational corporations, in a process of capital concentration that may have serious consequences for Asian, African and Latin American countries.

Last year alone, 3,000 mergers took place in the US business world, in a frantic drive for gigantism that has surprised even some of Wall Street's most experienced observers. In twelve months, at the rate of eleven mergers a day, US investors mobilized some US\$ 200 billion in an effort to consolidate their positions in the market and thus survive the "economic Darwinism" enforced by the Reagan administration.

Nearly all of this money came from bank loans backed by papers and bonds, not all of which with sound credit ratings. Actually, most of the recent transactions were made possible by the issue of what some financial observers call "junk bonds." The old American belief in money generating money seems to have been replaced by a conviction that debt can breed wealth through the acquisition of more debt. And the major target in this wild race for power is the electronics industry, which Wall Streeters view as capitalism's new magic at.

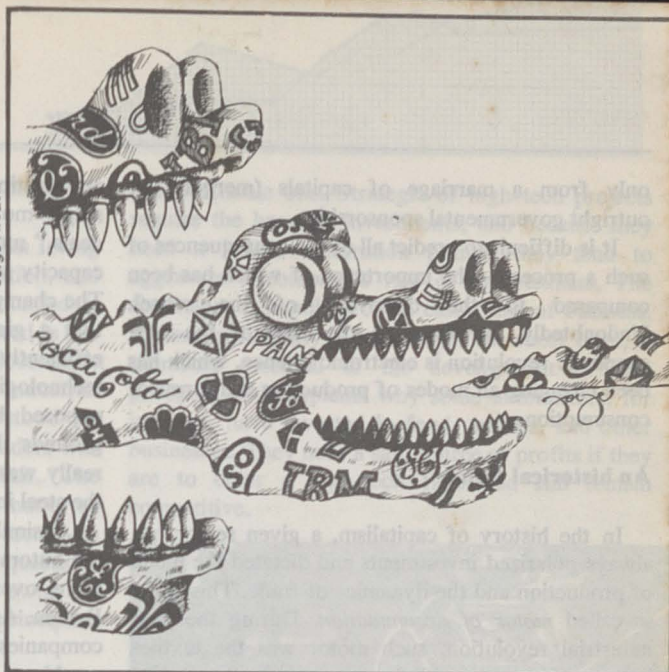
The number of mergers has grown so fast and so much that even their initial advocates are now calling for caution and would prefer to see things cool down a bit. They fear this orgy of speculation may have too high a price for the Western economic system. Yet the merger fever goes on in the US economy, and has already contributed to change the direction of the country's industrial development and the definition of what is and what is not a strategic area of production.

Escalated concentration

Transnational companies that were already enormously powerful have merged with others in their same line of business, or expanded their scope of production in buyout operations involving huge sums of money, in a total equivalent to the combined Gross Domestic Product of several small countries in the Third World.

The amount so invested in the US in 1985 exceeds the combined foreign debts of Brazil and Argentina (see table). In 1969-1980, there were only

Jorge Arbach



twelve mergers or buyouts among US companies exceeding US\$ 1 billion; in 1985, similar operations involved an average of US\$ 3 billion.

The "marriage" of capitals resulting from this increased concentration of transnational corporations "is having as deep an impact on the US economy as the advent of the railroad, the airplane or the telephone," says US Democratic Representative Timothy Wirth. And a top executive at Lazard Frères - one of the largest and most traditional firms in the world's greatest capitalistic power - admits he never before had seen anything like it.

From communications to missiles

Typical of this concentration process is a major change in the focus of business interests. In the past, mergers occurred more often in the oil business and other trades involving the exploitation of natural resources. Since the early 1980s, and especially since 1985, companies have converged toward "strategic" industrial areas that are seen as critical to a revitalization of the Western economic system - ranging from communications to weaponry and the aerospace industry (missile and satellite construction, maintenance and services), and including the production of nuclear energy. These are high-technology sectors requiring extremely heavy investments, the funds for which can originate

only from a marriage of capitals (mergers) or outright governmental sponsorship.

It is difficult to predict all of the consequences of such a process – the importance of which has been compared to the discovery of the wheel. Undoubtedly, however, at the core of the new economic revolution is electronic science, which has been changing all modes of production and forms of consumption.

An historical trend

In the history of capitalism, a given sector has always polarized investments and dictated the mode of production and the dynamics of trade. This is the so-called *motor of accumulation*. During the first industrial revolution, such motor was the textiles industry. Later on, with the opening of railroads and the revolution in transportation and communications, industries in the oil and steel businesses ranked first in the priority list of investors and profiteers.

In the 1920s, the introduction of the assembly line by Henry Ford in the production of his Model T automobiles completely changed industrial production methods and gave birth to the modern automotive industry, which was to remain as the new motor of accumulation in rich countries until the mid-1960s.

During this period, a group of more aggressive companies also ended up absorbing weaker ones. In 1901, for example, a series of mergers put an end to

competition in the American steel industry. A single move which its authors called “the deal,” more than 65% of the country’s steelmaking capacity went into the hands of a single company. The champions of such capital concentration claimed that a giant-size corporation could produce more efficiently at lower costs and generate greater technological advances. Their arguments were opposed by various Congress committees on the grounds that, rather than the alleged reasons, what really was at stake was the intention to monopolize the steel industry and eliminate competitors.

A similar capital concentration occurred also in the automobile industry. Early in this century there were over 100 large automakers in the US and Britain. At present there are no more than ten large companies in the automotive industry in the world.

In addition, large corporations are diversifying their lines of production and investing in “high-tech” areas. General Motors, for example, recently outbid Boeing and Ford by paying US\$1 billion for the stock control of Mill Hughes Aircraft (the Pentagon’s seventh largest supplier and one of the world’s main manufacturers of satellites, missiles, helicopters and computers). By 1984, it had already bought out Electronic Data Systems, the world’s number one data processing company.

All this points to the fact that capital concentration is an inherent trend in capitalist development. A child of free competition, capital

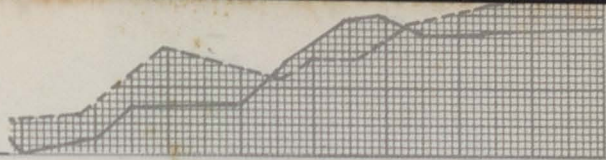
1985: A Record Year

□ According to a 1986 *Financial Times* survey, the total amount of money involved in mergers and acquisitions in the US was a staggering US\$ 179.6 billion in 1985, approaching the level recorded in 1973 and 47 percent above the 1984 level.

Among the characteristics of the 1985 operations was an all-time high total of 36 megamergers (thus called because each operation exceeded US\$ 1.5 billion) and a drop in the demand for oil-related businesses, which had been on the top

of the list in previous years. The survey noted that in six sectoral groups industries were bought at a price 40 percent higher than their actual market values; in the transportation and communication sectors, overpricing reached 50 percent.

The largest operation involving non-oil companies in the history of the United States was GE’s purchase of RCA for US\$ 6.28 billion while the largest buyout operation was made by Beatrice in the food sector: US\$ 5.36 billion. A similar concentration and relocation of capital had not occurred since 1973 – the year which marked the beginning of the deepest recession in the capitalist world since the crash of 1929.



eventually leads to monopoly, which is the exact opposite of free competition.

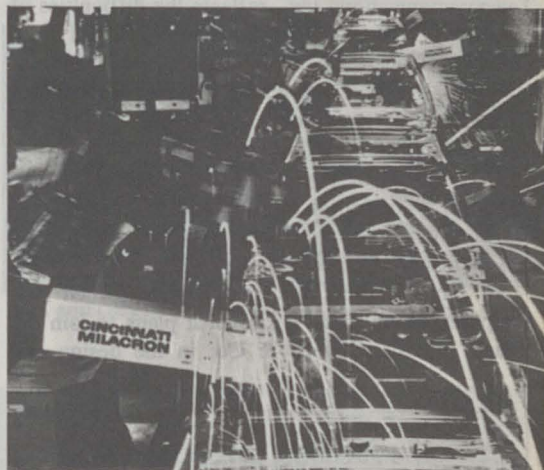
According to US New-Right theoretician Irving Kristol, the founders of the American nation, and even Adam Smith himself, would be astounded at the kind of capitalism which is being practiced in our times. Kristol, one of the most prestigious journalists and mass media communicators in the industrial North, argues that capitalism as understood by Jefferson, Hamilton and other early US leaders was an individual affair, or at most a family affair. "The present-day large corporation would be a matter of perplexity and grave concern for those men," he adds. "They would certainly ask the same questions we are asking ourselves these days: Who owns the new Leviathan? Who, by what right and principles, controls it?"

Determining prices and eliminating competition

Mario Burkun, a PhD in International Economics from the University of Paris and a Professor of Economics at the University of Buenos Aires, believes that the large number of commercial bankruptcies and the restructuring of the US industrial, commercial and financial makeup in the 1970s have led to the current trend toward mergers, centralization and concentration of capitals. He points out that the annual number of mergers had declined in the 1970s. In 1969, for instance, there were 6,000 mergers in the capitalistic world, while by 1980 this total had dropped to 2,000. However, though such operations had declined in number, they involved increasingly larger amounts of money. Fourteen operations amounting to more than US\$ 100 million each were recorded in 1975; by 1980 their number had grown to 94. From then on, mergers have increased in number and in the total of dollars involved.

But capital concentration is only one side of the picture: diversification is another. As they grow, international monopolies and oligopolies become increasingly capable of controlling prices and eliminating competition in all areas of trade. Crucial to this process is an artifice known as "cross-subsidization," by means of which a company uses the income generated by a given product to finance the development of an initially

less profitable one. Strategic or high-tech projects require the heaviest investments, and because they need a longer maturation period, they tend to aggravate a company's rate of indebtedness. The simultaneous handling of an easier line of business, whose profitability is ensured in the short term, is therefore essential to the development of new products. This explains why some automakers, for instance, have invested in food, textiles, and other businesses. They need a safe source of profits if they are to enter a high-tech field and still remain competitive.



Automakers expand into unlikely fields such as food and packaging to ensure the ready money they need for long-term investment in high-tech projects

The integration of transnationals

Side by side with diversification is a clear trend in the direction of a greater "internationalization" of capitals through associations or direct purchases. In the area of communications, the West German Siemens AG joined the CTE Corporation, a US telecommunications group, in order to develop, manufacture and market digital telecommunication equipment in the US. However, concerned about US makers' attempts to capture the French market, the same Siemens group made it known last January that it is willing to "cooperate" with Compagnie Générale de Constructions Téléphoniques (CGTC), which is France's second largest supplier of telephone equipment.

In December 1984, the US Digital Equipment Corporation (the world's second largest computer manufacturer) negotiated a joint venture in the area of plant automation with Comau, a subsidiary of the Italian Fiat. In turn, the French government has lately been examining a European alternative to the US Telegraph and Telephone (AT&T) so as to give the French telecommunications market a choice of official suppliers of telephone equipment.

In the US, according to the AP/Dow Jones,¹ the proposed merger of Sprint, CTE's long-distance telephone communications unit, and United Telecommunications Inc., reflects the difficulties of competing in a market dominated by AT&T. The Sprint-UTI merger, which took place last year, involved a total of US\$ 45 billion, and was the third "megafusion" recorded so far in the telecommunications industry.

In the area of equipment and machinery, Otis Elevator, a division of the US United Technologies, has proposed to buy all shares of the French Saxby S.A., a maker of power stackers.

In January 1986, the French state-owned Bull computer group made it known it plans to join the Italian Ing. C. Olivetti & Co. in the design and

manufacture of automated bank equipment terminals.

These are only a few examples among scores of others, involving anything from traditional products such as cigarettes, beverages and toys to steelmaking and chemical industries, the latter being also seen as partially strategic.

"European observers," writes *Le Monde*, "warily as the US financial market seems to be possessed of the demon of gigantism." But if this phenomenon began and proceeds at full speed in the US and other rich countries, it is also present in the Third World, where new capital associations lead to a consolidation of existing conglomerates becoming increasingly more frequent, usually at the initiative of foreign companies.

As already pointed out, central to the current refurbishing of the capitalistic system, which is undergoing its third industrial revolution, is the electronics industry – and electronics has found its most sophisticated expression in Reagan's Stars program and all associated technological research and development activities.

No revolution, however, is carried out peacefully, and since the 1970s the current

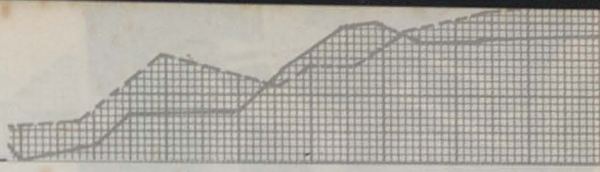
The Architect of Megadeals

Austrian-born Felix Rohatyn, 58, is known in Wall Street as a financial wizard – the architect of several megadollar mergers which have given birth to enormous transnational conglomerates in the past decade or so. It was he who helped engineer GE's acquisition of RCA, General Motors' purchase of Electronic Data, and IT&T's takeover of Hartford Insurance. Rohatyn has handled such billionaire operations since 1968 as a senior partner at Lazard Frères, a New York investment-banking company.

With his inside knowledge of this kind of big deals, Rohatyn warns against the potential instability of some of the mergers announced in the past few months. Interviewed by *Time* magazine, he said that the recent merger fever "has eroded confidence in US financial institu-

tions." Reason: the gigantic debt of US\$ trillion cumulated by companies in such growth race, a considerable amount of which is backed by "junk bonds" – high-yield promissory notes with low credit ratings "that may never be redeemed."

In spite of his warnings, junk bonds continue to proliferate in the Wall Street financial market. They are basically speculative papers, and some experts like Rohatyn are beginning to demand that order be restored to avoid financial chaos. Testifying before a US Senate subcommittee, Rohatyn emphasized that "US financial institutions, which are supposedly responsible for protecting their clients' interests and savings, have become gambling casinos that buy junk paper." Among the measures he advocates to avoid "excessive risk taking" is prohibiting companies from borrowing indiscriminately from other companies.



about has taken place amid a turmoil of bankruptcies and a reshuffling of capitals and markets. Both the US, West Germany and Japan already dominate the production of strategic goods and have been leading the race for high-tech products, but US power groups are still the ones that determine the overall character of capitalism's new accumulation pattern.

American leadership, which had been widely held in question in the 1970s, was aggressively resumed in 1981 when Ronald Reagan climbed to power in the US. Reagan brought with him to the White House a team of self-appointed neoconservative intellectuals and politicians. In contrast with the previous US presidents, for whom the system's economic and political crisis was the outcome of conjunctive conditions that had led to a squeezing of profits and a loss of dynamism in world trade, Reagan and his team saw the current crisis as the result of poor handling of international politics and economics on the part of his predecessors.

In the eyes of those Republican politicians, the prevailing situation was the first widespread capitalist crisis at a time when the world balance of power between socialism and capitalism, between revolution and counter-revolution, had been tipped against capitalism. No wonder, then, that their political, military, economic and social response should take on such an aggressive character. Their first move was to establish a fundamental coalition between the US government on the one hand, and international banking and industrial capitals on the other - a coalition that was closely related to the ensuing arms race.

The key to a better understanding of the political and economic guidelines adopted in the current restructuring of world capitalism lies in the somewhat contradictory relationship between the state and these capitals. And the origin of 90 percent of all technological changes introduced in the production of goods and services lies in the arms race.

According to Belgian economist Ernest Mandel, "We are living through a permanent Cold War marked by a continuous search for technological innovations in the area of weaponry, in which a new factor, an *extraeconomic force* (the manufacture of weapons), continually introduces new changes in

production techniques." However, having "exhausted" most of its natural and earthly expansion potential,² the capitalistic system now turns its eyes to space where it sees unlimited possibilities for high-tech related activities. The justification was "defense." Hence the need to overstate the enemy's capabilities, "and above all to perpetuate the notion of an everpresent threat."



RCA and GE executives celebrate their "wedding"

The "cold war"

On the international political plane, the US adopted the policy of a permanent East-West confrontation instead of the détente advocated by Nixon and Carter. On the economic plane, US national security became the rationale for increased military expenditures.

As early as 1973-74, under the Nixon administration, US authorities had utilized the fiscal deficit as a motor of economic expansion. At the time they could count on an abundant supply of petrodollars in the large international banks. Tax exemptions, Treasury bonds and other attractive benefits were confidentially promised by the US Treasury to the governments of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and other Arab countries. Thus the government eventually reactivated the US economy without having to resort - as Reagan did - to an increase in domestic interest rates.

In the 1980s, world conditions had changed for the worse. The solution found by Reagan to cope with the US loss of economic power was, on the one hand, to cut social expenditures, and on the other to reduce taxes so as to coax large corporations into making billionaire investments, especially in those areas the government viewed as strategic. Meanwhile, domestic interest rates were increased in order to attract foreign capitals into the country.

When in need of money, the government placed Treasury bonds in financial markets, offering

returns as high as those of private institutions. Consequently both the internal and external debt rose to unprecedented levels. And all this is done to finance the production of new weapons systems which, while "protecting capitalism against the enemy," offer new business opportunities for large corporations.

In the past ten years or so, the US Department of State has allotted over US\$ 1 trillion to the development of increasingly sophisticated weapons. Private corporations have used this money

Mergers in Advertising

□ Last April 27, the seventh largest advertising agency in the world, BBDO International Inc., merged with the thirteenth largest, Doile, Dane and Berbach (DDB) and the nineteenth largest, Needham Harper Worldwide, into a huge conglomerate that now ranks first in the world of advertising. All three are US agencies, the first with headquarters in New York, the second in Chicago, and the third in Detroit.

The new agency will handle advertising accounts to a total of US\$ 5 billion annually. In addition to a slice of the Chrysler account, BBDO has brought in the General Electric, Gillette, National Distillers, Lever Brothers

and Pepsi-Cola accounts, the latter having been awarded the highest advertising price last year. BBDO will keep 65 percent of the shares and will head the new enterprise.

DDB, which handles the IBM, Volkswagen, Nabisco, Clairol and Seagram's accounts, will hold 24 percent of the capital stock. The minority partner is Needham Harper, with 11 percent. Needham handles the Frigidaire, Anheuser-Bush (beer), Amtrak (a state-controlled US railroad company), and General Mills accounts.

The creation of the world's largest advertising agency seems to indicate that the merger fever has also found its way into the major segment of US business.

"The prestige of advertising agencies has grown enormously in the past few years," says Philip H. Dougherty of the *New York Times*. "Advertising has taken it upon itself to create

THE WORLD'S TEN LARGEST AD AGENCIES

(By income)

	Income (In US\$ millions)	Invoicings
1. Young and Rubican	536.0	3,580
2. Ogilvy	481.1	3,320
3. Dentsu Inc.	473.1	3,620
4. Ted Bates Worldwide	466.0	3,110
5. J. Walter Thompson & Company	450.0	3,010
6. Saatchi & Saatchi Compton Worldwide	440.9	3,030
7. BBDO International	377.0	2,520
8. McCann Erickson Worldwide	345.2	2,300
9. D'Arcy, Masius, Benton & Bowles	319.5	2,180
10. Foote, Cane & Belding Communications	284.5	1,900

'perceptible' product differences that, because of technological advances, usually are not there."

Observers in the advertising world believe the merger trend will continue, and that within a few years there will be only a handful of agencies operating on a world scale.

begin the recent process of capital concentration mentioned above.

However, this is a kind of policy that cannot be implemented without giving rise to conflicts and contradictions. The US is today a highly indebted nation (a trade deficit of US\$ 150 billion, a fiscal deficit³ of US\$ 200 billion, and a domestic corporate debt of US\$ 1.8 trillion in 1985), a country that manipulates its currency in order to serve its own national and private interests. It can hardly hope to continue to tell the rest of the world what to do.

The American Achilles' heel lies precisely in the speculative nature of the US economic model. In the area of international relations, the US has increasingly had to resort to force in order to impose its will. This is true of US relations with the Third World (some recent examples are the attacks on Libya and the overt support of Nicaraguan *contras*, not to mention the recessive economic policies imposed on low- and middle-income countries by the IMF), and with its own allies.

While going deeper and deeper into debt (Japan alone holds some US\$ 100 billion in US treasury



Electronics has been the target in many recent mergers

bonds), the government has lifted most bans on monopolistic expansion, raised its military expenses, and gradually cancelled social benefits that were extended to the lower classes of the US population. In the "new order" of things, only the strongest can survive, and very little is left of the liberal democracy which was once a US mark.

Unilever, a New Giant in Mexico

□ The Third World has not escaped the recent wave of mergers. Item: the transaction that made it possible for British-Dutch Unilever, the world's largest enterprise in the area of agribusiness, to grab the Mexican market by buying out the no less prosperous Mexican subsidiary of the US Anderson Clayton Corporation.

The deal was closed early this year. Anderson Clayton is the dominant transnational in the Mexican food business, having arrived there 50 years ago by acquiring 61 percent of the stock of a local conglomerate, and now has 26 industrial plants throughout the country. Fourteen of these are engaged in the animal food trade, with the others producing cereal and vegetable meals, edible oil, vegetal margarine and butter, candy, and

delicatessen.

In total sales, ACC ranks second in Mexico, next only to Nestle's. In turn, Unilever ranked 18th in the world in 1984 according to *Fortune* magazine, with Nestle's lagging behind in 49th place.

Unilever's infiltration of the Mexican market through the business empire it acquired from ACC will imply a major recomposition in an area traditionally dominated by US groups.

Out of 130 transnationals operating in the Mexican agribusiness, 104 are US-based enterprises, while the rest are subsidiaries of Swiss, Italian, Japanese and French companies. Between them they control 100 percent of the production of baby foods, 95 percent of poultry, 93 percent of dairy products and soluble coffee, 70 percent of vegetable meals and powdered milk, 60 percent of balanced food products, and 30 percent of canned fruits and vegetables.

The Rush for the Electronic Gold

□ To European observers, the US economy seems possessed of the demon of gigantism. Not a month went by in 1985 without increasingly spectacular takeovers and mergers in the world of big business. The largest operation ever transacted by a non-oil company occurred in December when General Electric paid US\$ 6.28 billion to incorporate another giant known as RCA. Merging the assets owned by these two companies, which are major Pentagon suppliers and two of the US largest manufacturers of consumer goods, has given rise to a huge conglomerate whose annual sales may reach some US\$ 40 billion – the equivalent of the entire trade surplus of a major exporter like Japan. The GE-RCA consortium now ranks seventh in *Fortune* magazine's list of the 500 largest business enterprises, slightly behind IBM and ahead of Du Pont, and contributes to consolidate the US position as the world leader in such sectors as telecommunications.

General Electric, which already puts out an endless list of products ranging from dish washers to jet turbines, from medical equipment to missile components and atomic reactors, now owns a TV network (NBC) which is the third largest and most popular in the US, in addition to such gold mines as the copyright on all reproductions of Elvis Presley songs, which are among the world's top selling recordings.

GE Chairman John Welch, 50, who joined the company created by Thomas Edison in 1878 – later known as GE, after merging with other enterprises in 1892 – said that, having bought RCA, the company will have “the technological capability, financial resources and global scope to be able to compete successfully with anyone, anywhere, in every market we serve.” GE's top executive, whom *Time* calls “an informal man who works twelve- to 16-hour days and often pops in on his subordinates unannounced”, will now command a total work force of 300,000 employees all over the world.

No obstacle to the deal was the fact that GE had been fined last year (US\$ 1.04 million) for having defrauded the US Air Force of US\$ 800,000 on a project involving the refurbishing

of Minutemen missiles, an episode which Chairman Welch thinks is best forgotten, claiming that only a few employees and no top executives were involved in the crime.

On the other side of the Atlantic, other large companies are also vying for a stronger position in the market and increased competitiveness. In addition to the German megamerger of Daimler-Benz and AEG-Telefunken (the latter has been on the verge of bankruptcy since 1980) and scores of others in West Germany, Japan and France, the two largest Italian telecommunications companies – Fiat's Teletra and State-owned Italtel – also merged last December. Hopefully this will give the Italians the necessary clout to play a decisive role where telecommunications technology is concerned. Italtel belongs to the Stet group (which, in turn, is part of a Swedish owned holding known as ITI, or Institute of Industrial Reconstruction).

No precise details have yet been made public on this deal, but this is not the first time Italian groups decide to cooperate with each other to promote joint ventures in the electronic sector since 1960. The Fiat-Stet merger will give rise to a mixed enterprise, with each partner holding 50 percent of the shares, whereas a third associated party, probably a bank, is expected to take up the remaining 4 percent.

To give an idea of the business volume handled by some of the worldwide telecommunications companies, the US National Telecommunications Information Administration has disclosed that the total sales in the information industry amounted to US\$ 450 billion in 1984. The NTIA estimates that this figure will rise to US\$ 830 billion by 1990 – an amount of money equivalent to the entire foreign debt of Third World countries. Of the US\$ 450 billion invoiced by the sector in 1984, US\$ 325 billion was invested in telecommunications services and equipment, with the rest being absorbed by the computer industry. Communication investments throughout the world will probably reach some US\$ 540 billion by 1990.

Hence some of the billionaire mergers which have taken place in the past few years. To compete in the world market, a company must continually adapt itself to new technologies – a feat which the international industrial giant claim cannot be achieved in isolation.

The consequences of this gap between a rhetorical "defense of democracy" and a contradictory practice have not failed to call the attention of the US public. In the bygone days of free competition, 70 percent of all Americans were self-employed; now only 7 percent belong to this privileged category. Absolute poverty and unemployment – especially among the young – have increased. The elderly now get less governmental aid when they did a decade ago. As a Citibank councillor noted recently, all this gives the US some of the traits of underdeveloped countries. Nowadays US politicians themselves admit that the future of liberal democracy is put in jeopardy by the steady growth and expansion of transnational corporations.

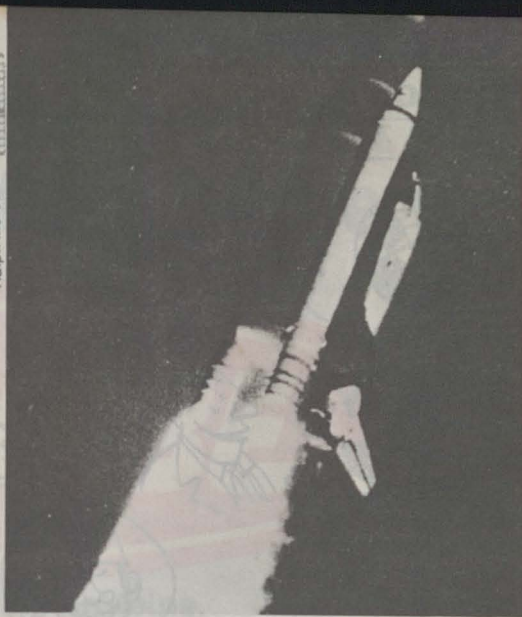
If these are the domestic consequences of the current US economic model, what will be its impact on the Third World? Deprived of any further possibilities of self-development because of its financial, commercial and technological dependence on the industrial North, Third World countries now realize that, in a world dominated by monopolistic capitalism where decisions are made by a handful of bankers and high-tech industrialists, it is very difficult to sustain democratic regimes or preserve national sovereignty and dignity.

Yet, differences exist in the Third World also: the impact is more dramatic on the poorer countries. Just as capitalistic competition favors the more powerful companies, so the less developed nations, being less capable of investing in the new technologies, become less competitive on the international plane, and consequently have less bargaining power in their political negotiations with industrial countries.

Compounding this situation is the foreign debt problem. Here the Third World lies victim of a continued capital flight via outrageous interest payments and a permanent decline in world prices of commodities, both of which are imposed on it by the same powerful interest groups that control all other sectors of the world economy. Thus the Third World, which supplies the financial and material means for the reformulation of the capitalistic system, becomes utterly unable to promote its own development or fulfill the aspirations of its peoples.

Faced with an increasingly centralized transnational economic power, underdeveloped

Ralph Morse



Star Wars may spell the end of liberal democratic dreams in the United States

nations have come to the conclusion that their only option is to promote South-South cooperation in major international issues. For over a decade now, the Non-Aligned Countries Movement – which is the broadest and most influential forum in the Third World – has been claiming for a New International Economic Order, as well as a restructuring of the world information system that will lead to a more democratic access to mass communication media.

This may well turn out to be the formula for Third World survival in a world environment which is threatened by the monopolistic Leviathan of the industrial North. ●

¹ AP/Dow Jones is a financial information service offered by the Associated Press in conjunction with the New York Stock Exchange.

² Outright colonial exploitation as it existed until the nineteenth century has become unfeasible for imperialist nations since the 1960s. On the other hand, there are no wild and virgin frontiers to be conquered. In the 1980s world trade dropped to the low levels prevailing immediately after the 1929 crisis. Financial expansion as made possible by transnational banks through debts contracted by Third World countries also went into a major crisis as of 1982. Meanwhile, sales of automobiles and other goods have experienced a serious decline worldwide, and no longer attract sufficient investment to keep the old accumulation process going.

³ The fiscal deficit is the difference between what a government spends and what it collects in the way of taxes.

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