

The Analyst

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March/April, 1988

N.L.C. Ban:
CHALLENGE TO
WORKERS

**MAN-MADE
DROUGHT,
MAN-MADE
HUNGER**



**WHO'S
AFRAID OF KURU?**



PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT

The attention of the Board of Directors of the Dansa Publications Limited has been drawn to a publication by the dismissed Chief Executive of Dansa Publications Limited and Editor-in-Chief of *The Analyst*, Danjuma Adamu, alleging that there is a "Crisis" in the company. The fact of the matter is that following internal investigations, in which he fully participated, it was discovered that:

1. Danjuma Adamu had mismanaged the affairs of the company;
2. Danjuma Adamu had all along been involved in secretly and illegally printing additional copies of *The Analyst* at the expense of the company, without reporting the proceeds from the sale of these to the company.

Consistent with our commitment to public accountability and probity, the company would not make an exception of Danjuma Adamu, and his criminal conduct was reported to the police on 12th February, 1988, at Kaduna.

The publication by the dismissed Chief Executive and Editor-in-Chief, which he purports to be *The Analyst*, is an attempt by him to divert attention from this criminal activities.

The Board and Management of the Dansa Publications Limited wishes therefore to assure our numerous readers and supporters that we shall spare no effort in defending probity and accountability in this case, as in all others.

The same *Fitila* and *The Analyst*, incisive and fearless as ever, shall continue to be on the news stands.

MANAGEMENT

DISCLAIMER



Danjuma Adamu

This is to inform the general public that Mr. Danjuma A. Adamu, whose photograph appears above, has been dismissed from the Dansa Publications Limited, Publishers of *The Analyst*. Anybody who transacts any business with him on behalf of the company therefore does so at his or her own risk.

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In this

The Analyst

THE SPECTRE OF HUNGER

The spectre of hunger now looms large on the horizon in Nigeria — a richly endowed country. Who is to blame for this paradox — man or nature?

Page 6

NLC BAN AND WORKERS

The NLC has now been banned by the Babangida regime. What are the implications and challenges of the ban for the Nigerian workers?

Page 21

NUTRITION: Capitalism Vs Socialism

In most capitalist countries, the growing of more food does not mean less hunger and better nutrition for the poor. What is the situation like in socialist economies?

Page 23

CONTENTS

	Page
Comment	4
Letters	5
NIGERIA: The Spectre of Hunger	6
CAUSES OF HUNGER: Population or Exploitation?	11
Children, Hunger and Nigeria's Future	13
UPDATE: Stealing the Food of the Starving	15
LET ME SPEAK: We eat Dussa to Survive	16
REVOLUTION AND FAMINE: The Case of Ethiopia	17
NLC CRISIS: The Challenge to Nigerian Workers	21
FOOD AND NUTRITION: Capitalism vs Socialism.....	23
The Debt — Equity Trap	27
KURU CONFERENCE — Where is the Report?.....	29
SOUTHERN AFRICA: Towards Total War?.....	32

CHANGE OF COVER PRICE

Because of the considerable rise in recent months in production costs, it has become necessary for us to increase our Cover Price from N2.00 to N3.00 as from the next issue. We believe that our thousands of readers in and outside the country will understand the basis of our action and bear with us. On our part, we will strive even harder to make it worth your while to buy and read The Analyst.

— MANAGEMENT

COMMENT

THIS HUNGER IS MAN-MADE

We cannot talk, yet, of a large-scale famine in this country. Certainly there are no reports yet of mass deaths from starvation. But few would deny that the spectre of hunger already looms large on the horizon, flashing ominous signals across the country. Everywhere you go, from east to west, from north to south, basic food items are increasingly out of the reach of most Nigerians, including many among the middle classes. As the tables of rising food prices in this issue illustrate, even in the southern savannah and forest belts, like in Kwara, Ondo, and Bendel States, food prices have been rising relentlessly in recent years. This is not even to talk of what has been happening in the sahel and semi-desert zones of Sokoto, Katsina, Kano and Borno. In fact, in the last one year alone, the prices of many staple food items have doubled and even tripled. And all this at a time when higher taxes, new levies and fees, retrenchment, land seizures, usury, and all sorts of budgetary cuts and reductions are imposing cruel burdens on the overwhelming majority of the people, making them less and less able to afford to buy anything.

The situation is such that today in the rural and urban areas, many Nigerians — unable to afford anything nourishing — are forced to resort to eating the food of donkeys and goats. In the northernmost parts of the country, for example, many poor families now feed on *dusa* (grain bran) in order just to survive. In the forest areas the parts of the tubers usually fed to livestock are now increasingly consumed in poor households. In most homes across the country, therefore, the children are becoming grossly undernourished, underweight, and diseased, being denied the most elementary nutrition they require for normal healthy growth of their limbs and brain. This is going to have devastating consequences for the future of this country.

This tragic situation of the spectre of hunger stalking a country like Nigeria, so much blessed with fertile land, rainfall, rivers, lakes, lagoons, creeks, a rich continental shelf, minerals, and massive human resources, needs to be properly understood and faced honestly and squarely if a major disaster is to be avoided.

We of THE ANALYST do not share the view of the establishment in this country that nature is to blame for this tragic situation. For, in the first place, although the rainfall last year was certainly inadequate in a number of areas, the actual decline in the amount that fell was not that drastic outside a few areas. Overall, there was enough rainfall in the whole country for an adequate food harvest. In addition, even in areas where the rainfall was inadequate, there are massive, untapped or wasted reserves of underground and surface water. In the Chad Basin, for instance, hydrologists have long established the existence of huge reserves of underground water in three aquifers,

at different levels, which can supply from a single bore-hole tens of thousands of gallons of water per hour, which can be directly used for human consumption, livestock and irrigation. In the areas of the basement complex rocks in Kano and Katsina, and in the Sokoto-Rima basin, where underground water reserves are more limited, there are the massive dams like those of Tiga, Zobe, Jibiya, Goronyo and Bakalori. These are now left to evaporate and seep away instead of being used effectively for large-scale irrigation to make up for the shortage of rainfall. It is clearly not possible to blame nature for the tragic situation we are facing over food in this country now. The problem, we believe, is basically man-made, occasioned by wrong and exploitative economic programmes and measures that cause unemployment, inflation, over-burden the people, alienate them from their lands and turn them into paupers; and by the unpatriotic acts of middle-men and speculators in food-stuffs who buy off large quantities of foodstuff from the poor farmers and hoard or smuggle it out of the country — as the profit motive dictates. The authorities would do well to tackle this instead of trying to divert people's attention by blaming everything on poor rains and the fictitious over-population of the country.

The way to go about solving this problem is not for government to adopt a fire-brigade approach, but to take a long-term view of the situation. To merely declare some areas disaster areas and rush in relief money and material, as the government has already done, is not the real long-term answer. The history of this country shows that, given existing arrangements, such money and material, far from getting to the hands of the starving, will only end up in the pockets of government officials, military satraps, tycoons, and traditional rulers. What the government must do, as an immediate measure therefore, is to free the Nigerian farmers and people of the unbearable burden of taxes, levies and other exactions which, for long now, has been sapping their meagre income, leaving them with nothing or too little to live on and produce. Secondly, the government should now admit the complete failure of its rural development programme to provide water, roads, and generally improve the rural areas, and think out a new one based on a collectivist and patriotic philosophy. The new programme must be one which is completely free of bureaucratic and feudal fetters, and in which peasant associations are in control right from the conception to implementation. This is the only way to ensure genuine improvement in the lives of the rural populace, increase their productivity, and raise the nutrition and living standards of all.

Finally, the government should reverse completely the policy of removing the subsidy on fertilizers and inputs needed by the farmers. The policy of handing over

the land and the rest of the rural economy to rapacious tycoons, retired generals and bureaucrats, and all sorts of bloodsucking middlemen and usurers should stop. Instead the government should actively support peasant associations, cooperatives, trade unions and other organisations of farmers, petty traders, artisans and workers to take control of the rural economy, including the food trade. Where relief material is required it should be these popular organisations that should be fully in charge. The

stealing of food from the starving during the 1972-74 drought by officials, contractors, and traditional rulers documented in our UPDATE is a very serious lesson.

Let us not try to fool ourselves by any evasive explanations over the causes of the hunger looming over Nigeria. This hunger is man-made. Man-made measures can overcome it. This requires patriotic and decisive policies totally committed to the immediate and long-term interests of the toiling people of this country.

LETTERS

MAGGIE: The Middle Class Racist

Dear Editor:

Your article on why the racist "Iron Lady" of Britain supports apartheid (Vol. 3, No. 1) is not only revealing but a good food for thought for President Babangida and his team.

Having helped to wreck the Nigerian economy, with the active support of her sponsors in the Tory Party and the connivance of leading Indian frontmen in the shameful JMB rip off, Maggie Thatcher still "fuses" round in the manner of a prostitute.

Nigerians expect the Babangida regime to make the racist woman eat her words for the second time. Nigeria should take similar lead as it did in liberating Angola and Zimbabwe. Enough of the racist woman.

Germany's Richard Von Weizsacker should also be reminded that we've had enough of crocodile tears. The world and infact the black race in particular deserve and desire to know the explanation behind his arms deal with South Africa.

**O.D. Kedeng,
BACAS, Bauchi.**

KEEP ABREAST OF OUTSIDE DEVELOPMENT

It is good that your December 1987 issue (Vol. 2 No. 7) had something on the assassinated Burkinabe leader Thomas Sankara. I would have written to criticise your magazine if you had not.

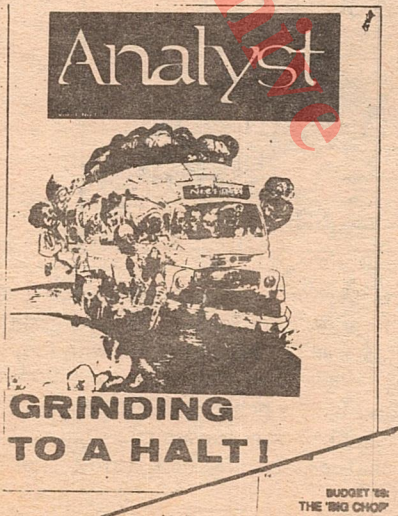
Still, I wish to suggest that whenever such unfortunate things happen, you should try and show your concern since this is the only paper that speaks our mind.

**Hasheem Aboo-Bakr Ladan Zuru,
Sokoto.**

AUCTION UNLIMITED!

After going through the list of Government-owned companies and parastatals to be auctioned, I really got terribly disturbed. But at the same time I realised that since most, if not all of the assets and properties are not pocketable, there will be a time when the masses will return them to their rightful owners. As of now, let the retired generals and the chairmen of Federal Republic (Nig.) Ltd enjoy them for a short while.

Among the list of properties to be auctioned you forgot to mention two, located at Samaru Katsf and Manchok i.e. poultry and a cattle ranch. Presently, all the birds in the poultry have been sold out and it's going to be purchased by one of the AFRC members, born from this part of the state.



Also, the cattle range is going to be given (purchased) or rather auctioned to one of the retired Colonels, also from the southern Zaria. Anyway, let's keep our eyes open and see what will happen.

**Lawal Abdul-Rahman,
Ibrahim Kaduna.**

"SCANIA RIP OFF"

After reading your Vole 3, Number / issue, particularly 'The SCANIA RIP OFF' story, I could not help it but feel 'sorry' for our dear motherland — Nigeria.

It is indeed very pathetic to know how a few rich individuals drain the economy, and the already exploited and oppressed people of Nigeria are later called to face the inevitable hardships of the ruined economy.

This will continue, I strongly uphold, unless the 'money-worshipping system' is radically transformed. Time we sit up and do something.

**Chuks Nwamadi T.
Zaria**

NLC AND OIL SUBSIDY

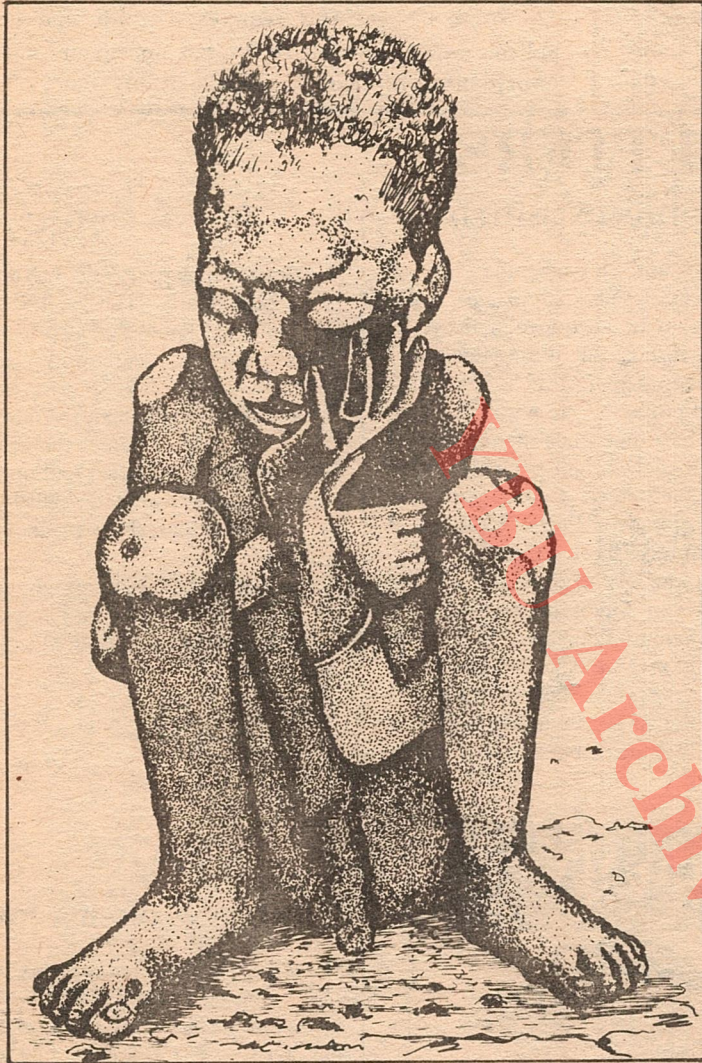
For years the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) only barked and barked. Suddenly, it developed teeth and started to bite. First, its executive were locked up for the worker's principled opposition to the government's proposed removal of oil subsidy.

And now, on the pretext that the NLC split into two factions, the Government has stepped in and installed a care-taker committee. The committee is to manage the affairs of the NLC for the next six months and organise fresh elections for the congress at its convenience, within the said period.

Wow!! I thought coups were only for take-over of governments.

**Tony Orlando Ibe,
Kaduna.**

NIGERIA: The Spectre of Hunger



For the people of 'Yan Doma of Ingawa District in Katsina State, *dusa* (grain bran) has always been known to be good animal feed. Every peasant household had plenty of it, left over after the grain had been threshed, and the animals thrived on it. Few were the occasions when the *dusa* went to the market. And fewer still were the market days when *dusa* moved fast.

But all that is long past. At the Mashi market today, *dusa* is not only one of the fastest moving commodities on display, it is also no longer the delicacy of livestock alone, but

has become a major food source for the poor. Says Mallam Audu, a grain trader at the Mashi market who himself hails from 'Yan Doma: "Yes, *dusa* is now being eaten by people. It is cooked and consumed. What else can those who cannot afford grain do?"

Mallam Audu was not exaggerating. There was graphic evidence of this all over the Mashi market. Indeed, *dusa* was the commodity that attracted the most customers. This is not so much because people prefer *dusa* to the grain on sale at the market. No, it's just that the prices

of the grains are beyond the reach of most.

For instance, at the Mashi market, a *tiya* (about 2.5 kg. of grain) of guinea corn sells for N2.80, maize sells for N2.70 per *tiya*, millet at N2.70, while rice sells for N8.00 a *tiya*. Except for rice, which is not a staple for most rural dwellers, the prices of the other grains by this time last year were about half the current ones. At Mai 'Adua and Daura, close to the Niger border, a small ball of maize *tuwo* sells at 50k, and an adult who works out in the field will require no less than six of these to quench his hunger. Nearby at Kongolom, right on the border, a golf-ball size cocoyam sells for 50k, and the leg of a chicken sells for N3.00. A few years ago you could buy a whole chicken for N3.00.

But spiralling prices of foodstuffs is not restricted to the northern parts of the country. At the Benin Mammy Market a bag of corn which sold for N65 last year is now selling for N110, while a 100 kilogram bag of beans has jumped from N200 last year, to N355 today. At the Auchu central market 20 tubers of yams which this time last year attracted about N12-15, are now selling for between N40-50, and a locally-raised live fowl which you could purchase for about N14 last year now costs about N18. At the Kabba central market, a *mudu* of garri which last year cost N2.50 is now being sold for N3, while a 10 kilogram bag of semovita has jumped from its last year's price of N17 to N19.50. At Akure, an average bunch of plantain which cost about N2.50 last year now attracts no less than N4.00, while a gallon of palm oil which last year sold for N18 is now going for N20, and a kilogram of beef has shot up from N12 to N16.

This sky-rocketting in the prices of basic foodstuffs is the tell-tale sign of a creeping disaster which is fast enveloping the homes, huts, farms, barns, herds, and the entire social fabric of the majority of our people.

COVER STORY

It is the tell-tale sign of a major famine which is afoot, but which officialdom and its lackeys in the media have largely ignored, or want to ignore just to feel safe.

Yet, even as they remain insensitive and indifferent to this looming tragedy, many of the affected villages are being deserted as disaster visibly destroys the ecology of our country, and indeed of the sub-region and our continent as a whole.

The rivers are drying up, the dams are shrinking to pools and puddles. Without vegetation, moisture or wind breakers the desert is rapidly consuming the parched land on our country's northern fringes, turning farms into wasteland.

To the south, soil erosion, over-cropping and deforestation is turning once fertile and rich lands into gullies and wasteland. And as hunger stalks, the people take flight. All across the country our rural dwellers are leaving en-masse for new urban slums in a desperate but vain search for survival. The spectre of hunger is looming ever larger on the horizon.

But this is not new. For the majority of the toiling people of our country hunger is unwelcome, but it has always been an uninvited guest in their homes. Since the onset of colonial rule, the records are replete with accounts of the suffering and misery people undergo during these periods of famine. Consider these examples:

ADAMAWA, BAUCHI, NUPE AND BENUE: 1903-1905.

In these years in Yola and Bauchi alone, one hundred deaths were reported by the colonial authorities, "largely due to the consumption of poisonous roots."

And in Katagum and Nupeland, the colonial authorities reported that "children were sold in large numbers". And while this was happening, in Borno the famine was so severe that the famished remnants of those who could not flee "were too weak to till the fields."

Further south, in the Gongola Valley, an Assistant Resident, Mr. Liddard, reported in 1905 that "a great number of people died (of famine)".

By 1906 the town of Banjaram, now in the Guyuk Local Government Area of Gongola State, with a population of about 4,000 in 1904, had shrunk to a mere 43 souls. This calamity did not spare the Benue Valley, which experienced very severe food shortages in 1905.

KANO PROVINCE: 1914

According to the Resident of Kano Province, Mr. Hastings:

"This year the effect of shortage showed itself in all its ghastliness. The gaunt ghost of famine stalked abroad through Kano and every other part. . . . Mothers could not feed their babies at their breasts, and cows' milk lacked, for the pasture had dried up and cattle were just skin and bones. The great city of Kano drew the starving thousands from the country in the faint hope of scouring in the streets and markets to pick up what they might, or beg the charity of the townfolk. Not only the Nigerians, but thousands from French country drifted down across our borders, passing through villages



NASKO: Blaming the victims

enroute, all bare of food to offer them. They died like flies on every road".

Another observer of that year's famine in Katsina, I. Vischer, noted thus: "Several persons fell exhausted on the road, unable to pick themselves up. Some mature men horribly emaciated, leant on their walking sticks; girls with eyes like trapped gazelles; women clenching their children to their shrivelled breasts. The children sucking feebly. . . all in vain. . . . In the fields one sees

bands of children. . . eating herbs and the soil".

BORNO PROVINCE: 1914

The famine of this year, nicknamed *Gyallare* in Kano, *Malali* in Katsina, and *Sude-mu-gaisa* in Sokoto, was also severe in Borno. Known here as *Kangale kori* ('short stalks') or *Kuna Kura* (big famine), it created so much havoc that the colonial Resident at that time had to send to his bosses the following report: "people died while trying to unearth roots, while looking for the tubers of water lilies or the *anza*".

The famine took its toll not only among the farmers, but the nomads as well. For instance, the Wodaabe Fulani of Western Borno whose population in 1913 was 10,000, by 1914 had been reduced to 5,500; and their herd of 88,000 head of cattle had been decimated to 26,000 as a consequence of the famine. On the whole, the colonial authorities estimated that the famine of 1914 took the lives of 14,205 people in Kano and Kazaure; 6,000 in Katsina; 10,930 in Katagum; 6,747 in Daura; and 7,769 in Hadejia.

SOKOTO AND KATSINA PROVINCES: 1942

Michael Watts reports: "a telegram from Sokoto District Officer in July reported 'large numbers of destitutes, starving, with no money', in the vicinity of Gusau. Yet more refugees from Dutsin-ma, Rimi, and Batsari poured into the Gusau area. By mid-August, with the first millet harvest at least two weeks away, Bindawa, Kankia, 'Yandaka, Mallamawa, Durbi, and Tsagero districts were all in the midst of severe hunger.

In 'Yar Gaga village area (Dutse District), 200 individuals died during the first two months of the wet season, and the vast majority of the wretched souls who lived subsisted on wild tubers and failed *gero* (millet) stalks."

IGBETTI AND IGBOHO IN WESTERN NIGERIA AND OTUKPO IN THE BENUE VALLEY: 1942-1946

This famine, nick named

COVER STORY

Abantila in Northern Oyo, was so devastating that the locals fashioned a befitting verse for it which ran thus: *Iyan papoju olomo ko mo 'mo iya de 'su mo koko o ran omo I' ode.*" This means: "Extreme famine (makes) the parent not know the child, (makes) mother cover the yam in the pot. She sends the child outside (on an errand)".

Otukpo peasants still recall with trepidation the serious droughts and famines of those years.

THE 1972-1974 FAMINE

If these accounts of famine in the colonial period appear too remote to many Nigerians today, the disaster of 1972-74 cannot be so described. The suffering and misery that befell many in those years are still fresh in the memories of those who survived. In most parts of the northern states, there were short-falls in food supply of between 50 and 90 per cent. The prices of grain rose to four times its previous price. In many parts, people resorted to eating all kinds of leaves and wild roots, or to digging in ant hills to search for the grains which these insects had carried away. In places like Gashua (in Borno) the few individuals who managed to harvest some crops dug underground rooms and hid themselves there together with their precious harvest so that when kinsmen and neighbours came to beg for something to eat, the family could inform them that "the head of the house is not at home".

This famine also took a heavy toll of livestock. A 1973 survey in Dambatta district of Kano State showed that between March and July 1973, some 4,423 cattle, 6,400 sheep, 4,955 goats, 502 donkeys and literally all poultry had died.

People had to sell their remaining livestock and other personal possessions in a desperate bid to get the money with which to buy food. And in many places, the emaciated cows were being sold for as little as N4.00. People were so desperate for food that they resorted to eating up the leaves of Neem and other trees.

In Sokoto State, the local

authorities of Sokoto, Argungu and Gwandu estimated that out of a total population of 1.5 million cattle, 302,163 died. And out of 4.3 million sheep and goats, 875,599 died, while as many as 168,000 of the area's 867,854 horses and donkeys perished.

Indeed, it has been estimated that in the entire West African sub-region over 100,000 people died as a direct result of the 1972-74 famine, most of whom were children. And even the survivors faced despair, disease and an uncertain future. Indeed, many of the children were later to die of measles and oedema, a condition associated with advanced stages of malnutrition, when the body can no longer digest solid food.

Perhaps it is because of this prevalence of famines in the history of our societies and the close association between the famines and droughts, that many are wont to consider famine as an act of God. While it may be true that drought, in so far as it leads to crop failure, does indeed create seasonal shortages in

managed in such a way that they can at most cause only hardships and inconveniences, not the tragedy that is famine.

In the specific case of Nigeria, while it is true that short-falls in rainfall, and therefore drought conditions, have occurred many times in our history, it was only with the onset of colonial rule and the consequent imposition of capitalist commodity production that droughts became dreaded ogres.

In the past, that is in the pre-colonial past, the rural economy had certain safety mechanisms that served to cushion the debilitating effects of food shortages during periods of drought. True, in the feudal societies the Emirs, Obis and Obas and their hierarchy of fief-holders, titled officials and court servants cornered for themselves a sizeable chunk of the food produced by the peasants in the form of taxes, levies, seizures and the like. Yet in spite of all this the social economy was such as to still leave some breathing space for the rural small



A Market Scene

food supply, this in itself cannot be the cause of famine. For there can be, and indeed there are, cases of drought conditions which do not lead to hunger.

The fact is that famine, far from being an act of God, or the weather, or whatever, is actually man-made.

Depending on how a society is organised and structured; depending on whether it is organised to promote the well-being of all its productive members or only that of a few parasitic but powerful elements within it, drought conditions can be

producers. For one, the production unit functioned on a cooperative basis, with people helping out on each other's farms, and in times of crisis lending aid to one another.

Secondly, there was a network of kinship ties which spread across wide geographic and climatic zones. So that in times of poor harvest in one zone, relations in more favoured areas could readily lend their assistance.

In addition, the ecology was replete with nutritive plants and trees which had traditionally

COVER STORY

provided alternative sources of food in times of shortage.

Furthermore, the society had a time-tested food reserve system built around homestead barns, (called *rumbu* in Hausa), in many parts of Nigeria. Some of these could hold food reserves for upwards of five years, and were replenished after every harvest.

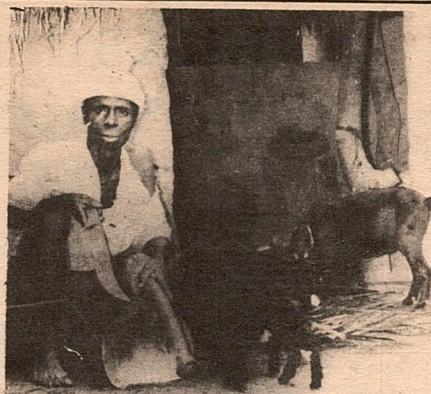
All these safety-nets were undermined by the social and economic system imposed by colonial rule, leaving the producers at the mercy of the vicissitudes of the climate and the elements.

COMMODITY PRODUCTION

Everyone knows that the primary motive of colonialism was to introduce and entrench a system of market-oriented, commodity-producing capitalist economy in our country. This meant the reorientation of peasant agriculture away from producing primarily for the home market towards producing for export in order to obtain money to pay extortionate taxes. Colonialism also required the building of basic infrastructures like roads, railroads, waterways, as well as mines, etc., which were indispensable to the extraction of the agricultural and mineral resources of the country needed by British industry.

It is thus not surprising that the systematic encouragement of cash crops like groundnuts, cotton, cocoa, rubber, etc. was one of the first policy measures embarked upon by the colonial administration. Meanwhile, the colonial authorities conscripted forced labour on a massive scale for the construction of these infrastructures, at a time when the demand for labour on the farms was at its peak.

But if all this was in the interest of the colonial powers, it was a source of unforgivable calamity to our people. For instance, directly related to the 1913-14 famine was the encouragement of groundnuts by the colonial trading companies. These companies lured farmers away from growing food crops by the prices they offered for groundnuts. Consequently, there was a massive expansion in the land area devoted



PEASANT FARMER: Toiling but starving

to the cultivation of the commodity, and a high proportion of domestic labour went into groundnut production. A sudden decline in the planting of grain resulted, and before the end of 1913, reports Watts, "there was a food shortage, and the peasantry faced starvation". To make matters worse, the colonial authorities hiked up taxes in order to corner the new surplus of cash from groundnut production that was in the hands of the peasantry. Without food, and left with little cash, rural dwellers in large parts of the country starved.

Similarly, the 1942 famine, known in the northern parts of Nigeria as 'Yar Gusau', was caused not so much by drought as by the criminal and inhuman exaction of a colonial administration hell-bent on extracting surplus from its subjects.

No less a source than the colonial government itself confirmed this very close affinity between famine and deliberate colonial policy, particularly with regards to the diversion of labour from peasant food crop production to mining and the construction of colonial infrastructure. In 1918, for instance, the *Zaria Annual Report* commented on that year's food shortage thus: "the shortage is said to be due to two causes, the increased cultivation of cotton and groundnuts to the detriment of corn, and the ever-increasing non-farming communities on the Plateau (mines) and (the) railway."

HUNGER AND SAP

But even after the formal colonial period, the policies pursued by successive administrations in

Nigeria have remained basically the same as far as famines are concerned. The 1972-74 drought, for instance, would not have been so severe in its consequences but for the fact that government was pursuing a so-called rural and agricultural development programme which, like that of the colonial government, further eroded the rural producer's traditional insurance system against drought. For the so-called multi-billion naira open irrigation schemes only meant the bull-dozing of trees and shrubs that used to provide alternative food sources in times of drought-induced scarcities, as well as eventually forcing many peasant farmers off the land into poverty and hunger in the urban areas.

The tragedy of Nigeria is that most of our leaders so far have proved to be incorrigibly blind to the lessons of history. One would have expected that, if nothing else, the tragic consequences, the dislocations, disruptions, and the heavy tolls of the 1972-74 famine would have served as an object lesson to our usually myopic leaders. Alas, it never did.

In spite of everything that has shown the bankruptcy, and even criminality, of the pursuit of an export-led economic development strategy, our leaders remain tied to it. The spectre of hunger which now threatens thousands of our fellow country men and women is, among other things, the direct consequence of the short-sighted policy of the export-oriented recovery programme which the present military administration is pursuing. It is this policy which makes it possible for government to encourage the export of agricultural commodities by local business tycoons at a time when large sections of the population are in dire need of food.

It is also the fruit of the I.M.F. and World Bank — induced commercialisation and privatisation programme under SAP. It is this commercialisation and privatisation that has made government to remove subsidies from almost everything, including even as crucial a sector as agricultural inputs and services. The

Cont'd on P. 10

COVER STORY

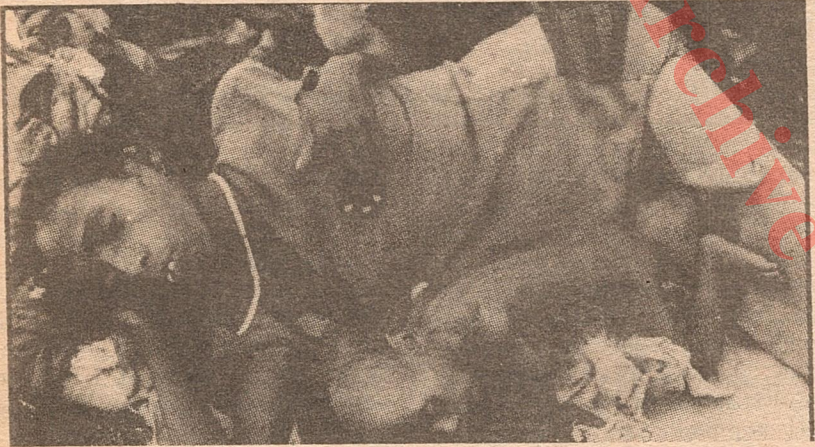
malnutrition In Kaura Kimba (Sokoto State)

In 1986, 89 percent of the peasant households in Kaura-Kimba and Gidan Shikkau, both in Sokoto State, "were incapable of producing enough food for their domestic consumption", while 100 percent of the peasant households sold "some portion of their food in one way or the other to get money for tax, levies and other family demands." The households had to buy grains (millet and sorghum) from the market to make it to the next harvest. These alarming statistics are contained in a brilliant and well-researched study recently completed by Abdullahi Sule-Kano for a Masters degree in Political Science at the Ahmadu Bello University. The villages of Kaura-Kimba and Gidan Shikkau are made up of 181 household compounds containing 1,200 people. Because colonial and new

state laws have created government forest reserves (*dajin gomna*) which prevent them "from expanding their farmlands into any available space" close to them, while rich farmers, *tajirai*, who employ between 300 to 600 casual labourers are seizing more and more land from them, as high as 77 percent of the households now possess far below the minimum of 10 to 15 acres necessary for them to grow enough food to feed themselves adequately. The cattle Fulani are equally affected. A rinderpest epidemic of 1885 which is believed to have been introduced by British and French economic spies and saboteurs posing as "explorers", devastated their livestock. Consequently, whereas a "pastoral family of six adults needs at least 593 heads of cattle if they are to survive entirely

on their animals", by 1933, each family had remained with only about 20 heads of cattle. By 1986 the fatal figure plummeted down to a disastrous 10 heads of cattle per household. The loss of cattle also meant the disappearance of adequate quantities of animal manure for fertilizing farms, while imported industrial fertilizers are too expensive for the villagers to afford.

Abdullahi Sule-Kano reports that the overall effect of all these pressures on the villagers of Kaura-Kimba and Gidan Shikkau is that "ten different kinds of meals" which used to be eaten in order to balance household diets "have disappeared from the menu" of the peasant households in these communities. Foods such as beans, eggs and chickens are now almost completely absent from the meals of these villagers because they are forced to sell these food items to urban consumers in order to earn money to pay taxes, buy clothes, medicines, etc. The devastating effect of all this self-deprivation is the "rampant cases of Kwashiorkor and muscle wasting in pre-school children in these communities." As high as 92 percent of the children between the ages of one and five years covered by the study are malnourished and ravaged by resultant diseases such as malaria, measles, whooping cough, diarrhoea and death.



Malnourished Patient

Cont'd from P.9
 consequent high cost of fertilisers, pesticides, agricultural machinery, etc., as well as low producer prices for agricultural products, have been as important (if not more so) in causing the present serious food shortages as the factor of poor and erratic rainfall.
 Coupled with the increasing costs of taxes and services to the rural producers, this SAP-mania had made it literally impossible for large numbers of the victims of the

present drought to purchase food, even where this is available. And when one adds to these the innumerable chains of usury and hoarding which fetter the economy, then it becomes evident to even the most insensitive apologist of the powers-that-be that the slightest shortfall in rainfall must perforce lead immediately to hunger and suffering.
 Is it therefore any wonder that the people of 'Yan Doma are now resorting to *dusa*? It is any wonder

that *dusa* is now a fast moving commodity at the Mashi market and the other markets in the area?
 The Babangida administration, by its policy of SAP, is reducing large numbers of people in this country to living on food fit only for goats and donkeys. For how long can this continue?
 By Sa'idu Adamu and Richard Umaru, with Yahaya Abdullahi.

NIGERIA

ONDO STATE – Prices of Food Items (N)

FOOD ITEM	AKURE				IKARE				OMUWO			
	1985	1986	1987	1988	1985	1986	1987	1988	1985	1986	1987	1988
Gari (Mudu)	0.40	1.70	3.00	3.60	2.80	3.00	3.20	4.20	2.50	1.90	2.00	2.00
Yams (Set)	4.00	—	5-6.0	9.00	4.50	8.00	10.00	10.00	4.50	8.00	15.00	12.00
Rice (Mudu)	2.10	3.50	4.50	5.00	3.00	4.30	5.00	5.50	3.00	4.50	7.00	5.80
Maize (50 kg.)	60.00	110.00	118.00	96.00	32.00	95.00	80.00	130.00	40.00	120.00	90.00	130.00
Beef (1 kg.)	9.00	12.50	12.00	16.00	7.00	8.60	12.00	15.00	5.00	10.00	12.00	13.00
Beans (Mudu)	3.40	4.70	5.00	5.00	3.90	4.80	6.00	5.50	1.40	5.00	9.00	7.80
Plantains (Bunch)	0.70	1.20	2.50	4.00	0.85	2.50	0.60	2.00	0.50	1.60	2.50	4.00
Palm Oil (Gallon)	5.00	6.80	18.00	20.00	16.00	12.00	18.50	18.00	6-8.00	17.00	12.00	15.00
Tomatoes (Tin)	0.80	0.80	1.00	1.50	0.50	0.90	1.00	0.75	—	—	—	—
Goat (One)	—	—	—	25-180	30-70	25-50	20-60	25-150	25-100	30-160	50-130	50-130

KWARA STATE – Prices of Food Items (N)

FOOD ITEM	LOKOJA				KABBA				OKENE			
	1985	1986	1987	1988	1985	1986	1987	1988	1985	1986	1987	1988
Gari (Tin)	1.00	1.40	2.70	3.00	1.50	1.60	2.50	3.00	0.60	1.50	2.80	3.60
Yams (Set)	2.50	7.00	9.00	10.00	5.00	6.00	9.50	11.00	7.00	9-12.0	10.00	13.00
Rice (Mudu)	1.20	4.80	6.50	5.50	4.30	6.70	8.50	8.00	2.50	3.50	5.00	6.20
Maize (50 kg.)	55.00	120.00	80.00	110.00	25.00	50.00	80.00	100.00	70.00	80.00	100.00	120.00
Meat (Kilo)	7.00	13.00	10.00	15.00	6.80	10.50	10.50	12.00	7.00	10.00	10.50	14.00
Beans (Mudu)	3.50	4.00	5.50	5.90	5.50	5.70	7.50	9.00	3.60	4.50	6.50	7.00
Plantains (Bunch)	1.70	3.00	2.50	4.30	7.00	6.00	6.50	7.00	2.00	2.50	4.50	4.00
Palm Oil (Gallon)	16.00	14.00	18.00	24.00	9.00	9.60	15.00	18.00	12.00	14.00	22.00	22.00
Tomatoes (Tin)	0.60	1.00	0.90	1.20	0.40	0.50	0.70	1.00	1.00	0.80	1.00	1.00
Goat (One)	—	—	—	25-150	30-130	30-150	40-300	60-300	30-100	25-120	35-150	35-150

*Above tables compiled by Olorunju Edwin. All prices as at January, 1988

CAUSES OF HUNGER: Population Or Exploitation?

Hunger is increasingly the dominant reality of everyday life for most people in Nigeria. By hunger we do not mean the absence of certain kinds of food. We mean the absence of any kind of food. When available such food is bare and devoid of the nourishment necessary for the support of life. The results are malnutrition and devastating illnesses like kwashiorkor and marasmus for children.

In spite of this, we live in a well-endowed land. There is more rain than no rain. The country has two of Africa's biggest rivers, the Niger and

the Benue. The variety of soils range from the heavy root and tree crop supporting soils of the forest zone, to the light grain-supporting soils of the sahel. The Middle Belt and its mostly humus soils can be described as a literal bread basket, characterised by the near-temperate climate of the Jos and Mambilla Plateaus to the humid and more tropical weather of the Niger and Benue valleys. The country has about 98.3 million hectares of land, while about 70% of her population is engaged in agriculture.

Why then are the people

hungry? Why do so many children suffer and die? Of the 4.7 million children born yearly in Nigeria, a quarter are born underweight. The UNICEF has shown that 425,000 of this figure die in the first year of life, while 300,000 more will die before their fifth birthday, due to malnutrition. When you ask the Nigerian establishment the question "Why are the people hungry?", the most common answers you receive are: "the people are too many"; "Nigerians love too many children"; or, "we do not have enough food to support our birth rate". There is a

NIGERIA

widely held view among the ruling class in Nigeria that hunger in this country today is a result of over-population and over-procreation. Nigerians are therefore asked to produce fewer and fewer children. A decree is even being proposed to peg the permissible number of children from each mother at four.

To support arguments like this statistics such as these are bandied around: Nigeria's estimated population is put at being between 88 million and 100 million; the crude birth rate is 49 per 1000; the rate of natural increase is 3.2%; the population doubling time is 21 years; the total fertility rate is 6.9%, and the projected population for the year 2020 is 258 million.

The attempt to link up an increasing population with declining food supplies is nothing new. As early as 1798, the Rev. Robert Thomas Malthus, a pioneer apologist of capitalism, argued in an essay that the rate of population growth was four times faster than that of increase in food supply. This population growth rate was particularly evident among the poor, argued Malthus. He therefore called for the removal of laws which he believed encouraged the poor to procreate.

The "over-population" argument deliberately ignores certain basic facts. First, science and technology have made it possible for agricultural productivity to outpace the rate of population growth. Secondly, human beings in themselves are productive assets to society. And therefore the more a society has, the more its potential for providing more food. The problem however is that in capitalist societies, advances in science and technology are not used to enable man to feed more mouths, but to amass greater profit.

In the case of the African continent, this whole question of over-population is uncalled for. Africa entered the twentieth century as a highly depopulated continent, having suffered 500 years of slave raiding. This was immediately followed by colonialism. Under colonialism, African lands were exploited to produce raw materials

for European industries. Millions of hectares of land were diverted from food to cash crop production. The colonial domination of agriculture was such that technological stagnation, instead of industrial transformation, was left as a legacy. As Walter Rodney put it, the African entered colonialism with the hoe and came out of it with the hoe.

African post-colonial governments continued the policy of cash crop production to the detriment of food production. What we have is therefore a false image of over-population. Statistically, Africa is one of the least populated parts of the world. Africa has a total population of 531 million people. China alone has over one billion people. India has about 746.4 million, the USSR has 274 million, while the United States has 236.3 million people. With a continent which is the third largest in the world, Africa has only 11% of the world's population. For Africa's 531 million people there are about 1,400 million hectares of arable land! Africa is actually underpopulated!

The fact that malnutrition and ill health are NOT positively related to levels of population can easily be seen in the following statistics: In

of land area, but the life expectancy of individuals born in that country is only 43 years, while each person on the average eats only 90% of the required calorie intake. Nigeria, with 89.39 persons per square kilometre, has a life expectancy of 49 years, and a calorie supply of 83% of requirements, according to 1980 World Bank figures. On the other hand, in Europe, the U.K., with a population density of 228 persons per square kilometre, has a life expectancy of 73 years, and supplies its population with 132% of calorie requirements, and The Netherlands (one of the most densely populated nations in the world), with a population density of 341.46 persons for each square kilometre of land has a life expectancy of 75 years, and provides its people with 124% of their daily calorie requirements.

The countries of the European Economic Community (EEC) have been hoarding 1 million tonnes of butter, 798 tonnes of beef, 12 million tonnes of wheat and 525,000 tonnes of skimmed milk. This is done to push up profits, while thousands go hungry in the world. The hoarded food is worth 5.5 billion U.S. dollars.

We can thus see that hunger is a man-made problem. Our land has sufficient resources to feed our people. The potential to improve the ability of the land to sustain the Nigerian people also exists. But as long as there exist parasitic groups that have and consume more than they need, and as long as there exists a ruling class that seeks to make Nigeria a perpetual subject of the whims and caprices of the World Bank, the IMF and their Structural Adjustment Programmes, hunger is here to stay. The heavens may release all the water in its reserves, and we may build the biggest silos to store all the harvests of the world, but there would still be hunger in the midst of plenty until the profit motive and class inequalities are eliminated.



WALTER RODNEY: Debunked the Overpopulation myth

Africa, Mali has a population density of 5.48 persons per square kilometre

By David Tukura

CHILDREN, HUNGER, AND NIGERIA'S FUTURE

It is not yet large-scale famine. Nor is it necessary or desirable to put out a new version of "We Are The World" in order to raise funds in the West in aid of the starving in Nigeria. And, to be sure, pictures of children "picking from dustbins" are yet to dominate the pages of our newspapers and television screens. But that there is hunger in the land, already leading slowly but surely to the death and wasting of especially the children of the poor, is a fact that only the very few rich and powerful living in their own separate world would want to dispute.

The signs are there for all to see: the reduced rations on the tables in most homes; the noticeable loss of weight and failing health of otherwise healthy people; the increasing number of beggars on our streets; the endless cries of children for food that most of the time doesn't come. Yes, children — because they are most vulnerable when it comes to the question of hunger. And, now, you see these deprived and unfortunate children everywhere — diseased, emaciated and wasting away.

At conception, a child is endowed with genetic potential for achievement of his growth and to a certain extent his level of health. This potential depends on certain environmental factors for its full expression; and this environment could be either inside or outside the womb. These environmental factors are several, but easily the most important is a proper and good nutrition. Proper nutrition means availability of food which is adequate in both quality and quantity.

For the child, normal growth and good health almost always go hand in hand. Characteristically, there is rapid growth from conception to about 8 weeks before delivery. After the birth of a child, there is a slowing down of growth



KUTI: Hospitals still consulting clinics

until the child is about 2 years old. Thereafter, growth becomes steady until puberty when it becomes very rapid again before final cessation at about the age of 16. But the brain develops in a different way. For example, most of the growth of the brain takes place during the last month of pregnancy and the first 2 years of life. Similarly, lymphoid tissue, i.e. the system that protects the body against infection, is poorly developed at birth; but from birth onwards, it continues to develop for most of the first 6 years of life.

All these processes depend on adequate and balanced feeding. Among the poor, the nutrition of a pregnant woman is often inadequate. This is because poor people cannot afford to buy the food that their bodies require. Because of this, they become easy victims to diseases. In early pregnancy, the unborn child is able to extract its food needs from the blood of its mother. In the later stages of pregnancy, a mother who is poor and cannot afford good food would lack the necessary food

ingredients that the baby in her womb needs for proper growth. This inevitably leads to malnutrition in the unborn child. The consequences of this are dire. Such affected babies are small at birth, they succumb to infection easily and because the mother cannot afford to eat well, the milk does not flow, and even when it does, it does not contain the necessary nutrients that the child needs for its growth and development. The child becomes seriously starved, i.e., *marasmic*, and most often eventually dies.

But there is an equally and possibly more disastrous outcome. The baby may not die, but may continue with his state of poor nutrition started months before birth. His marasmic condition may continue for the first 1½ years of life, and may possibly progress to kwashiokor by the age of 3. He may then recover and, if still lucky, go on to grow to adulthood.

However, the brain grows maximally from about the fifth month of gestation, through delivery to the first 2 years of life. For this child, therefore, his period of poor nutrition has coincided with the period of rapid brain growth and development. Studies have shown that such a child may suffer loss of brain matter through failure of brain cells to grow or multiply. Such failure is, in effect, an injury or damage to the brain. This has grave implications for the child's intellect — the single most important attributes of man which separates him from animals. When such an unfortunate child grows to adulthood, he or she is invariably less intelligent than their more fortunate peers.

There is yet another implication for poor nutrition occurring in the womb, especially for girls. The effects are even more devastating if poor nutrition continues after birth. By adulthood, such women would

have developed a contracted pelvis (that is, narrowed bony part of the birth canal). A woman with contracted pelvis almost always has difficulties at delivery and may have obstructed labour, treatment for which is emergency surgical delivery (caesarian section).

Another effect of poor nutrition on infants and small children is the extreme lack of interest they show in their surroundings. They become very weak, irritable and appear pale. Their developmental stages such as sitting, crawling, walking and talking are delayed. Their growth is stunted. All these create extra burden on their parents.

Poor nutrition in children also results in the stunted growth of the intestines. The intestines cannot absorb food properly. Similarly, the pancreas — a tiny organ which secretes the fluid that digests food in the stomach — becomes smaller and can only release an insufficient quantity. Result: starvation. This condition can also lead to diabetes later in life, and consequently to other complications like kidney, eye and even heart damage, including hypertension.

Poor nutrition also leads to the weakening of the body's natural system of defence against infection. Furthermore, the cracks on the skin of malnourished children allows the easy invasion of their bodies by germs. In such children, severest forms of measles, whooping cough and chronic diarrhoea are seen. They are also prone to infestation by all kinds of worms in their stomach.

Nowhere are these signs better seen, and the depth and seriousness of the problems better appreciated, than in our hospitals. Our hospitals, especially the childrens' wards and clinics, are now full of pathetic cases of children who are reduced to skeletons, sapped and wasted by hunger and malnutrition. And the hospital records, though not complete or up to date, show that the situation is really alarming.

At the Jos University Teaching Hospital (JUTH), past records are not readily available for comparison with current statistics. But doctors at the paediatric unit say the incidence of malnutrition "is

definitely on the increase". Cases reported at the JUTH Nutritional Unit between 1984 and 1986 confirm this. In 1984, only 92 cases of malnutrition were reported at the unit. But by 1985, this figure had more than tripled: 305 cases were reported, with 19 deaths. It should be remembered that given the rising cost of treatment in the hospitals, these figures are only the tip of the ice-berg.

The doctors say in fact that there has been a marked decrease in the number of reported cases in the unit within the last two years. This, a doctor insists, is not in any way because people are now better off and their children are better fed, but because things are getting so bad now that parents can no longer afford the cost of going to a hospital, much less the cost of treatment. At JUTH, it costs N500 per child to run the period of treatment, which is 2 to 3 weeks. The bulk of this amount is borne by the hospital, and the parents only pay for the bed, investigations, and the prescribed drugs. But only a few parents now can afford the cost, especially with the exorbitant cost of drugs, and many are now forced to watch their own children starve and die at home.

At the ECWA Evangel Hospital in Jos, where there were two particularly pathetic cases of kwashiokor (from the same family), the story is much the same. Nurses at the paediatrics ward in the hospital say that the past three years have brought a sharp increase in the number of malnutrition cases managed by the ward.

But perhaps the University of Jos Staff Clinic provides one of the most interesting cases. From only 18 cases of malnutrition in 1983, the clinic found itself handling 58 cases in the first three quarters of 1986. The figure for 1984 was 23; for 1985, it was 35. The trend is shown even better in the case of kwashiokor. In 1983, the clinic handled only 4 cases of kwashiokor. But in 1985, there were as many as 41 cases of kwashiokor reported; and in the first three quarters of 1986, up to 58 cases. It shouldn't be forgotten that this is a clinic catering for

enlightened people who earn reasonably well.

In all the three hospitals, as must be the case with other hospitals and clinics all over the country, doctors dealing with malnutrition cases are now understood to be encountering diseases that hitherto they are familiar with only in text books. This, more than any other thing, shows the depth of the problem.

But just who, or what, is to blame for this paradox of want, hunger and disease for the poor and their children in a country so endowed in food and natural resources? The tendency even in official circles is to blame this situation on the poor parents — for being "too lazy"; or for producing more mouths than they can feed. or for being too ignorant to know that even in their own back yards there are rich foods on which to feed their children.

This amounts to blaming the victim. The blame for this state of affairs must be put where it really belongs: on the shoulders of governments for their criminal indifference to the plight of the poor and for pursuing policies and programmes that push even foodstuff out of the easy reach of most Nigerians; on the unjust system that allows a few to corner everything while the majority starve; and on the tiny class of the rich and powerful who, in the search for private profit, hoard, smuggle, or export foodstuff out of the country, or even destroy it.

The future of any society belongs to its younger generation. A diseased, undernourished and sickly generation of young men and women for any country or society invariably means an uncertain and hopeless future. Can Nigeria afford this uncertainty? Can Nigeria continue, listlessly, to grope in this hopeless dungeon? The challenge before this generation of Nigerians is to turn things around, and make it possible for this and subsequent generations of our youths to have the basic necessities of life.

By Dr. A. S. Bala and Rufa'i Ibrahim

Stealing The Food of The Starving

As has been brought out in the graphic descriptions in our cover story and other features, the starvation and malnutrition of human beings is shocking and frightful. But in a society built on the exploitation of man by man, and of the many by the few, this human tragedy only brings out the callousness and inhumanity of the system and those who control it.

During the 1972-74 famine in this country, over one hundred million naira was raised by the governments and through private contributions for the relief of the famine victims. In the former North-Western State alone, the total raised for this relief in the three years 1972/73, 1973/74 and 1974/75 came to N52.7 million. This is now equivalent to about N500 million, and for only one state! But as numerous reports have revealed, most of this huge sum did not go to feed those who lost their crops and livestock due to the drought. Most of it was cornered by the rich and powerful parasites running the government and local authorities. Some of these heartless brutes are to be found flaunting themselves today as the traditional, religious or political 'leaders-of-thought' in this country. They and their younger types are ready and prepared to do what they did over fifteen years ago — that is, stealing the food from the starving. Here are some descriptions of their inhuman and detestible rapacity against the hungry and the starving, as contained in a report titled Drought in Nigeria: Volume 2: Lessons of the 1972-74 Disaster, edited by Jan van Apeldoorn, Centre for Social and Economic Research, A. B. U., Zaria, 1977. Read on:

NORTH—WESTERN STATE:

"The Commission of Inquiry set up in November 1975 in the former North-Western State came up with

what it termed 'gross irregularities in connection with purchase, storage and distribution of grains'. On the purchase, the Commission discovered that the Ministry of Agriculture paid for more grains than it received, and this was caused by payments for no supplies. . . . The Commission found evidence of collusion between the suppliers and officials of Ministry of Agriculture. In several districts in Sokoto Province, village and district heads, instead of distributing the relief materials to the needy actually used the same for their own selfish ends. It was discovered that a lot of these materials were openly sold in the markets. In some cases, where relief materials were locally purchased, these were bought by the local committees through contracts, often the same relief materials were purchased at the various distribution centres, only to be sold again to the committees."

NORTH—CENTRAL STATE:

"... the Chairman discovered that many district heads or their representatives had converted some of the relief material to their own use instead of distributing them to the people affected. . . . It has also been reported that some of the district heads had asked their people to bring back the grains they received after the Committee had left their districts. They extracted part of the grain and then returned a smaller measure to the farmers." And: "From a very reliable source the distribution is understood to have been badly administered. According to this source, any time aid is brought to the village it is left with the chief. He distributed it to the three sub-divisions of the village. The three sub-divisional heads in turn divided them to clan heads who then divided to families. It is alleged by poor farmers that any time any sub-group was in bad terms with the immediate boss (village, divisional or clan head) it stood a danger of

receiving very little. Rationing was not according to population numbers but to every tax-payer in the village the same quantity was given. Whereas some got as much as ten measures, at any one time, some never exceeded five. At any time one was away when this aid arrived he simply had no share reserved for him nor his share given to his family. And because nobody knew when the aid was to come many missed them at different times."

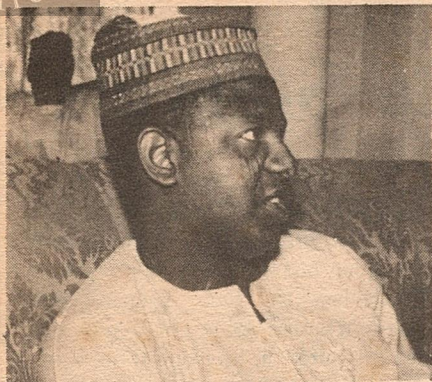


FARUQ USMAN

KANO STATE:

"In Kazaure Emirate, in some cases trucks did not go to their destinations but to markets, where the goods were sold. People in Kazaure regarded drought as 'elite drought' having seen the way officials made away with their relief materials with hardly anybody challenging them. In areas affected by the drought but excluded from relief distribution the exclusion plus the way relief was used elsewhere caused great resentment and discontent among the people in these areas. Distribution personnel were followed by traders from the cities; they asked the receivers of relief materials whether they

UPDATE



KYARI: *Where did the relief material and money go?*

intended to sell their allocation and if so directed them to the traders; this purchase was done from people who got the large shares."

NORTH-EASTERN STATE:

"In almost all places visited in Borno Emirate, a rent-free storage facility was promised to us by the district councils, but what happened in most cases was that the sacks of grain were stocked and piled up in front of the district head's compound with no attempt to cover them or to spray them with

insecticide. Most of the villagers complained that in the few cases they managed to get some grain as relief it had already gone bad."

And: "Transportation under supervision by the Area Cooperative Officers was at first given out to private transporters on contract. Every lorry was accompanied by a member of either the Nigerian Police or Army to ensure that the grains reached their destination safely. But even this did not eliminate malpractices, which included the complete diversion of the grains from designated destination to other places where highly placed Local Authority officials or influential rich men simply bought up the supplies. This grain was then sold by the men at exorbitant prices. Relief supplies were to be sold at N4.50 per bag of guinea corn; in August 1973 a bag of guinea corn was N14.25 in Maiduguri market."

This vicious heartlessness perpetrated by brutes may sound like fairy tales to those who have



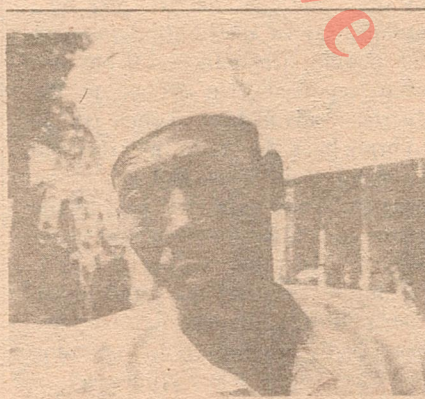
MUSA USMAN

either forgotten or were too young to know the ravages of the 1972-74 famine. But it is true. In fact, in many instances it was far worse. But in a society like ours which is built on individualism, private greed and private property this is inevitable. The lessons of that famine for Nigerians are that for the majority of us, survival means bringing this type of society to an end, and building in its place a new society in which the collective will, collective survival and collective interests are central.

LET ME SPEAK

“WE EAT *DUSSA* TO SURVIVE”

Mallam Audu 'Yan Doma is one of millions of peasants in this country who now live their lives under the constant threat of hunger and starvation. As he explains to THE ANALYST, many people from his village, 'Yan Doma, in the Ingawa area of Katsina State, just like thousands of others from other villages in the far northern states, are now fleeing their homes in search of food in other parts of the country. According to Mallam Audu, many people from 'Yan Doma can now be found in Funtua, Katsina, Malumfashi, Kaduna and even in far away places like Minna, (where Mallam Audu says there are now as many as 20 people from 'Yan Doma living). Yet in spite of the abject poverty, hunger and suffering in 'Yan Doma village, the village and district heads and their agents have never failed to call for the collection



AUDU YANDOMA

of taxes and all sorts of levies from the people. The following conversation with Mallam Audu says it all:

THE ANALYST: *What is your occupation?*

MALLAM AUDU: I am a farmer. But during the dry season I trade in

grains, in order to raise some money with which to keep the family together. This year, though, there weren't enough grains to trade in.

Why weren't there enough grains?

In recent years there has never been the kind of food crisis and hunger experienced this year. You see, where it was usual, in the years just past, for a farmer to record a harvest of up to 400 bundles of guinea corn in places where the harvests were good, this year such a farmer could not get even 5; and many ended up with nothing at all. All the left-over grain from last year has now been eaten up. And all those who have cows, goats and other animals have sold them in order to get money for food. Even donkeys have been sold, as you can see them being loaded over there (pointing) to be taken away. All those who had two

LET ME SPEAK

donkeys have sold out one, and those who had one have sold it, in order to get some money to buy grain. But with all this, grain here remains affordable only by the few well-to-do in the village. And the situation has been worsened by the burden of taxes and levies, and sharp rise in food prices. The grain you see here has been brought in from Funtua, Zaria and Gombe. A measure of guinea corn now costs N2.80; that of maize and millet is N2.70. At this time last year, one measure of guinea corn cost only 70 to 80 kobo. But with all the grain shortage, some people are still busy buying up what little has been produced and smuggling it out of the country into Niger Republic. This is what has been pushing up food prices and making even grain out of the reach of most people here.

What do those who cannot afford grain eat then?

Dussa (Eran left over after grain has been threshed).

Dussa?

Yes, *dussa* from wheat is what people here now buy to feed their families on. What else can one do if one can't afford something better? Yet, with all the difficulty people have getting something to eat, what worries us most here is the lack of water.

Aren't there wells in your village?

A borehole has been sunk in our village but the village head, Mallam Dambo, has refused to allow it to be open for use by the people. A water tanker brings water here to sell to people at 20k per pot. But most of the times the poor villagers have to bribe in order to get the water sold to them even at this price. I know one ward head here who insists on getting a 20k bribe before the water is sold to a villager. Hunger and thirst are really causing us a lot of headache here. And should one fall really sick here, only God knows what will happen.

Isn't there a hospital or clinic in 'Yan Doma?

We have no health facility or medicine in 'Yan Doma. We have to

go to Mani (a nearby town, also in Katsina State) to buy medicines in chemist shops. And if one is seriously sick, one needs more than N40.00 to get transported to a hospital. In fact, in emergency cases, one needs between N80-N100 to hire a vehicle to take one to a hospital in Daura. The other day the son of our ward head fell sick and N100 was spent on hiring a vehicle to take him to the hospital.

How many children do you have?
I have one wife, and we have in all eight children — seven males and one female. Two of my sons are already married. I am responsible for feeding the whole family. Only one of my sons has been to school, and even that one has now been forcibly removed from the school by the powers that be. He is now staying in Malumfashi, without any work to do. What can the son of a poor man do?

Revolution And Famine: THE CASE OF ETHIOPIA

In the fifties, sixties, and even very early seventies, the image of Ethiopia was one of a 'stable', 'independent', and 'cultured' country, with a millenia-old dynasty at the head of which was strong man, Emperor Haile Selassie, the conquering Lion of Judah, who had been in charge for so long and, it seemed, would be around for ever. For many people in the rest of Africa and other parts of the world, Ethiopia — the only country in Africa that was never colonised for any considerable length of time — simply spelt stability, continuity, progress and light, for the rest of Africa.

The events of 1974, which brought to an end the feudal monarchy, set in motion a national-democratic revolution now moving toward socialism, shattered such myths. But it seems that where Ethiopia is concerned there can be no end to myths, distortions and misrepresentations. For, in the place of this fusty mythology, the Western media, never idle, have as usual spawned new myths and distortions.

MEDIA CAMPAIGN

In fact, today, in spite of the radical changes and transformations that have taken place, and the definite political, economic and social progress made, the mere mention of Ethiopia, especially since the Western media campaign over the 1984/85 famine, conjures up, in many quarters, horrid images. Images of a famine-ravished country, with



SELLASSIE: Fed his lions while people starved

starving men, women and children clad in tattered clothes and reduced to mere skeletons; and of an 'insensitive' leadership that is aggravating the problem by imposing socialism on an 'unwilling' people, and 'doing the bidding' of the Soviet Union instead of relying on the aid, wisdom and the tested ways of the West. Socialism is the problem; if it didn't cause the food crisis and the resultant starvation, deaths and untold human suffering, it has been worsening the situation and making impossible a solution. This is how, for the most part, the Western media, governments, leaders, institutions, artists and their megaphones around the world have been casting the Mengistu-led regime in Addis Ababa and presenting the Ethiopian situation to the world. In particular, the Western powers and their media

SOCIALISM AND FAMINE

reserve their sharpest criticism for the Ethiopian regime's resettlement programme and collectivisation of agriculture.

Right now, in fact, there is a bill — which has already received two hearings — before the U.S. Congress, that seeks to ban Ethiopian coffee imports to the U.S. and block further World Bank and U.S. commercial bank loans to Ethiopia. Its sponsors and supporters are alleging human rights abuses arising from the government's resettlement programme and collectivisation of agriculture — which they believe is the cause of the recurrent famine in Ethiopia.

But what exactly is the situation in Ethiopia today? In what ways has the radical transformation now taking place in Ethiopia affected the situation in the country? Is the socialist direction chosen by the people and leadership of Ethiopia leading to more hunger and suffering for the Ethiopian people or to the improvement of their conditions? Who, or what, is responsible for the food crisis in Ethiopia?

THE FEUDAL REGIME

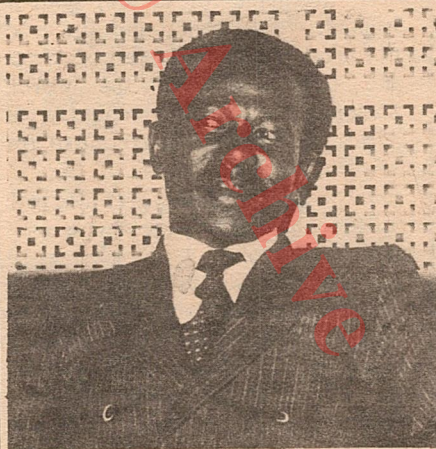
Famine, it needs to be understood from the outset, is no stranger to at least some parts of the area now known as Ethiopia. For as long as it can be remembered, drought in this area has been a frequent occurrence. Under Haile Selassie these droughts had always led to very severe famines. This was because of the nature of the country's social structure, and the Selassie regime's criminal indifference and failure to introduce measures and programmes to meet the challenges of a phenomenon that had become foreseeable, or even expected.

Up to 1974, Ethiopia, under Haile Selassie was in many ways like some European states of the Middle Ages. The peasants, forming 90% of the population, lived more or less like serfs, in abject poverty and in a condition of almost complete subjugation. They gave out, in form of taxes, levies, and obligatory presents between one half and three quarters of their total harvests to landlords. In addition to these levies,

there were also other burdens imposed on the peasants by the local potentates. The ownership of land — the source of wealth, power and status — was extremely uneven, with only 2% of owners cornering for themselves up to 80% of the entire land. In less than 30 years, for instance, Emperor Haile Selassie alone personally distributed over 1.3 million hectares of land, mainly to the nobility, church, state officials and top army and police officers. The country was like the personal estate of the Emperor and the powerful, landed gentry in the provinces.

Under these conditions, and with a government that just didn't care, drought inevitably led to famine. For without land and left with literally no food reserves, the peasants had nothing to fall back on, in times of drought. And so they simply starved.

Take the case of the 1972-74 famine, in the wake of which the



MENGISTU: Gave land to the poor

1974 revolution came. Although it was not, as others in the past, a nation-wide famine, it ravaged seven provinces, and left in its wake a terribly battered country. The toll it exacted and the suffering it inflicted were unprecedented. The people were left with hardly any food to eat or water to drink. All in all, this famine affected 3 million people and led to the untimely death, through starvation, of up to 400,000 Ethiopians.

But while people starved and died in their thousands, Emperor Haile Selassie kept his princely smiles

on and pretended there was nothing. He and his government in their usual cynical ways tried to hide the facts from both the Ethiopian people and the rest of the world. When asked in 1974 about the famine then devastating millions of Ethiopians, this is what he callously said:

By the time his countrymen and the rest of the world came to know the truth, the damage had already been done, and for him personally, the end had come. For the storm and forces for his own overthrow had already gathered and were moving with speed. His end came at dawn on September 12, 1974 when he was bundled out of his palace by junior officers — never to be seen again.

The new regime thus made its debut in the most difficult of times. But, worse, there was very little if anything at all for it from the *ancien regime* to help it grapple with the problems and challenges it met. The deposed Emperor left behind a terrible legacy. The Ethiopia the new regime came to inherit had been so terribly devastated that it was perhaps the poorest country in Africa. Its potentials were left untapped, leaving 90% of its population employed in agriculture, and 95% of its exports being products of land collected through feudal levies. Its annual per capita income was 80 U.S. dollars (one of the lowest in Africa); its illiteracy rate (in the seventies) was 90-95%; it had one doctor per every 75,000 citizens; it had only 8,000 kilometres of all-weather roads in an area of 1.25 million square kilometres; it had only 54,000 workers employed in 421 industrial establishments (with 10 employees or more).

Such was the Ethiopia inherited by the new regime: an extremely backward country in which though capitalist social relations were slowly (and unevenly) but surely taking root, the social conditions were essentially feudal. The new military regime, which came in the wake of mass protests and in the context of a social revolution, thus had to grapple with not only the problems and dislocations occasioned by the famine but also the difficulties and challenges posed by Ethiopia's political, social, and

SOCIALISM AND FAMINE

economic backwardness.

REVOLUTIONARY ACHIEVEMENTS

But the new leadership, with the support of other social forces that made the 1974 revolution possible, proved itself equal to the task. And within a short time, major successes were achieved in some areas. Understandably, attention was first given to the crucial question of land. In March 1975, the land reform decree was promulgated which nationalised all land, abolished tenancy and gave the right to peasants to till plots of a maximum of 10 hectares in size. This necessitated the mobilisation of the peasants — the real beneficiaries of the land reform. 60,000 students were sent into the rural areas to mobilise the peasants; and soon, peasant associations began to spring up in all parts of the country. By September 1975, there were already 18,000 peasant associations comprising 4,500,000 farms; by 1978, there were 28,583 such associations, with a total membership of 7.3 million households. In fact, with the exception of a few districts in Eritrea and Tigre, the peasant associations came to involve practically all the rural population.

In December 1975, a decree was passed giving official legal status to the peasant associations and expanding their functions to give them a dual purpose: to serve as peasants' economic and social self-administration units, as well as the rural bodies of revolutionary-democratic power.

The land reforms, together with other measures and reforms, like those for the nationalisation of industrial and commercial enterprises and the wiping out of illiteracy, helped greatly to bring about a real improvement in the living conditions of the peasants and masses of Ethiopia.

As a way of tackling the food crisis, the peasant associations were encouraged to form co-operatives and a programme of collectivisation of agriculture was embarked upon. However, as part of a long-term solution to the food crisis, the government embarked on resettlement programmes. The aim: to move



Famine Victim

people from the over-populated and over-used northern highlands to the more fertile and less populated south and west.

The results were quick in coming, especially in the area of food production. The programmes, with the state allocating, in the early 1980s, about 25% of total capital investment to agriculture, led to a definite improvement in the food situation, especially in the more fertile areas of the south and west. In the state farms especially, the level of yield rose to 1,500 kg. per hectare (as against the national average of 1,000 kg. per hectare). And the government began to build up stocks of marketable grains on a large scale. Agricultural output rose by 2.4% in 1978/79 and by 4.8% in 1979/80.

Genuine progress, made possible through the mobilisation and organisation of the peasants, was also made in other areas. The mass literacy campaign was particularly successful. By mid-1980, up to 6 million people had become literate. By 1979-80, primary school enrolment had risen sharply to 38%, involving 1.8 million children of school age. The Ethiopian Workers Party, initiated in 1979 as the vehicle for socialist transformation and as the pivot of Ethiopian social, political, economic and cultural life, was gaining in grass-roots support. In short, in spite of initial difficulties like the problems caused by uneven peasant participation in the associations, and the Ogaden war of 1977-78, the 1974 revolution brought about real improvements in people's lives. It brought about a new level of political

consciousness, put an end to the exploitation of the peasants by landlords and the nobility, improved social relations in the rural and urban areas, gave the people confidence in their ability to organise themselves and improve their conditions, and led to a definite rise in their living standards.

PROBLEMS AND OBSTACLES

Then came the drought of 1984-85 — considered the worst in living memory. It affected the provinces of Gonder, Wollo, Tigre, and Eritrea, and to a lesser extent northern Sidamo, parts of Shoa, and the province of Gamo Gofa. The starvation and famine it occasioned led to the death of hundreds of thousands of people and, by 1985, put as many as 7.9 million people in need of aid.

One thing ought by now to be obvious from the above: this is that the revolution is not the problem, or the cause of the famine, in Ethiopia. Far from it. In fact, but for the path of socialist orientation and development chosen by Ethiopia — which has made possible a high level of mobilisation and organisation and has provided a favourable climate for the fuller development of the people's productive and creative capacities — the situation in the country would certainly have been far worse.

To fully appreciate the food crisis in Ethiopia, one has to take into consideration the hostile natural environment and the threats from both within and outside the country, which made the management of the environment even more difficult

SOCIALISM AND FAMINE

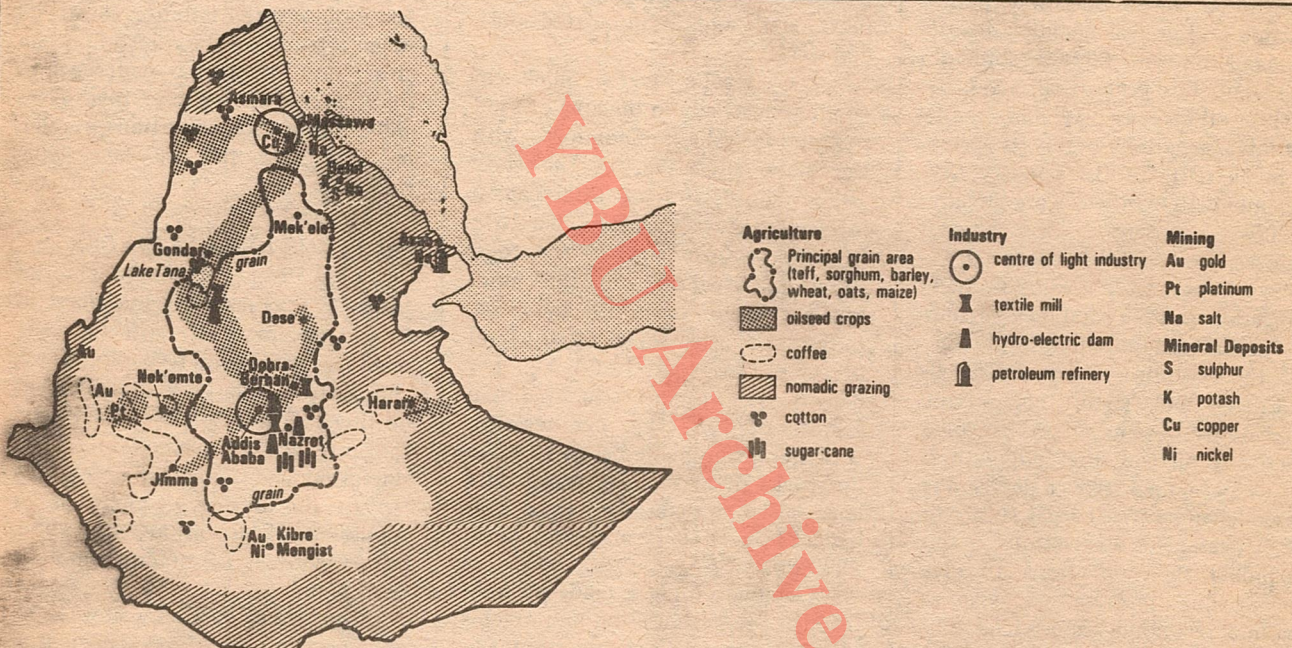
for the new regime. First, the threats. Since the 1974 revolution, Ethiopia has been, by and large, a country under siege. From the very beginning, the new regime has had to face a complex nationality problem of deep historical roots, which it is yet to fully resolve. There have also been machinations and scheming by reactionary forces opposed to the radical changes being introduced. Added to all this were the mischief and unpatriotic acts of certain infantile extremist groupings. And, of course, there have been the many secession attempts by some nationality groups, notably the Oromo,

anywhere in the world.

The result of all this has been to divert the government's attention and resources away from developmental efforts. The Ogaden war of 1977-78, for instance, constituted such a huge drain on national resources that development programmed in all other provinces were affected. More importantly, the wars helped to aggravate the food crisis by making impossible farming and the distribution of food to needy people in many areas, and diverting resources that would otherwise have been invested in the development of agriculture.

infertile dust through over-use. A century ago, 44% of Ethiopia was forested. Today, only 4%, all of it in the south, is forested; the north is completely bare.

But nature is not to blame for all this. Under Selassie, this process of ecological decay was accelerated through such unchecked but harmful practices as indiscriminate felling of trees, bush burning, bad farming methods and poor management of water resources. The point is, in itself drought does not necessarily lead to mass deaths, starvation and disruptions in social life. It is a condition not beyond the capacity of man —



Source: "The Ethiopian Revolution," by Fred Halliday.

Economic Activities

the Tigreans, the Eritreans (with their many fronts), and the Somali to the south. In fact, by 1977 the new regime was facing insurrection in no less than 12 of the country's 14 provinces.

And from without, there have been imperialist manoeuvres, as manifested in the moral and material support given to the various break-away movements by especially the U.S. Most notably, there was the Ogaden war of 1977-78 — resulting from the full-scale invasion of Ethiopia by U.S.-backed Somalia — which became, at the time, the hottest armed conflict

And now the problem posed by a hostile environment. The main cause of the frequent droughts in Ethiopia has been the environmental degradation, in the form of soil erosion and deforestation, to which the country has been subjected for centuries under the feudal regime. According to U.N. estimates, Ethiopia every year under Haile Selassie was losing about 1.6 billion tonnes of her precious top soil through wind and water erosion. This process was most pronounced in the northern highlands, where over-population has led to deforestation and helped to reduce the soil to

organised, equipped and determined — to control.

RESETTLEMENT

Yet, when the Ethiopian government, under the leadership of Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam, tried with the help of socialist allies, to combat the menace of the 1973-74 and 1982-84 droughts, its efforts were subverted by the so-called friends of the starving in the West. The Mengistu regime had embarked on a programme to transfer people from the ravaged, infertile and

severely affected areas of the north and resettle them in the more fertile areas to the south and west. This resettlement programme was part of the regime's strategy for long-term development. The West, however, tried — in vain — to convince the world that the motive behind the programme was to move people out of the strongholds of the Tigre Peoples Liberation Front (TPLF) and thus deprive it of grass-roots support.

But anyone with a slight familiarity with the Ethiopian situation, especially the desolate and hopeless nature of the environment in the severely affected northern region, would know that the only alternative to resettlement is mass starvation, more deaths and more suffering.

In spite of such Western blackmail, however, the Ethiopian government has been vigorously pursuing its resettlement programme with admirable results. The programme, along with the land reform programme and the setting up of peasant associations has enabled the government to save millions of Ethiopians and the environment from the ravages of drought and hunger. Almost a billion trees have been planted; hundreds of thousands of anti-erosion ridges have been constructed; over 20 irrigation projects (with an average size of 600 hectares) have been completed; and food production has been significantly increased, with considerable surplus in many areas. All these have been made possible only through the overthrow of feudalism, the mobilisation of peasant power, land reform, mass literacy and the planning and collectivisation of agriculture, which are some of the crucial elements of the national democratic revolution Ethiopia has been undergoing since 1974. In spite of vicious and sustained Western attacks, subversion and propaganda against it, in the last 14 years, the Ethiopian revolution has begun to lay the essential material, social and psychological foundations for making famine a thing of the past in this historic African country.

By Rufa'i Ibrahim

SPOTLIGHT

NLC CRISIS: The Challenge To Nigerian Workers



GENERAL BABANGIDA:
Handing over to Tiny Rowland?



TINY ROWLAND: *Taking over the NLC?*

On Monday 29th February 1988, the government announced that it had dissolved the National Executive Council of the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) and had appointed an administrator to run its affairs for six months. This sole administrator, in the person of the director of personnel of John Holt (Nig.) Ltd., a subsidiary of the notorious Anglo-American conglomerate, Lonrho, is also to convene a delegate's conference to elect a new leadership for the NLC. The government has tried to justify its actions on the grounds of the rift between the delegates of the forty-two industrial unions constituting the Congress over the recent election of a new National Executive Council, which is said to have produced a "Ciroma faction" and a "Shamang faction", thus threatening industrial peace and the security of the nation.

The fact of the matter is that the government's justification for its action is baseless. The NLC, in accordance with its constitution and the laws of this country, held a quadrennial delegate's conference at the Ogbé stadium in Benin on 14th-26th February 1988 and with a legal quorum of delegates elected Ali Ciroma, and others on his slate, to lead the congress for the

next four years. The government therefore has no legitimate basis for dissolving this newly-elected National Executive Council and appointing an agent of an Anglo-South African conglomerate to run the affairs of the Nigerian Labour Congress, even for a single day.

Whatever may be the immediate and long-term intentions of the government's action, it amounted to an assault on democracy and the rule of law. It also amounts to an attempt to disrupt and intimidate the democratically elected national leadership of the Nigerian trade union movement, so that the exploitative, unpatriotic and unpopular additional measures it is going to implement as part of the IMF/World Bank Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), like the increase in the prices of petroleum products and public Utility services, and large-scale privatisation which amount to auctioning can be imposed, without even a token protest.

This rape of democracy and the rule of law is also not unconnected with the government's plan to impose on the people of this country a Constituent Assembly selected by state governments and traditional rulers through the local government councils. This Constituent

SPOTLIGHT

Assembly is to rubber-stamp a constitution, which is to ensure that the reactionary social classes and political forces, dominant now, continue to dominate all succeeding regimes, for decades, using ethnic, regional and religious manipulation and tied closely, by chains of debt — slavery and military and security pacts, to the apron-strings of the West. All this, the government seems to believe, requires, not just an emasculated, but a completely subjugated trade union movement which is disrupted and intimidated.

There should, therefore, be no doubt whatsoever that this coup against the NLC is calculated and pre-meditated, and part of a larger strategy against the immediate and long-term interests of the people of this country. Therefore, all patriotic and democratic forces of the workers, peasant farmers, petty traders, artisans, women, youths, students and progressive elements from all classes and sectors, should awaken to this challenge, and rise to it.

The fact that the NLC leadership at the national, industrial union, work-place, state, and local government levels has, in the ten years of its existence, proved largely timid, careerist and emasculated, and in many areas and sectors crooked and bankrupt, should not prevent this awakening and active solidarity with the NLC, in its hour of need.

The trade union leaders around Takai Shamang's candidature are openly and explicitly opposed to the Nigerian trade union movement becoming part and parcel of the struggle for the liberation of this country from feudalism, capitalism and imperialism. They have said in so many words that they are for a trade union movement which has nothing to do with political struggle; as if the bitter hardships of retrenchment, inflation, homelessness, hunger, huge cuts in education, health, etc being inflicted on Nigerian workers today are not the results of political decisions, based on the control of political power by the exploiters of this country. This position which they hold with regard to the role of the trade union movement is most retrogressive and has been by-passed all over the world, over one hundred and fifty years ago! It has nothing to do with "social democracy" or any form of democracy. It is simply the position of slaves and lackeys of the rich, hoping for crumbs to be thrown down at them when they plead and beg the master.



OGUNKOYA: Tiny's Agent?

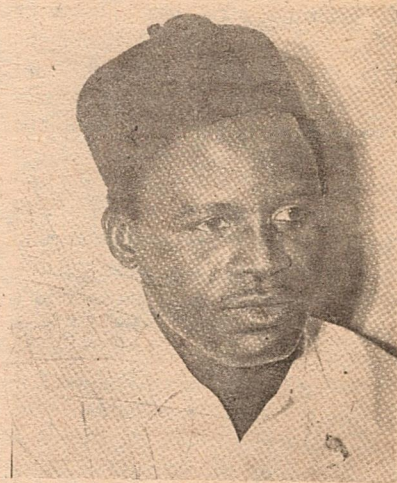
Therefore, in spite of the serious limitations of the leadership of the NLC under Hassan Sumonu and Ali Ciroma, N.L.C. has consistently rejected this very retrogressive position of the group formed around Shamang's candidature. In principle, at least, they have stood for the progressive position which sees the trade union movement as a crucial part of the struggle of the working classes and their allies for our total liberation from imperialism, and for socialism.

In this context, the most immediate form of support and solidarity for the NLC, at this moment, is to start by explaining all the issues involved, clearly and widely among the workers, the unemployed, the peasants, the traders and artisans and all the oppressed classes. This is not a matter for seminars, wordy communiques and articles or conspiracies. It is for an intensive and systematic campaign of grass-roots enlightenment of those classes who constitute the foundation of this society and economy.

Such a campaign of enlightenment is necessary for reconstructing the foundations of the Nigerian trade union movement on a solid and democratic basis, with effective political links with all the allies of the working class.

This is required in order to overcome the low level of political consciousness, political activity and political organisation of the working classes in particular and the oppressed classes in general. In the first place therefore the *political consciousness* of the position and potential of the Nigerian working class

and its allies has to be developed systematically, and integrated in an organic way with *political activity*. This activity should be in the form of the defence and promotion of the rights of all the oppressed classes over retrenchment, land seizure, housing, rents, schools, police brutality, markets, taxes, judicial oppression, human rights and all other aspects of daily life and struggle in this country. Around these concrete issues, popular mobilisation in defence of national unity, and the struggle against apartheid, for example, can be built. It is from these that the appropriate political organisations in the form of factory, city neighbourhood, market place, village-level, parents associations, committees and other bodies can be developed. This is the only way in which the foundation for the struggle for democracy, national unity, national independence and social progress can be constructed in this country. It is in this context and on these bases alone that the Nigerian trade union movement can be reconstructed and revitalised to recover from this assault, and developed the



UMAR: Arranged the handing over?

capacity to play a crucial role in the struggle for the liberation of the people of this country.

This task is beyond scheming and squabbling over posts and offices. Genuine democratic foundations for the whole trade union movement, and the larger popular and democratic movement it is a part of, has to be developed. This is the real challenge of the assault on the Nigerian Labour Congress.

Cont'd from Page 34

On this third front the racists won significant victories, disrupting large areas of Mozambique and throwing its armed forces into considerable disarray and onto the defensive. On 16th March 1984, the late Samora Machel met with Botha and signed the "Agreement on Non-aggression and Good Neighbourliness" at Nkomati. This included an undertaking by Mozambique to expel most of the ANC people living and working there.

But as the ANC leadership had told the Mozambican leaders, it is impossible for an African to make a treaty with the Boers! They said that the Nkomati Accord is not going to be worth the paper it was written on, and that the Mozambicans were going to be bitterly disappointed.

Apparently, even before the accord was signed, the Military Intelligence Directorate of South Africa had air-lifted to Renamo bases in the Gorongosa Mountains of central Mozambique heavy and light arms and equipment enough to last six months.

Before the ink had dried on the Nkomati Accord, SADF laid its plans, and within a few months Renamo opened up with massacres, sabotage, and bombings all over Mozambique. By June 1985 it was clear that the Mozambican armed forces could not cope. After a meeting between Samora Machel, Julius Nyerere and Robert Mugabe in Harare, in June 1985, Zimbabwe sent three combat battalions totalling about 3,000 men into Mozambique, in addition to the 2,000 already guarding the Beira corridor. Training facilities in both Zimbabwe and Tanzania were provided for Mozambican troops. On 28th August 1985, a combined Mozambican and Zimbabwean offensive smashed the Renamo base in the Gorongosa mountains, capturing large quantities of weapons and some very revealing documents further confirming South Africa's deep involvement in Renamo.

To be continued in the next Edition

FOOD AND NUTRITION: Capitalism Vs Socialism

Many people believe that once the amount of food produced in a country increases, then the nutrition of its people will improve. In fact, it is almost a dogma in official, military, business and academic circles in this country that all you need to do to solve the problem of hunger and malnutrition is to produce more food. It is believed that once the quantity of food produced is large enough, and most of it is kept inside the country, then you can start working on ensuring a fair and equitable distribution. A dogma among top Nigerian bureaucrats in the early 1970s was that the main issue in Nigeria, and the rest of the underdeveloped world, is not over how to share the cake, but over how to bake the cake first. They say, cynically, that you cannot share a non-existent cake. This is in fact one of the main arguments used nowadays to justify the large-scale seizure of peasants' farmland and of grazing and other communal land by retired generals, civil servants, chiefs, tycoons and the subsidiaries of multi-national corporations. It is claimed that this large-scale seizure of land provides large farms on which modern agricultural technology for food production, to feed the nation, can be applied. The basic assumption being that once there is more food produced in a country, and it is not taken out, it will be eaten by the people of the country and their nutritional level will improve. But is this true?

Here we bring to you two factual accounts of the experience of two countries with the largest populations in the world — that is China, with 1.029 billion people, and India, with 749 million. The two of them constitute almost half of humanity, and therefore their experiences are of great importance to all mankind.

The first account is about how India expanded its food production,

using modern agricultural techniques, and following a capitalist path of development, and what this increased food production meant to the people of India and their level of nutrition. The second account is about how China expanded its food production also using modern agricultural techniques, following a socialist path of development, and what this increased food production meant to the people of China and their level of nutrition.

INDIA: MORE FOOD! MORE MALNUTRITION!

"On the food front the strategy chosen was to invest in the new technology of high yielding varieties of staple food grain in few states. Wheat in the Punjab, Haryana, and Western Uttar Pradesh. Rice in Andhra Pradesh and the Kaveri River in Tamil Nadu. With irrigation assured in these areas the farmers were offered the high yield variety package of seeds, fertiliser and pesticides at highly subsidised prices. And electricity, which was already being generated in these states from earlier hydroelectric projects, was also supplied at cheap rates to pump water up from tube wells. Credit was made available on easy terms, and the state offered to buy the farmer's produce at good support prices. Those who were able to invest in the new technology, including farm mechanisation, were the large and middle farmers. The size of their landholdings and the credit facilities available to them on the basis of their assets made the new technology a viable strategy. The results were dramatic: wheat production jumped from 11 million tons in 1960/61 to 23.8 million in 1970/71; rice from 34.6 to 42.2 million tons in the same period.

"As we go deeper into the period 1966-84, we notice the so-called Green Revolution spreading to only a few more districts in a small number of states, e.g. Jammu and

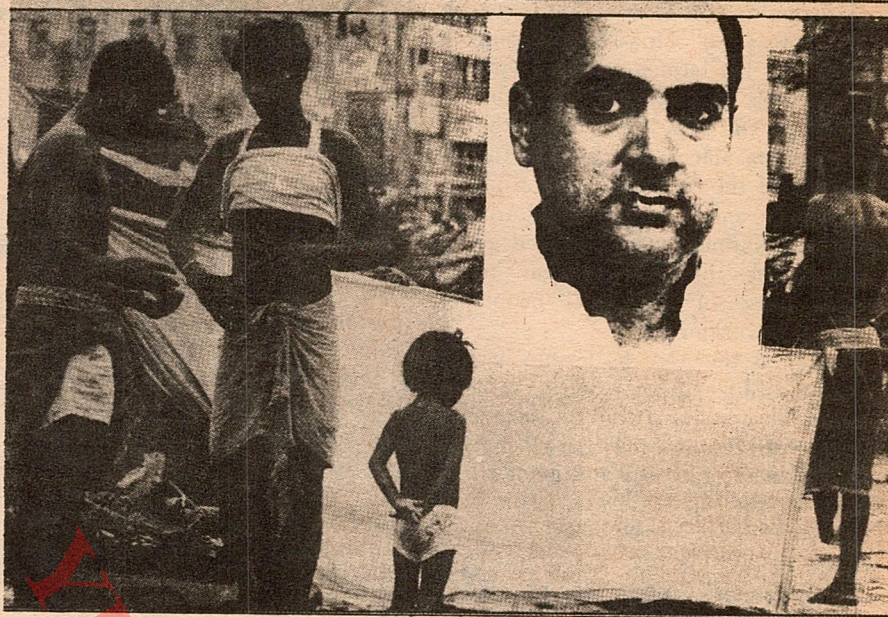
THE WORLD

Kashmir, Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharashtra, and West Bengal. However, seen in an all-India perspective the production of both wheat and rice has registered remarkable increases since the introduction of the high-yielding varieties in the late 1960s. By 1984/85 wheat production was 44.2 million tons and rice 58.6 million tons, nearly quadrupling and doubling, respectively, over two decades. But for other food crops the increases on a total national basis have been extremely modest, being nearly at a standstill for legumes (i.e. beans), the only regular source of protein for nearly 80% of the population; and also very low for vegetable oil.

"One reason for this, of course, is that the high-yield variety technology has not yet been developed for the other major Indian crops, besides wheat and rice. The public food grain stock held by the state for distribution through 'fair price' shops, through food-for-work and other related programmes, and for emergency distribution in times of crop failure due to droughts and floods reached 29.2 million tons in June 1985 and declined somewhat to about 24 million by early January 1986, but is expected to climb to about 30 million tons by the end of 1986.

"This is the best news on the food front in the sense that the Indian government now has enough food stock to distribute at relatively modest prices through 'fair price' shops thus keeping staple food prices down, and for distribution in case of national emergencies. The dependence on foreign imports of food grain seems to be definitely over. However this can by no means be interpreted as having reached food 'self-sufficiency' as domestic and foreign publicists of the Indian government are claiming. The reality is different as the following facts reveal.

"The food distribution through 'fair price' shops reaches only the urban population and is equally available to the richest and poorest urban families at the same price, which of course means yet another increase in the purchasing power of



Inset: RAJIV GANDHI, INDIAN POOR: Suffering under capitalism

the urban middle and upper classes at the expense of the poor. Furthermore, some 300 million out of a total rural population of about 560 million in 1985 are *net* buyers of food grain. These are the poorest of the poor, comprising landless labourers and marginal and small peasants, living below the so-called 'absolute poverty line' which is defined by the World Bank as 'that income level below which a minimal nutritionally adequate diet plus essential non-food requirements are not affordable'.

"The purchasing power of those below the 'absolute poverty income level' is at present estimated to be about 1,400 rupees per person per year in the rural areas, which is less than one-tenth of a middle class income. This has seriously declined over the last few decades. The reason is that the price of coarse grains on which the poorest spend the bulk of their income has steadily increased, for there are no 'fair price' shops in the villages. The theoretical net availability per capita per day of cereals remained the same, at about 415 grams in 1966-84. That of legumes, like beans, which are the only regular protein source for the vast majority has actually declined

by a factor of one-third, from 60 grams in 1965 to 40 grams in 1985! This protein availability in 1985 was about half of the 75 gram minimum world standard protein intake set up by the FAO. If to all this is added that 20% of the net theoretical availability is held unsold in the state's public stock of food grains, it follows that the actual purchases by the poorest 300 million is bound to be well below the theoretical net availability.

"The stark dimension of the malnutrition of 40 per cent of India's total population of 750 million thus stands clearly revealed. What the huge unsold, and unsaleable, stock of food grains of about 24 million tons in 1986 means is that the poorest 40% of India's population (300 million people) do not have the cash income to buy food in sufficient quantities. This 'food mountain' acquired at highly subsidised support prices from middle and rich farmers, in a few states, is imposing a very heavy financial burden on the Indian government, which is of course carried by the poor, constituting some 80 per cent of the total population through the burden of the indirect taxes they pay."

THE WORLD

[From: "A Critique of India's Economic Policies", by M. R. Bhagavan, *Monthly Review*, July-August 1987.]

CHINA: MORE FOOD! MORE NUTRITION!

"The first step towards the collectivisation of agriculture was the formation of mutual aid teams. After the land reforms of 1946-49 the initial efforts of the Chinese peasant to increase productivity ran into difficulties because of the relative scarcity of means of production. Some peasants had somewhat larger plots of land but not enough animals or farm implements; others had more animals than they could use on their own plots of land. By grouping six, eight or ten households into mutual aid teams, peasants could pool as they had done to some extent in the past, their labour, animals, and farm implements, while retaining individual ownership of the land. The value of man's labour or the work done by a member's draught animal was determined through an agreed local standard. Some teams were seasonal, others were permanent. By the end of 1952, 40 per cent of China's rural households had organised themselves into 8 million permanent and seasonal mutual aid teams.

"To overcome the limitations of the mutual aid teams, the second stage of the collectivisation of Chinese agriculture, in the form of elementary or semi-elementary socialist agricultural producers' co-operatives was initiated in 1953. Simple credit and marketing co-operatives had been set up even before 1953 to replace the middle man, but the big step was to set up producers' co-operatives in which land can be pooled for joint collective cultivation. The main characteristics of these elementary cooperatives was their recognition of the system of individual property rights in the system of income distribution. About 60 to 70 per cent of the total income was distributed on the basis of work done by each member of the co-operative, but 30 to 40 per cent of the income was distributed as rents for land or other means of produc-

tion contributed by various members, which constituted the share capital of the co-operative membership. The co-operative was voluntary, and it was possible for members to terminate their membership and withdraw their land. Management of the co-operative was the responsibility of a committee elected each year by all the members. By 1955, about one third of peasant households had formed about 633,000 elementary producers' co-operatives.

"The third stage in China's rural development was that of advanced producers' co-operatives. In many ways this stage was more significant than the second, because in an advanced co-operative, the entire income was distributed among members on the basis of work done for the co-operative and not on the basis of land or implements contributed by members. The advanced co-operatives were also much larger in size and were formed by amalgamating fifteen or twenty elementary co-operatives. In practice the typical advanced co-operative covered a natural village, with a population ranging from 1,000 to 3,000 and a cultivable area ranging from 300 to 800 hectares. They had therefore much larger capital with which to acquire agricultural

machinery, undertake large irrigation and flood control projects and finance small-scale rural industries.

"The creation of the people's communes was accompanied by another mass movement to consolidate the changes that had already taken place, and prepare the ground for further collectivisation. Chairman Mao himself toured the countryside in the summer of 1958 to evaluate the situation and lend his personal prestige to the movement. The Central Committee of the Communist Party of China adopted a resolution in August 1958 on setting up the people's communes. The amalgamation of advanced co-operatives and *hsiangs* (districts) into people's communes was very rapid and the process was almost completed by the end of September 1958, by which time 740,000 advanced co-operatives had been reconstituted into 26,000 communes.

"The 26,000 communes were again sub-divided into 74,000 communes. The system of private plots was also re-introduced, but the total area to be covered by private plots was not to exceed 5% of the total land area under the collective as against 10% before 1958.

"Most communes have their own



A CHINESE COMMUNE: Socialism eliminates hunger

THE WORLD

small peasant research groups. The main function of the research stations is to disseminate information received from higher levels in the form of pamphlets and posters and to train farmers. Some communes have started regular programmes of training which bring together fifteen, twenty or thirty peasant farmers for a period ranging from a week to a month. Some of these training courses cover basic agricultural techniques while others may be designed to deal with special problems and needs of the locality. In practise almost every production brigade has at least a few trained peasant farmers. Those who do well in these training programmes may be selected to become research workers at the research station.

"Like many other parts of Asia, China has accorded high priority, particularly in the 1960s, to the introduction of improved seeds in order to achieve higher yields. There are literally hundreds of varieties of each crop being continuously tested, developed and exchanged. . . . According to official sources, improved strains are now used in over 80% of China's rice-growing areas and over 70% of the wheat-growing areas in the Yellow River Valley.

"One of the most important manifestation of China's progress is its success in feeding its large population, estimated at 800 million people in 1975. Total grain production had more than doubled between 1949 and 1975, from 108 million tons to 285 million tons. Since the increase in population over this period has been about 50%, from 550 million to over 800 million, the per capita availability of cereals has increased from 200 kg per annum to 300 kg per annum. Partly because of a sustained increase in grain production and partly due to the equitable distribution of available food supply, the proportion of malnourished population in China is very small."

[From: *Rural Development: Learning from China*, by Sartaz Aziz, Macmillan, London, 1978.]

Since 1979, there has of course been major reforms in the Chinese

economy, and its growth and the improvement in the living conditions of the Chinese people have been most impressive. There are many among the Nigerian elite however who want to believe that because of these reforms China has abandoned socialism and gone capitalist. They peddle this lie all over the place, but can never state what specific features of these reforms have turned China into a capitalist country. For, if they were to ask their masters in New York, Tokyo, Paris and London who went to China with their mouths watering, thinking that they can now



MAO: Led the people out of hunger

make fortunes from this huge market of one billion people, they would have been told that China has remained firmly socialist, and that no moneybag, foreign or local, can fleece its people.

The modernisation reforms in China have involved basically the elimination of bureaucratic control over enterprises, peasant households, co-operatives and communes; and greater flexibility in pricing and marketing, in the context of a socialist economy. The sixth Five Year Plan of 1981-85 brings this out very clearly, leaving no one in doubt about the socialist nature of the Chinese economy and the socialist bases of these reforms. The Plan states that:

"... the construction for modernisation in our country should be achieved by integrating the universal truths of Marxism with the specific reality of China, it should take place along a road of China's

own, building socialism with special Chinese features. In the light of China's national conditions the following important principles and strategic thinking should be affirmed in our economic and social development. . . . We must adhere to the principles of first feeding the people and next building the country, paying attention to both improving people's lives and developing production and construction. . . . We must develop diversified economic forms and modes of operation under the conditions of upholding the leading position of the state economy and carry out the principle of keeping the leading role of the planned economy and the supplementary role of market regulation, on the basis of maintaining the absolutely superior position of public ownership so that the national economy is centralised and unified on one hand and develops in a flexible and diversified way, on the other."

The success of socialism in China is further illustrated by a comparison with India of infant mortality rates, a crucial indicator of the nutritional level of populations. This fell in China from 90 per one thousand in 1965 to 36 per one thousand in 1984; while in India it fell from 151 per one thousand in 1965 to 90 per one thousand in 1984.

Although averages are misleading, particularly in a society with a high degree of class stratification and entrenched inequality, like the capitalist society of India, the per capita daily calorie supply in India was — in 1983 — only 96% of the FAO minimum requirement, while in China in the same year it was 111% of the minimum. There are no huge unsold and unsaleable stocks of food grains in China, and there is no starvation in China even when there is drought in the country.

In the field of food and nutrition, the basis for human survival and progress, the comparative experiences of China and India, in the last 40 years, have clearly shown the tremendous superiority of socialism. That is why it is a scientific fact that for the human race to survive it has to follow the path of socialism.

THE DEBT-EQUITY TRAP

Since the onset of the current economic crisis and hardships about six years ago, millions of ordinary Nigerian workers, traders and farmers have learnt new terms, phrases and names from the jargon of professional economists, some of which were hardly known to even most university graduates before. Names, terms, and phrases like IMF, SAP, SFEM, FEM, 'retrenchment' 'redundancy', and 'privatisation' now crop up occasionally in conversations in markets, motor parks and *buras*, and other places where before they would just be laughed off as big grammar. People are also now less frightened off by figures of hundreds of millions and billions which are more and more part and parcel of every major statement by the top echelons of the government. The fact that the overwhelming majority are not literate and numerate, or course, blocks the extent of this familiarity with economic jargon. And even those who have made the effort to become literate and numerate have very little genuinely enlightening material to read in English and Nigerian languages. The bulk of the reading material available in English and Nigerian languages tries to divert the readers' attention from the real economic, social, and political issues over which their survival depends. They try to divert popular concern and interest away from these to sports, pornography, romance, and religious spiritualism of various types. In fact, the current variety and intensification of diversionary and divisive religious campaigning is revealed by the fact that one of the most important policies announced in the 1988 budget, with grave implications for the future of all Nigerians, the DEBT-EQUITY CONVERSION, is confused with religious CONVERSION in some evangelical Christian and Muslim circles. This confusion, of course, suits the foreign and domestic forces who are going to benefit from the policy. Instead of Nigerian workers, peasants

and other ordinary people understanding what is going to be converted and what it means for them, suspicion and sinister rumours are used to divide, confuse and prevent them from united action in defence of their own specific class interests and of the larger national interests which they alone are really capable of defending.

What the government has decided over this is ECONOMIC and not RELIGIOUS conversion. As stated by President Babangida in his 1988 budget speech:

"Fifthly, as part of our strategy to reduce our external debt burden, authentic debts owed to willing foreign creditors will be considered for conversion to equity investment in projects, especially in new high-



EDWARD DU CANN: *City of London's Leading Loan Shark*

priority projects which will use local raw materials and provide employment for our people. Adequate guidelines are being worked out to ensure that the naira proceeds of the exercise are channelled into productive activities in the country. . . and ensure that this laudable objective does not run counter to the Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Decree and is not frustrated by those who may be scheming to convert such proceeds into foreign currency through the Foreign Exchange Market for subsequent transfer abroad."

The Minister of Finance, Dr. Chu Okongwu, in his 1988 budget

briefing repeated this, specifying that the policy is for immediate implementation, this year. He said:

"A debt conversion scheme to reduce our external debt stock but at the same time promote domestic investments, output and employment will be implemented during the year and the guidelines in this regard are being worked out."

What this means is that those foreign governments, companies, corporations and individuals whose claims Nigerian governments, banks, companies or individuals indebted to them have accepted, will be paid the amount in naira, provided they agree to invest this amount into some business in Nigeria, by paying for shares in a Nigerian enterprise. This is supposed to mean that although the external debt is paid off, it has not involved taking any money away from Nigeria. Instead it has brought about foreign investment into Nigeria. The fact that this creditor-turned-foreign-investor is only investing because he shall be able to take out the profit he makes from this investment, when this profit starts flowing, is supposed to be alright for Nigeria. For, it is said that the profit will be generated from productive activity in Nigeria, and by the time it is generated our economy would have gained a lot from the 'investment'. The foreign exchange to be taken out later as profits by this creditor-turned-foreign-investor is regarded as a reasonable cost of getting relief from paying the debt in foreign exchange right now, and getting some foreign investment, even if it is money raised here.

All this seems eminently sensible on the surface. But when we look beyond the surface of this debt-equity conversion, we shall see that it really amounts to a huge debt-auction of Nigeria.

In the first place, the government has not verified most of the external debts being claimed against the country. In fact, the Minister of Finance has so glaringly contradicted

THE ECONOMY

himself over the exact amount we owe externally that even Chief Shonekan, Chairman of the UAC, and reputed to be one of the architects of SAP, has, at a speech to the Nigeria-American Chamber of Commerce on the budget in January, expressed concern at this strange escalation of the external debt. For how can the Minister of Finance on 23rd September 1987, in a review of SAP, state categorically that as of 31st July 1987 Nigeria's total external indebtedness stood at 19.6 billion U.S. dollars, and then at his 1988 budget briefing state that the country's external indebtedness stood at 24.4 billion U.S. dollars on 31st October 1987? Since most of our external debt is in U.S. dollars, even when it is from Western Europe, the decline in that currency against the others in later 1987 cannot lead to such an escalation of our external debt by 4.8 billion U.S. dollars in only 90 days! In this situation, what exactly is the amount of authenticated debt to be converted into equity? You cannot carry out any serious repayment, let alone conversion, of debt into anything unless its exact amount is established. And any conversion of unverified debt into shares in Nigerian enterprises amounts to auctioning these enterprises off, not for any amount of money, but for some foreign sharks and baracudas to drop their dubious debt-claims against Nigeria.

In fact, among those who will have ostensibly the strongest of such claims shall be the holders of the promissory notes. These are notes printed to formally certify that the holder is owed money by Nigeria. They are intended to be used for monetary transactions and many of them are being sold.

According to *The Guardian* of Sunday, 5th July 1987, the total promissory notes issued for short-term debt-claims came to about 3.5 billion U.S. dollars. The first batch of 1 billion dollars was issued in 1984; another batch of 1.5 billion dollars was issued in April 1987; and another batch for 1 billion dollars was issued in July 1987.

Since then a batch for 3.25 billion dollars has been issued in

January 1988, after the Wembly Conference Centre meeting in London with the so-called short-term uninsured creditors. So the total of these notes issued on the short-term debt-claims alone now amounts to 6.75 billion dollars. This equals about 28.35 billion naira worth of debt claims. This is less than one-third of the total external debt burden, according to Okongwu's latest figures. But even if half of the owners of these notes agree to the debt-equity conversion, they will — with over 14 billion naira — buy almost all the major productive enterprises in this country without any money at all, just with notes promising to pay them very dubious debt-claims.



CHU OKONGWU: Promoting Debt Slavery.

But what even makes this whole debt-equity conversion policy so rapacious is that most of the people who have got these notes have already sold them to others. By June 1987 it was reported that the promissory notes issued up to then were selling at one-third their face value. That means that those banks and companies with promissory notes worth one million dollars were selling them at about 300,000 dollars.

The amounts of these promissory notes in the big financial centres of the West has produced a new secondary banking sector which

largely deals in the sales of these notes, which are bought by powerful financial speculators who believe that they can ensure that the governments that issued them pay the full amount at the end of the period agreed.

According to two leading Wall Street financial brokers, Merrill Lynch and Shearson-Lehman Brothers, the promissory notes of seven Latin American countries were, by November 1987, selling at only 39-42% of their face value. They say that every one dollar worth of promissory notes of Argentina, for example, was selling last November at no more than 37 cents; for Brazil it is 41 cents, and for Peru only 7 cents!

The people who buy these notes are of course not interested in any investment in the countries enmeshed by these chains of debt-slavery. They are sheer speculators who want to make a big rip-off. If they agree to any conversion of their promissory notes into equity shares in Nigerian enterprises, they will do so in order to get naira, and buy foreign exchange by any means, or exportable commodities to take out and sell. They have bought these notes at knock-down prices because those who got them first know how dubious their debt-claims really are; and these speculators hope to make an easy kill. If in order to make this kill they have to go through the motions of buying shares in a Nigerian enterprise, all well and good, especially as they are also going to get these shares at knock-down prices.

The debt-equity conversion policy announced in the 1988 budget therefore does not involve any conversion. The debts to be converted are largely fictitious. The promissory notes issued on these largely fictitious debts are being bought at knock-down prices by hard-core speculators who will use this new policy to rake off billions of dollars from Nigeria, through an exercise which is nothing more than the debt-auctioning of Nigeria.

By Bala Usman

Who Is Afraid of The Kuru Conference Report?

Two years ago, on Monday, 6th April, 1986, President Ibrahim Babangida opened the All-Nigeria Conference on Foreign Policy at the National Institute, Kuru, near Jos. It was the second of its kind in the history of Nigeria. The first one took place in August 1961.

In his opening speech, General Babangida underlined the significance of the conference. He said:

"Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, from the theme of this conference, 'Nigeria and the World: Foreign Policy Options Up Till The year 2000', I believe your task is not only a formidable one but is also of great historical importance, because you are being called upon as representatives of a cross section of our society to come up with ideas that would sustain us in a dynamic international environment up till the year 2000 and possibly beyond."

He added:

"This conference fits into the style of this administration in which issues of our national life are subjected to popular participation. More importantly this conference should provide an opportunity to evolve a new national consciousness and consensus on the goals and objectives of our foreign policy and thereby forge national consciousness and support for our foreign policy programmes."

In line with what President Babangida said he expected of the conference, a very broad cross-section of Nigerians were invited to participate in it. The list of non-governmental organisations who sent official delegates to the conference reveals this very clearly:

1. Nigerian Institute of International Affairs
2. Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research
3. Nigerian Association of Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Mining and Agriculture.



AKINYEMI: Sat on the Report?

4. Manufacturers Association of Nigeria
5. Nigerian Labour Congress
6. Nigerian Employers Consultative Association
7. Nigerian Bar Association
8. Nigerian Medical Association
9. Nigerian Society of Engineers
10. Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria
11. Association of National Accountants of Nigeria
12. Nigerian Institute of Architects
13. Nigerian Institute of Bankers
14. National Council of Women's Societies
15. Nigerian Sports Commission
16. Performing Musicians Association of Nigeria
17. Association of Nigerian Authors
18. Nigerian Union of Journalists
19. National Association of Nigerian Students
20. Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs
21. Christian Association of Nigeria
22. Academic Staff Union of Universities

All sections of the Armed Forces, Police, Customs, Immigration, the Ministry of External Affairs and all other Ministries were effectively represented. Besides, there were the numerous individuals and groups who participated on their individual

merit, or as representatives of sections of the society who do not yet have established national organisations.

The conference, which deliberated for seven days, produced a report which has been submitted to the President. But up to TODAY the government has not issued its views on the report in a white paper. In fact, it has maintained a deafening silence on the report of this conference which the President himself said is of "historic importance". Why? Who is afraid of the Kuru Conference Report? If you read the communique of the conference in the light of the way Nigerian foreign policy has gone in the last two years, and the domestic factors involved in this, you may find the answer to this question. Below is the full text of the official communique of the conference which summarised the report unanimously agreed on at the conference:

"The All-Nigeria Conference on Foreign Policy which was declared open by the President, Major-General Ibrahim Babangida on Monday, 7th of April, 1986 ended on Saturday, April 12, 1986. The Conference, which was held at the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies, Kuru, was attended by about 400 Nigerians from all sections of the population — Workers, Farmers, Business Community, Students, Women, Civil Servants, Members of the Armed Forces and Police, Former External Affairs Ministers, Journalists, Musicians, Performing Artists, Ambassadors, Members of Academic Community, Accountants, Lawyers, Architects, Captains of Industry from the Commercial and Manufacturing sectors, Engineers, among others. 2. The Conference was presided over by Alhaji Yahaya Gusau ably assisted by Chief A. Y. Eke and Chief (Mrs.) Bola Kuforiji-Olubi. Meeting at plenary and committee



levels, participants at the Conference reviewed the role of Nigeria in the international community, our performance in that community in the past twenty-five and a half years, its current position and recommended policy options for Nigeria's foreign policy for the period 1986 – 2000. Conference participants unanimously agreed that a virile, dynamic and progressive foreign policy for Nigeria can only be based on a very sound and strong, independent and self-reliant economy totally free from all forms of foreign domination, controlled by Nigerians and informed by the principle of social justice and the absence of exploitation of man by man. Consequently, participants were agreed that the democratisation of the social and economic institutions is imperative for a stable and peaceful society which is the only solid foundation on which Nigeria's foreign policy can be built.

3. Conference noted the concern of the nation with regards to the expatriation of Nigeria's wealth by a class of Nigeria's Political, Military, Administrative and Business elites. It calls upon government to set a diplomatic machinery in motion to enlist the support and cooperation of nations involved so that Nigeria could recover such assets.

4. Conference participants re-emphasised the essential secularity of the Nigerian state and were of the view that the country should not be a member of any international organisation based on religion or racism.

5. Participants were agreed that Nigeria should not restore diplomatic relations with Israel.

6. Participants also agreed that the ability of Nigeria to project a good and virile defence and security policy depends on its capacity to effectively and efficiently tackle disruptive influences and the problem areas of external threats including areas of internal, social and political instability. Consequently, the most reliable defence and security that we can have is the mobilisation of the citizenry through their involvement and participation in governance. For this to be realised, morale and patriotic motivations must be anchored on full employment, equal

opportunities and a sense of belonging.

7. Participants agreed that Nigeria should positively use culture, and all its ramifications as a potent instrument in the promotion of its foreign policy. This can be done only when Nigerians have the appropriate pride in their culture and reflect this fact on the domestic scene. Consequently, in order to prevent cultural dislocation through the impact of inappropriate films and television content, especially from the Western world, Nigeria's film-purchasing policy should explore other markets especially in the Third World and acquire only those foreign films and television programmes which are consistent with our cultural values and national aspirations. In short, participants agreed that a foreign policy should be informed by the need to create, promote and generate a virile self-reliant nation where national interests can be vigorously pursued abroad.

8. Conference participants accepted the following principles, objectives and strategies of Nigerian foreign policy for the years 1986 to 2000.



WACHUKWU: *Where is the Report?*

PRINCIPLES

9. Given the foundation and current condition of Nigeria, its foreign relations and foreign policy, and given the fundamental interests and needs of its people:

i. The first principle of Nigeria's foreign policy is that all nations have a fundamental right to freedom and independence and the defence of

their sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity, free from any foreign interference.

ii. The second principle of Nigeria's foreign policy is that all nations have a fundamental right to secure and utilise all their human and natural resources for their own independent national development, free from imperialist or any form of foreign domination.

iii. The third principle of Nigeria's foreign policy is that the people of Africa, and black people everywhere have a common destiny and their progress requires their solidarity and cooperation.

iv. The fourth principle of Nigeria's foreign policy is that the defence and promotion of the independence, equality and mutual respect of all nations requires the elimination of all forms of racism and of all relations of exploitation of man by man within and among nations.

v. The fifth principle of Nigeria's foreign policy is that the promotion of independence, equality, and mutual respect among nations requires respect for human dignity, human rights and social justice in all nations.

vi. The sixth principle of Nigeria's foreign policy is that world peace can only be secured on the basis of equality and mutual respect among nations, equity and social justice within nations and total opposition to militarism and aggression in any form.

vii. The seventh principle of Nigeria's foreign policy is that it shall, at all times, promote the unity of the people of Nigeria, on the basis of the secular nature of the Nigerian state and Nigeria shall not belong to, or have diplomatic relations with, any international religious organisation or institution.

OBJECTIVES

10. Given these foundations, current conditions, fundamental interest and needs, and the seven principles arising from them, as set out above, the objectives of Nigerian foreign policy until the year 2000 should be:

i. The defence and promotion of Nigerian sovereignty, unity, territorial integrity and national indepen-

ANNIVERSARY



HAROUN: Conference Organizer

dence.

ii. The creation of the necessary political and economic conditions in Africa which will secure the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and national independence of all African countries and their total liberation from imperialism and all other forms of foreign domination.

iii. The creation of the necessary political and economic conditions in Africa for the securing and renewal of all the human and natural resources of Africa, for the rapid, self-reliant and integrated ecological, economic, social, cultural and political development of all its people and the building of a united Africa.

iv. The creation of the necessary political and economic conditions in the rest of the world which shall ensure the independence, dignity, and self-reliant development of Nigeria, Africa, all black peoples, and all the oppressed peoples every where.

v. The defence and promotion of world peace built on freedom, equality, mutual respect, justice, and independence for all the peoples of the world.

STRATEGIES

11. Given these principles and objectives, the strategies for the implementation of Nigeria's foreign policy until the year 2000 are:

i. That Nigeria's foreign policy shall ensure the building of a solid domestic base of genuine democratisation of political power at the local, state and federal levels, to enable every Nigerian to defend the country and its resources, promote its foreign policy principles and objectives and

contribute in all other ways to foreign policy formulation and implementation.

ii. That Nigeria's foreign policy shall ensure the taking over by the people of Nigeria of complete control over the material resources and social wealth collectively produced by their labour for national development. This strategy involves the disengagement of Nigeria and the Nigerian economy from the existing relations, and structures of foreign exploitation and domination which now block the realisation of its potential.

iii. That Nigeria's foreign policy shall be to identify with and actively participate in their struggle against imperialism and all forms of foreign domination, the struggle for the unity of Africa and for peace,

democracy and social progress for all mankind.

12. Finally, in order that Conference recommendations should not be allowed to gather dust, Conference resolved to transform itself into a Foreign Relations Council. It approved the setting up of an Interim Executive Council made up of the Members of the Implementation Committee."

So, who is afraid of the Kuru Foreign Policy Conference Report? Why is it that twenty four months after this official conference of such historic importance and with very broadly based participation from all sectors, nooks and corners of the country, the government has failed to give its views on the report?

REMEMBER THE BAKORI TRIALS?

Readers would recall that, last year several editions of The Analyst carried a long-running coverage of the plight of the peasants of Maiyadiya and Dogondawa villages of the Bakori Local Government Area of the then Kaduna State (now Katsina State).

After a long-winding trial, full of absurdities and glaring contraventions of both the letter and spirit of our laws, the Bakori Area Court handed down a so-called judgement which was in favour of the prosecution and the complainant in the case — one Alhaji Badamasi, and his absentee-landlord patron, Alhaji Hassan Alhassan.

Since that judgement, a lot of water has passed under the Bakori bridge. First, the peasants appealed against the judgement of the area court at a higher court of record. Secondly, Alhaji Hassan Alhassan himself was killed by unknown persons in his Kano residence late last year. Then, early in March this year, the Funtua Local Government deemed it fit at last to hand back to the peasants their lands.

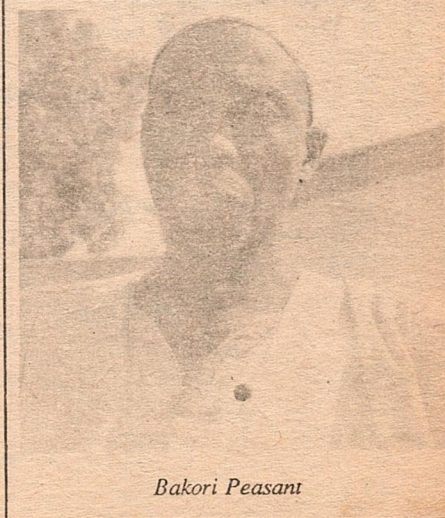
The Analyst is happy to publish below, for record purposes, the unedited text of the Funtua Local Government letter which gave effect to this long-overdue decision:

Ref: NO. FAA/S.42/Vol.1/109
Funtua Local Government,
FUNTUA.
4th March, 1988.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LAND USE AND ALLOCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE'S REPORT — FUNTUA LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

Sequel to the above Committee's report on the alleged illegal acquisition of Farmland by one Alhaji Hassan Alhassan Dorayi — a Businessman based in Kano in collaboration with the District Head of Bakori — Alhaji Tukur Idris.

The Funtua Local Government has decided to return the Part or Portion of the land that belonged to the villagers as per Committee's recommendation at page



Bakori Peasant

STRUGGLES IN THE FRONTLINE

SOUTHERN AFRICA: Towards Total War

On Wednesday, 24th February 1988, the racist government of the Republic of South Africa announced that it had banned seventeen anti-apartheid organisations, including the broad-based and popular United Democratic Front. It also ordered that the Congress of South African Trade Unions, COSATU, should confine itself strictly to legal trade union matters and have nothing whatsoever to do with political activity in any form.

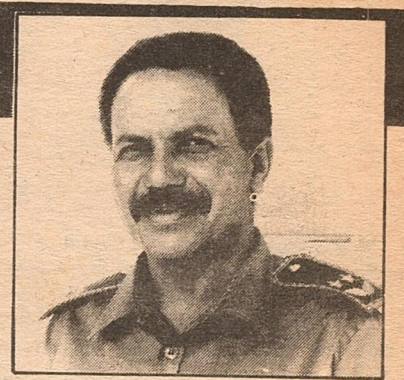
Less than a week later, a procession of leading South African churchmen, including Archbishop Desmond Tutu, was attacked by the police as they marched to the white parliament to present a petition. A number of them were arrested.

This arrest of liberal church leaders has confirmed what the African National Congress has been telling Africa and the rest of the world: that the racists of South Africa shall never allow any peaceful evolution towards a multi-racial democratic government in that country. But, in addition to confirming the stand of the ANC, this latest clamp-down in South Africa has also jolted many people in Africa into the realisation that the large-scale war that has been going on in Southern Africa will intensify and most likely engulf a large part of the continent.

THE BATTLEFRONTS

It is very important to understand clearly the nature and scale of this war, fought now on three major battle fronts and with skirmishes now beginning on a fourth front. The three major fronts of this war are, firstly, the front inside the borders of the Republic of South Africa itself; secondly, in Namibia and Angola; and thirdly, in Mozambique and eastern Zimbabwe. The fourth battle-front opening up is along the Limpopo River, marking the border between Zimbabwe and South Africa.

Inside the borders of the



GEN. ANTONIO F. "NDALU":
Inflicting heavy blows on the racists

Republic of South Africa, including its outposts, this war has varied in its intensity over the last seven years, but it has been a war all the same. It has involved urban and rural guerrilla operations, largely by the fighters of the *Umkhonto We Sizwe*, the army of the African National Congress; urban insurrections, mass demonstrations, strikes, funeral marches, boycotts, and many other forms of popular resistance. These have been met with fierce and brutal repression by the racist army and police and by white and black vigilantes and thugs like those of the Inkatha, led by that puppet Gatsha Buthelezi.

In spite of this intense repression the balance has been shifting decisively in favour of the forces of liberation. In fact, the vicious clamp-down against non-violent anti-apartheid organisations and church leaders in late February 1988 is an illustration of how much the racist government has failed to build any political basis for its much touted "reforms" of apartheid. For a government which prides itself as a defender of "Christian civilisation" to have to throw bishops and pastors into jail for peacefully marching to present a petition, shows how desperate Botha has become, and how much the balance of forces has shifted against them.

As for the military levels of the struggle inside the borders of South

2 para 7 of the map which the Committee used during the time of its investigation.

So by virtue of Decree No. 6, Page A 49 of the 'Land Use Decree of 1978' and the powers so vested on all Local Government Chairmen to have direct dealing on all Land matters as per 'Gazetted Schedule of Duty by the Federal Military Government as regard to the transitional Programme. It has now been decided that the Committee's report which the then Sole Administrator had set up be implemented forth with and without any further delay, this of course is in the interest of justice and fairplay because the implementation of such report has long been overdue.

Finally, I wish to express my sincere sympathy on the delay in implementing the report since the said Committee submitted its findings in 1986, and the series of hardships you were personally occasioned to, since the beginning of the case. Each one of you should make sure that he does not encroach beyond the actual boundary of his farm.

Wishing you all the best.

**CHAIRMAN
FUNTUA LOCAL
GOVERNMENT**

SIGNED

(ALHAJI BASHIR IDRIS NADABO)

**Chairman,
Funtua Local Government,
FUNTUA**

Copy to:—

**The Principal Private Secretary,
to the Governor,
Katsina State,
KATSINA.**

**The Secretary to the Military
Governor and Head of Service,
Military Governor's Office,
KATSINA.**

**The Zonal Commander I/C
Funtua.**

**The Divisional Police Officer,
Police Headquarters,
Funtua.**

Above for your information please.

SIGNED

(ALHAJI BASHIR IDRIS NADABO)

**Chairman,
Funtua Local Government,
FUNTUA.**

STRUGGLES IN THE FRONTLINE

Africa, what the Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group discovered, according to General Obasanjo, speaking to *Africa Report* in 1986, is that "the conflict won't reach its height for the next two or three years. But in another four or five years it will reach full-scale guerrilla war and that will go on for another five or six years before it is resolved. . . . The government which will emerge — will be a radicalised government — won't care a damn about Western interests."

NAMIBIA AND ANGOLA

The recent developments in the second battlefield of this war which is located in Namibia and Angola have even further weakened the position of the racist regime and its NATO patrons. In the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale in November 1987, the Angolan armed forces, FAPLA, killed 230 South African troops and shot down 40 of their aircraft. The Angolans had 300 of their soldiers killed. This was a major victory for FAPLA, and shook the racists because this rate of casualty and losses seriously demoralised their troops, causing mutinies and desertions.

Since they launched their second large-scale invasion and occupation of southern Angola, Operation Protea, on 23rd August 1981, the South African racists have placed the bulk of their forces fighting outside their borders on this second battle front. That invasion, for example, involved 11,000 soldiers, 90 planes and helicopters, 36 Centurion tanks, 70 AML-90 armoured vehicles, and very heavy artillery. They occupied about 50,000 square kilometres of the Cunene Province of Angola.

In spite of this and of United States and other Western military aid to Unita, the Angolan armed forces, FAPLA, built up itself, and in the Battle of Congamba in Moxico Province in August 1983, smashed up Unita's main units, killing 1,100 in a single day. The South African airforce had to come to the rescue by bombing the town to smithereens. FAPLA had to withdraw, taking serious casualties from these air attacks.



SWAPO FIGHTERS: Matching to free Namibia

In spite of this, FAPLA recovered again and with the solid background support of the Cuban internationalist brigades and together with units of the People's Liberation Army of Namibia, PLAN, who were operating from southern Angola, they made the South African occupation of Namibia and Angola very costly.

In December 1983, the South African Defence Forces (SADF) launched another large-scale invasion of Angola, Operation Askari, which met FAPLA much better trained, organised and equipped with anti-aircraft and other advanced weapons. Ten South African planes were shot down. But because of South Africa's decisive air, armour, and artillery superiority, FAPLA took a heavy beating. On 11th January 1984, after a meeting in Moscow with Angolan leaders, the Soviet Union and Cuba announced that they will decisively strengthen Angola's defence capability.

After the demise of the peace talks between the governments of South Africa and Angola which started in Lusaka in February 1984, and the spectacular failure of the South African commando mission to sabotage Cabindan oil installations on 21st May 1985, FAPLA launched a large-scale offensive against Unita units in Moxico and Kuando Kubango provinces. The young combatants of FAPLA showed a high level of skill and courage in a brilliantly executed combined operations using infantry, artillery, armour and aircraft. They smashed up the Unita bandits in battles like

the famous Battle of Mavinga in August-September 1985. Jonas Savimbi and his walking stick barely escaped. The Mig-23 aircraft and helicopter gunships, skillfully operated by Angolans, scared the South Africans and the West so much, particularly when FAPLA units gave a good thrashing to the SADF elite unit, the Buffalo Battalion. A noisy propaganda campaign was started by the West, saying that a Soviet infantry battalion was involved in these battles and that the Migs had Soviet pilots. This was an obvious lie, and revealed how shaken South Africa and the West had been by the high level of professionalism, skill and courage shown by FAPLA in the battles of late 1985. Since then, FAPLA's fighting capacity has improved. Its performance at the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale recently is in fact one of the factors causing the racist government to be so strident and desperate in its internal and external actions.

MOZAMBIQUE AND ZIMBABWE

In this third front made up of Mozambique and eastern Zimbabwe, the battles started between FAM, the armed forces of Mozambique, and black South African commandos operating under the name of Renamo. In *THE ANALYST*, vol.2, no.3 we showed how this auxiliary arm of the South African Defence Forces was created.

These Renamo bandits unleashed their offensive in 1981, with about 10,000 of them heavily armed and equipped. They were at

STRUGGLES IN THE FRONTLINE

that time much better equipped and prepared and almost as large as the Mozambican army. In addition, commando units of the South African army based in South Africa launched direct attacks on Mozambique, particularly on Maputo and the areas around it. They claimed that these were attacks on ANC bases and facilities. This claim is false.

Recent revelations have further confirmed that Renamo, far from



CASTRO: Firmly on the side of Africa's Liberation

being "The Mozambique National Resistance" as the BBC, VOA, Reuters, etc. peddle every day, is actually a special strike force, trained, funded, equipped, controlled and directed by the Military Intelligence Directorate (MID) of SADF. Roland Hunter, a corporal working as an aide of Colonel Cornelius Van Niekerk of MID, the head of Operation Mila, the destabilisation campaign directed against Mozambique, confirmed this, and is now completing a five year jail term in South Africa for revealing this.

Corporal Hunter, a supporter of the ANC, revealed how he personally used to deliver salary payments to the Renamo bases inside South Africa. For the top Renamo nenchmen, their monthly pay from the MID came up to 500-750 rand or 250-375 U.S. dollars. When the so-called president of Renamo, Afonso Dhlakama, was to go to West Germany in 1983, pretending to be from inside Mozambique, Hunter said he took him and his fellow imposters to shops in Pretoria and bought them clothing worth 2,500 dollars.

Hunter also mentioned a warehouse in the Voortrekkerhoogts

military barracks where SADF had stocked thousands of AK-47 rifles for supply and re-supplying Renamo, so that they can pretend, by using this Eastern Bloc rifle, that they are a genuine guerrilla army fighting the FRELIMO government of Mozambique from whom they claimed to have captured their weapons.

He also revealed how he personally used to deliver to the Johannesburg studios of the South African Broadcasting Corporation tapes for broadcast, which claim to be from a Renamo radio station inside Mozambique called "Voz da Africa Libre" (Voice of Free Africa), but actually are broadcast from Johannesburg.

According to Hunter, even the decision, in April 1983, to kill Orlando Cristina, a former

Portuguese secret police officer who became a leading figure behind Renamo, was taken by Colonel Van Niekerk of the MID. It was, however, made to appear as a result of internal fighting within Renamo, and one John Cacacola was arrested near the scene of the shooting with a 9 mm. Parabellum pistol.

The level of the South African investment in their Renamo units was high. Hunter, for instance, revealed that even as a mere corporal in Operation Mila he was authorised to spend up to 125,000 dollars on his own. The level of funding revealed by this huge amount of imprest disbursed by a corporal made Renamo very effective in its attacks inside Mozambique.

Cont'd on Page 23, Col.1

WHY WAS WILMOT DEPORTED?

After several botched attempts, since 1981, the Federal Government has finally abandoned all legal pretenses. In an operation reminiscent of the tactics of Latin American dictatorships, a team of fifteen gun-totting security agents, on Thursday March 10th, 1988 at about 10 p.m., along Queen Elizabeth Way, G.R.A. Zaria, ambushed, handcuffed and drove away with Dr. Patrick Wilmot, a Jamaican Sociology lecturer with A.B.U. After 35 hours of anxiety and tension, during which neither the police nor the Immigration departments in Zaria nor his employers, the A.B.U. could tell his Nigerian wife, Mrs. Makki Saratu Wilmot (nee Sakaba) of his whereabouts, Dr. Wilmot rang from London's Gatwick airport at 9.00 a.m. Saturday, to say that he has been deported.

On Wednesday March 16, the Chief of General Staff's Chief Press Secretary, Yusufu Mamman, told Nigerians that Dr. Wilmot was a "secret agent" working for the South African Intelligence Organization, BOSS. When asked by Pressmen why Wilmot was not arraigned before a court of law, as is the case the world over with people charged with spying, Yusufu Mamman, sounding very much like a spokesman of Chile's Pinochet, said "We are not taking him to court. We have kicked him out. Finish!" But it is now clear that most Nigerians do not believe what the



Patrick Wilmot

Government said. Indeed in his seventeen and a half years of teaching in Nigeria, Patrick Wilmot has shown himself more committed to the anti-apartheid struggle and has done more to educate Nigerians on the nature and evils of apartheid and the threats it poses to our security and sovereignty than many highly placed Government functionaries. Nothing short of an open trial will convince Nigerians and freedom loving people the world over, who have known and respected Patrick's contribution to the anti-apartheid struggle that he was guilty of the crime the Government said he had committed. Why then was he really deported? Why has the Minister of Internal Affairs said nothing about the deportation? Why take Wilmot to Britain? Who then is really afraid of Patrick Wilmot? BOSS, MOSSAD, CIA, or those Nigerians with business connections in South Africa and Israel?

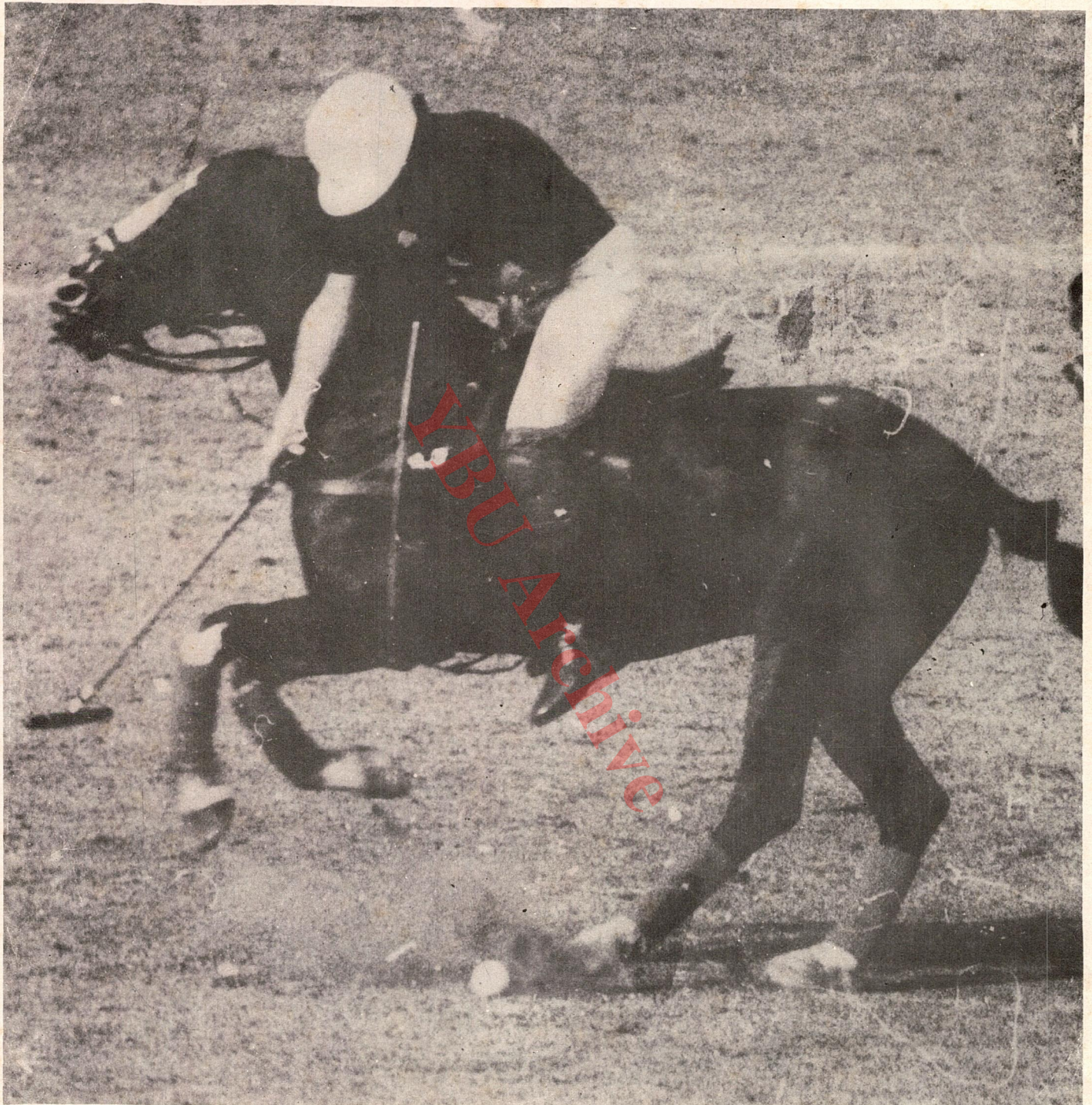
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ONE COUNTRY, TWO NATIONS



A beautiful horse this is, isn't it? Each of these argentinian polo horses cost a minimum of about N600,000.00! They live in air-conditioned rooms, and are conveyed from one polo field to the other in air-conditioned trucks.

Everyday each of these horses consumes at least N200.00 worth of sorghum, special grasses and bran. And there are veterinary doctors and other

handlers attending to them 24 hours of the day.

Yet, while these horses receive such royal treatment, to make them fit for the obscene pleasure of their rich owners, the vast majority of Nigerians are wasting away, suffering from hunger, ignorance and disease. But then, this is our Nigeria—One Country, Two Nations.